Lectures

CO85-001-e

Harmonization of training and assessment of medical specialists in physical and rehabilitation medicine across Europe—The contribution of the UEMS Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine

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Keywords: European Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine; Medical education; Pre-graduate; Post-graduate; Continuous medical education

Background.—The main goals of the European Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (EBPRM), founded in 1991 as the third speciality board of the Union of European Medical Specialists (UEMS), are to harmonize pre-graduate, post-graduate and continuous medical education in physical and rehabilitation medicine (PRM) all over Europe. The harmonization of curricula of the medical specialties and the assessment of medical specialists has become one of the priorities of the UEMS and its working groups to which the EBPRM contributes.

Action.—The EBPRM will continue to promote a specific minimal undergraduate curriculum on PRM including issues like disability, participation and handicap to be taught all over Europe as a basis for general medical practice. The EBPRM will also expand the existing EBPRM postgraduate curriculum into a detailed catalogue of learning objectives. This catalogue will serve as a tool to boost harmonization of the national curricula across Europe as well as to structure the content of the MCQ examination. It would be a big step forward towards harmonization of European PRM specialist training if an important number of countries would use the certifying MCQ examination of the Board as a part of the national assessments for PRM specialists.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rehab.2014.03.006

CO85-002-e

Educational resources offered by the European Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (EBPRM)

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Keywords: European Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine; Medical education; Pre-graduate; Post-graduate; Continuous medical education

Background.—Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (PRM) is a very demanding medical specialty. To ensure high standard of research and care in PRM all across Europe, it is crucial to attract gifted trainees and offer them high quality education. At undergraduate level, many medical schools in Europe omit to offer teaching on disabled persons and on basic PRM knowledge. Thus PRM is hardly known to medical students. For postgraduate trainees access to evidence-based knowledge as well as teaching of research methodology specific to PRM, rehabilitation methodology, disability management and team building also need to be strengthened to increase the visibility of PRM.

Action.—To address these issues the EBPRM proposes presently a specific undergraduate curriculum in PRM including issues like disability, participation and handicap as a basis for general medical practice and postgraduate rehabilitation training. For PRM trainees many educational documents are now available on the EBPRM website. A growing number of educational sessions for PRM trainees take place during international and national PRM Congresses which can be accessed at low cost. Educational papers published regularly in European rehabilitation journals and European PRM Schools are offered free or at very low cost to trainees.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rehab.2014.03.007

CO85-003-e

Certification for European medical specialists, trainers and training centres run by the UEMS Board of Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine
Board certification of PRM specialists (Board Fellowship).– (a) by examination, for PRM doctors and final-year trainees: succeed a MCQ examination based on the training curriculum published by the PRM Board; (b) by equivalence, for PRM specialists having practiced at least 10 years: assessment based on their past and present PRM activities and publications. All Fellowships are valid for 10 years. To recertify PRM specialists must prove adherence to a continuous medical education program. After recertification Fellows become Senior Fellows and Senior Fellows become Life Fellows.

Board certification of trainers.– The candidate for certification must be a Board Fellow, recognized as a trainer in his country and author of publications. Duration of certification equals the one of his current fellowship certificate.

Board certification of training centres.– A site visit is necessary for the first certification. Recertification is required every 3 to 5 years that might be awarded on file if no change has taken place since the first visit and if there is no concern about the quality of training.

Further reading
Detailed information on the eligibility criteria and application procedures is available at www.euro-prm.org.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.rehab.2014.03.008