

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Title: Center for Leadership in Pediatric Physical Therapy
Project Number: T18MC00004-5
Project Director: Lisa Ann Chiarello, PT, PhD, PCS
Grantee Organization: Drexel University, Programs in Rehabilitation Sciences
Address: 245 North 15th Street, MS 502
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Phone Number: (215) 762-8805
E-mail Address: lisa.chiarello@drexel.edu
Home Page: <http://cnhp.drexel.edu/GradProgs/RehabSci-PT/>
Project Period: 7/1/1997 – 6/30/03
Total Amount of Grant Awarded: \$738,606

ANNOTATION:

The purpose of the Pediatric Physical Therapy Program is to prepare leaders in the field to promote service, teaching, and research to improve the quality of life of children with disabilities and their families. This program addresses the need for doctoral prepared pediatric physical therapists and the paucity of research on the effectiveness of interventions and service delivery for children with disabilities. The major goals of the project are to prepare leaders in the field of pediatric physical therapy who will embrace the MCH mission and to disseminate knowledge and skills to the community to improve services for children with disabilities and their families. The major educational program and activities are the PhD degree program for pediatric physical therapists and an advanced and foundational continuing education courses for community therapists. Eleven students received their PhD and accepted university faculty positions. Sixteen received their master's degree and the majority are providing pediatric physical therapy clinical service. Faculty, graduates, and students published sixty journal articles on pediatric physical therapy scholarship / research, conducted over 220 presentations, provided consultation for over 60 community agencies, and served over 4000 children and families.

KEY WORDS: Pediatric Physical Therapy, Children with Disabilities, Post Professional Education, Research, Community Service

ABSTRACT:

A. PURPOSE: The purpose of the Pediatric Physical Therapy Program is to prepare leaders in the field to promote service, teaching, and research to improve the quality of life of children with disabilities and their families. This program addresses the need for doctoral prepared pediatric physical therapists and the paucity of research on the effectiveness of interventions and service delivery for children with disabilities.

B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: The goal of the Pediatric Physical Therapy Program is to improve the quality of physical therapy to children with disabilities and their families. This is best met by the preparation of leaders in pediatric physical therapy, who will educate future therapists, conduct research to document effectiveness of interventions and service delivery, and will provide leadership in professional and community activities serving children and their families. The specific goals of this project are to:

1. Support the program and its faculty in their continued roles as national leaders in research, education, advanced clinical practice and service in pediatric physical therapy.
2. Provide financial support for physical therapists to achieve the post professional education necessary to develop: high levels of clinical competence; leadership attributes; the skills and knowledge necessary to do research in pediatric physical therapy and related areas; and competencies to succeed as future faculty members.
3. Prepare pediatric physical therapists for leadership roles in the profession as evidenced by employment as educators, researchers, and clinical specialists, and by their leadership activities in professional and community organizations.
4. Enhance the knowledge and skills of community pediatric physical therapists, occupational therapists, and related professionals serving the needs of children.
5. Prepare physical therapists interested in working with children having special health care needs and their families in the basic competencies in pediatric physical therapy.
6. Encourage professional physical therapy students and physical therapist assistant students to enter the area of pediatric physical therapy.

C. METHODOLOGY: The PhD in Pediatric Physical Therapy requires a minimum of 96 credits hours beyond the baccalaureate degree or 60 hours beyond the masters degree, successful completion of comprehensive and qualifying examinations and a dissertation. The primary emphasis of the program is to prepare leaders for research and teaching. Students are required to take core courses in pediatric physical therapy, research, and teaching. MCHB trainees take courses on Family-Centered Care, Health Policy, and Service Learning and participate in a MCH topic discussion group. They participate with the faculty in providing technical assistance in the community, and receive the mentorship necessary to develop research and teaching skills, and to establish a record of publication. Two continuing education courses, one at an advanced and one at an introductory level, are offered annually to enhance pediatric physical therapy. A pediatric concentration is offered in the Post Professional DPT Program. A pediatric concentration, clinical affiliations/internship, and research practica are offered in the entry-level program.

D. EVALUATION: Student evaluation includes: tests and papers; comprehensive and qualifying examination; and proposal and dissertation defense. Curriculum evaluation includes: course evaluations; student and faculty review; and post graduation surveys. Community evaluation includes: publications; presentations; grant funding; awards; technical assistance; student employment; input from participants of the continuing education programs; and review by the program's Advisory Committee.

E. RESULTS: Eleven students received their PhD and accepted university faculty positions. Sixteen received their master's degree and the majority are providing pediatric physical therapy clinical service.

F. PUBLICATIONS / PRODUCTS: Faculty, graduates, and students published sixty journal articles on pediatric physical therapy scholarship / research, conducted over 220 presentations, provided consultation for over 60 community agencies, and served over 4000 children and families.

G. DISSEMINATION: Project findings have been disseminated at the local, state, and national levels through professional and community publications and presentations.

H. FUTURE PLANS /FOLLOW-UP: The program will continue through university support and research funding.

I. TYPE OF SUPPORT AND RESOURCES NEEDED TO REPLICATE:
University infrastructure is needed to support a PhD program. Faculty, with expertise in pediatric physical therapy, and staff support are the driving force behind the project. Funding for graduate tuition and stipends are essential to enable pediatric physical therapists to minimize employment while they immerse themselves in doctoral education.