Interprofessional Education at Niigata University of Health and Welfare

Implementation of an Integrated General Seminar and Future Prospects

Rieko Oshiki1, Akira Magara2, Emiko Hoshino3, Yasuyuki Nishihara4, Seiya Masegi4, Eikichi Watanabe5, Masato Kaibuchi6, Yoichi Nagai6, and Hideaki E. Takahashi7

Summary

Since its establishment, Niigata University of Health and Welfare has been actively involved in interprofessional education: Basic Seminars I and II (introductory programs for first-year students); basic lectures on health care and welfare (a core curriculum for students in all departments); and the Integrated General Seminar for fourth-year students. We herein report the significance of the program and the educational achievements. The Integrated General Seminar was held in 2004 on a

1Department of Physiotherapy, Faculty of Medical Technology, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Niigata, Japan
2Department of Prosthetics & Orthotics and Assistive Technology, Faculty of Medical Technology, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Niigata, Japan
3Department of Social Welfare, Faculty of Social Welfare, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Niigata, Japan
4Department of Health and Sports, Faculty of Health Sciences, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Niigata, Japan
5Department of Health and Nutrition, Faculty of Health Sciences, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Niigata, Japan
6Department of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Medical Technology, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Niigata, Japan
7Niigata University of Health and Welfare, 1398 Shimamicho, Kita-ku, Niigata 950-3198, Japan

Tel. +81-25-257-4455; Fax +81-25-257-4456
e-mail: takahasi@nuhw.ac.jp

Correspondence to: H.E. Takahashi
trial basis for the first fourth-year students and formally introduced in 2008. The number of students who attend the Integrated General Seminar is increasing: from 70 students in 2007 to 100 students in 2008. The seminar encourages students to develop specialized skills while recognizing the expertise of those from other departments and learning from them; they also learn to design and implement care and assessment plans for patients using disease and lifestyle models. Students learn the basic methods and procedures necessary to provide patients with care in collaboration with other health care professionals through simulations of multidisciplinary care.

Key words Interprofessional education ⋅ Interprofessional work ⋅ Health care and welfare

1 Profile and Mission of the University

Since the end of World War II, Japan has seen a steady increase in the average life expectancy, with priority being given to longevity. During the 1980s, however, quality of life (QOL) started to attract public attention. As the Japanese population ages during the 21st century, it is essential to provide consistent, integrated health care and welfare services. Today’s advanced, sophisticated, specialized medical services are provided by a variety of health care professionals; and it is becoming necessary to train a large number of welfare specialists to address the aging population. In April 2001, Niigata University of Health and Welfare was established to meet these demands in the society.

The mission of the university is to train excellent quality of life (QOL) supporters. Thus, the school aims to train professionals who will help promote the QOL of care recipients, patients, and the elderly. Qualities required for the QOL supporter are compassion, brightness, enthusiasm, creativity, and cooperative skills.

With the purpose of enhancing close collaboration among medical and welfare professionals, the university established departments related to medical technology, social welfare, and nutrition. Until 2004, the university consisted of two faculties (Medical Technology and Social Welfare) and five departments. The Medical Technology Faculty included the following departments: Physical Therapy; Occupational Therapy; Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences; and Health and Nutrition. The Social Welfare Faculty included the Department of Social Welfare. As of 2009, the university has three faculties and eight departments, with the Departments of Health and Sports (2005), Nursing (2006), and Prosthetics & Orthotics and Assistive Technology (2007) being established. The university was reorganized into three faculties in 2007, when the Faculty of Health Sciences, being added, included the Departments of Health and Nutrition, Health and Sports, and Nursing. The master’s program of the Graduate School of Health and Welfare was started in 2005 and the doctoral program in 2007.

Since its establishment, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, designed to train specialists with advanced expertise who will closely cooperate with other