

## Career and Continuing Professional Education Intentions of Physiotherapy Students at Zagreb School of Health Studies

IVA SKLEMPE; M. RADMAN; J. STIPETIC; M. MILETIC

*B. Berse 1/50  
43 000 Bjelovar  
Croatia*

**PURPOSE:** This research deals with professional education and career plans of physiotherapy students at Zagreb School of Health Studies. We wanted to examine if the new generation of physiotherapy students is ready to accept the challenge of developing profession and continuing education after graduation. **RELEVANCE:** Considering the new law on higher education in Croatia (accepted in 2003), which for the first time gives the opportunity to organise postgraduate education in physiotherapy, this study might contribute to development and improvement of the new curricula. **SUBJECTS:** 1st, 2nd and 3rd year physiotherapy students during academic year of 2003/2004. 222 out of 250 students took the questionnaire, out of which 69.8% female and 30.2% male. The dominant age of the subjects was 19 (range 18-28). 41.4% of subjects were 1st year students, 31.1% 2nd year, and 27.5% 3rd year students. **METHODS AND MATERIALS:** For the purpose of this study, we developed a questionnaire with 21 items concerning subjects' career and professional education plans. **ANALYSES:** The data obtained was entered and analyzed using the SPSS statistical package. **RESULTS:** Most of the students took the physiotherapy studies because of their inner interest in the area (81.1%). 93.7% of students want to work in the field after graduation. If there was a postgraduate study in Croatia, 70% of students would take it. 87.7% of students feel the need for continuing professional education and 98.2% think it's necessary to be up to date with professional literature. Average interest in scientific work (1-5 scale) is 3.41, while self-assessed knowledge of the research process is 2.74. Most students want to work in pediatrics and sports, and to have their own private practice. **CONCLUSIONS:** Physiotherapy students at our School are interested in postgraduate continuing professional education. Most students want to take formal postgraduate study. Many students expressed the interest for research, but what they lack is knowledge about research methodology.