Preparring Socially Accountable Physical Therapy Professionals

1. Professionalism – 7 core values are key
2. Interprofessional and intersectoral approaches to improving health outcomes
3. Education is student- and community-centric and transformational
4. Engaged Scholarship guides research

"...[T]he academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic and moral problems, and must affirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement" Boyer, 1996
"It is not inequalities that kill people...it those who are responsible for these inequalities that kill people."


Health professionals for a new century: transforming education to strengthen health systems in an interconnected world

1. Fragmented, outdated, and static curricula produce ill-equipped graduates
2. Mismatch of competencies to patient and population needs
3. Poor teamwork
4. Persistent gender stratification of professional status
5. Narrow technical focus without broader contextual understanding
6. Episodic encounters rather than continuous care
7. Predominant hospital orientation at the expense of primary care
8. Quantitative and qualitative imbalances in the professional labor market; and
9. Weak leadership to improve health-system performance


National Chief

"You could open a new medical clinic on every reserve, but it still wouldn’t treat the root causes such as poor and crowded housing, and inadequate water and sewage systems."

"Crowded housing results in the spread of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, which is ten times higher among First Nations than the national average."

"Contaminated water spreads viral diseases such as Hepatitis A, which is 12 times higher in First Nations children than the national average, and shigellosis—an acute and sometimes deadly intestinal illness—which is 20 times higher than the national average."

A 12 yr old, immobile, tube-fed GMFCS Level V spastic quadriparetic child with cerebral palsy was brought to your clinic for a scheduled follow up.

Living with roaches and mold in rundown apartments risks illness, injury

The principal factors responsible for increasing life expectancy from less than 50 years to more than 70 years in wealthy countries are to be found outside the health care system as it is traditionally defined and, instead, in the broader socioeconomic environment.


“Competence and Conscience

“In many fields, skills have become ends. Scholars are busy sorting, counting, and decoding. We are turning out technicians.

But the crisis of our time relates not to technical competence, but to a loss of social and historical perspective, to the disastrous divorce of competence from conscience.

Once professionals begin to practice, they stop thinking beyond the technical aspects of their work.

Professionals must be able to make judgments that are not only technically correct but also ethically and socially considerate.”

College: The Undergraduate Experience (1987)
Ernest Boyer 1928-1995
Accreditation Bodies Calling For Greater Attention to Social Accountability

“healthcare disparities and the development of solutions to related burdens, the importance of meeting the healthcare needs of medically underserved populations... and core professional attributes, such as altruism and social accountability...”

For God sake, Jim, I'm a doctor!!

“This is important but we really need to develop proficiency in clinical and surgical skills... the other 'stuff' we can figure out later, once we get going in our careers.”


Medical students from high SES backgrounds are less inclined to want a patient from low SES background in their practice than high SES patients.

Physicians with low SES backgrounds (low parental income and education) showed significantly higher levels of service to poor patients than physicians with high SES backgrounds, even after adjustment for physician race, ethnic background and sex.

Health Professionals’ Attitudes Towards Homelessness

36. I believe that those who enter medicine or other health disciplines want to help those in need.

<table>
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Total Respondents: 101 (Year 1 MD Students)

Health Professionals’ Attitudes Towards Homelessness

33. I believe that health professionals are too pressed for time to investigate psychosocial issues routinely.

<table>
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"You'll have students tell you that what you're trying to teach me is a waste of time. " The curriculum is so focused on... getting students through the process... the currency to graduate... is not social responsibility but [passing] tests and [getting] clinical credits.”
Becoming a Doctor: A longitudinal study
Sherlock and Morris (1972)

“...students are highly motivated to achieve economic and professional status... they adopt a rhetoric of altruism in order not to disclose these motives.”


The MS-IVs are less favorably inclined toward caring for the medically indigent than MS-Is


Longitudinal findings revealed that commitment to caring for the medically underserved was greater when students entered medical school than when they graduated.

Transformative Education

“...curricula that is immunized from the human condition and devoid of story, attachment and meaning.”

Phelan 2004

Rationalism, complexity science and curriculum: a cautionary tale

“I wanted to tell you how excited I am to see [that] school is not all about long hours of studying and feeling disconnected from society... thank you for firing this interest in us...

...When you are lectured on things like socio-economic status, it doesn’t quite sink in, you really need that personal experience to kind of realize [and] to see those communities and be out there... It is just different than being told in a classroom.”


Organizational Structure

“Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets. If we keep doing what we have been doing, we’ll keep getting what we’ve always gotten.”

Paul Batalden - on the healthcare system and quality improvement.

“The definition of lunacy is to keep doing what you’ve always done and expect a different result.”

Albert Einstein
“A troubled world can no longer afford the luxury of pursuits confined to an ivory tower; [Our work] has to prove its worth by service to the nation and the world.”

Oscar Handlin