**Education**

**Intercollegiate Board for Sport and Exercise Medicine**

Establishing a new medical discipline in the United Kingdom must meet a series of criteria laid down by the European Medical Specialist Qualification Order, the General Medical Council, and the Specialist Training Authority (STA). Enthusiastic practitioners of sport and exercise medicine must meet the demands of these bodies before the National Health Service medical education unit will recommend that the secretary of state for health should amend schedule 2 of the Specialist Medical Order.

There is a reluctance in the STA to increase the number of specialties. Any proposal to support the recognition of sport and exercise medicine will need to be soundly based and closely argued, demonstrating that an identified need for the specialty can be met by appropriately trained doctors.

Postgraduate medical training in the United Kingdom is based on doctors spending one year as a preregistration house officer followed by a minimum of two years general professional/basic specialty training giving a breadth of experience before the doctor chooses a higher specialty training programme. These supervised programmes vary from a minimum of one year in general practice to four to six years in hospital-based or community medicine specialties. Thereafter, the doctor applies to the STA for recognition that his/her training has been completed. This entitles the doctor to have his/her name added to the specialist medical register with an agreed suffix acknowledging the specialty.

This is the background against which the Intercollegiate Academic Board for Sport and Exercise Medicine was established with the support of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges in April 1998. The board’s first priority has been to develop a diploma examination, building on the experience of the Scottish Royal Colleges, which will set the minimum standards of knowledge and “touch line skills” for doctors practising sport and exercise medicine. This examination is pitched at a similar standard to the membership examinations in medicine and surgery, and acknowledges the completion of basic specialty training. In due course, the examination will be an entry requirement for higher specialty training in sport and exercise medicine.

The first part of the examination consists of a multiple choice question paper (two hours duration), of which about one third of the questions cover the basic sciences, and three short essay questions (one hour). Candidates must pass part I before they enter part II, which consists of a 30-minute oral followed by two 30-minute structured clinical examination designed to assess core and clinical skills.

The board has issued a syllabus and reading list to help the candidates, who come from a wide range of backgrounds, to prepare for the examination. Details of suitable educational courses run by the British Association of Sport and Exercise Medicine and several universities can be obtained from the National Sports Medicine Institute.

The board has clarified the steps that need to be put in place to establish higher specialty training programmes in sport and exercise medicine. Individual specialty advisory committees supervise and accredit training programmes, trainers, and trainees before recommending a successful trainee to the STA. A common feature of all specialties is that trainees can apply for a flexible year to undertake additional relevant training or research. Rehabilitation medicine currently allows trainees to spend a year in sport and exercise medicine. The Intercollegiate Board of Sport and Exercise Medicine hopes to persuade more specialty advisory committees, ranging from orthopaedics and trauma to rheumatology, occupational medicine, or public health to view sport and exercise medicine as a suitable flexible training year.

Developing a four year full time higher specialty training programme in sport and exercise medicine that will meet the requirements of the STA, as outlined above, will require an enormous commitment, looking at European, North American, and Australasian experience as well as coordinating clinical and educational opportunities. The number of centres able to offer a full programme will be limited. The Intercollegiate Academic Board of Sport and Exercise Medicine would welcome approaches from centres who would be prepared to develop suitable programmes for what will initially be a small number of trainees to meet the requirements of Great Britain and Ireland. The momentum to develop one year and four year higher specialty training programmes has recently been accelerated by correspondence between Ms Kate Hoey, MP, Minister for Sport and the Chairman of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges which accepts that sport and exercise medicine is ready to develop along these lines.

The board is also considering how best to recognise the continuing competence of doctors practising sport and exercise medicine. The procedures to document the appraisal, revalidation, continuing medical educational requirements, and professional development of doctors in Great Britain and Ireland is still in its infancy. The Intercollegiate Academic Board of Sport and Exercise Medicine expects to make a positive contribution to the debate as well as supporting doctors practising sport and exercise medicine as a specialty interest or on a full-time basis.

The board will be available, as the professional body responsible for standards in sport and exercise medicine, to advise colleges, postgraduate deans, and regional advisers in general practice on the quality of programmes suitable for continuing medical education credits or postgraduate educational allowances. The board may also act as the body that will record the portfolio of doctors who do not naturally fall under the umbrella of one of the more established colleges or faculties.

In summary, the programme being pursued by the Intercollegiate Academic Board of Sport and Exercise Medicine is designed to:

(a) recognise basic specialty training in sport and exercise medicine;
(b) promote one year flexible training opportunities in a wide range of higher specialty training programmes;
(c) develop a four year higher specialty training programme in sport and exercise medicine;
(d) gain recognition for the new specialty by the STA;
(e) establish a system to recognise the continuing competence of doctors practising sport and exercise medicine.

The Intercollegiate Academic Board of Sport and Exercise Medicine must report its progress and plans for future development to the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges in July 2000. The plans summarised above will be the basis of the submission that will hopefully be approved and give further momentum to the eventual recognition of sport and exercise medicine as a fully fledged specialty in Great Britain and Ireland.

Chairman

DONALD A D MACLEOD
Postgraduate medical education: methodology

Sports medicine is a relatively new and rapidly growing specialty that as yet does not have an organised postgraduate training programme. Currently, doctors enter sports medicine from a variety of backgrounds and rely on ad hoc training. If sports medicine is to be encompassed in the NHS, it is important to address the issue of training and organise effective postgraduate training in the specialty. Sports medicine has the opportunity to develop a training programme from a “clean slate”, uncomplicated by existing practice. The specialty therefore has the potential to learn from other examples of good practice and avoid some of the problems experienced with higher specialist training in other specialties.

Postgraduate medical education refers to education provided after full registration and before consultant appointment or equivalent career grade. Medical education should be seen as a continuum, with postgraduate medical education supplementing undergraduate education and being continued after appointment to a career post as continuing medical education.1 There have been major reforms in the United Kingdom’s postgraduate medical education during the last decade, prompted in part by demands for greater harmonisation with other European states.2 There has also been increasing realisation of the importance of self-directed learning and development of life-long learning skills to allow the doctor to keep pace with continually changing medical knowledge.3 Previous ad hoc individually organised postgraduate medical education has been replaced in various specialties by structured training programmes providing shorter and more focused training with a predominance of education over service provision.4

Such training programmes are overseen and regularly monitored by joint higher training committees or the equivalent set up by the royal colleges to ensure that standards of training are maintained across the country. The committees lay down the criteria for training in the individual specialties and approve training programmes on the basis of suitable facilities in terms of consultant supervision, staffing levels, clinical experience, and opportunities for research. Likewise the committees grant certificates of accreditation (CSST) to trainees on satisfactory completion of specialist training to mark the end of training and show that the doctor has met the requirements for independent practice.

The Department of Health report entitled Training for the future made several recommendations about higher specialist training.4 The training programmes should have clearly defined entry criteria and published curricula with clearly stated objectives. The aim should be to convert the trainee into a doctor ready to take up a consultant post and capable of independent unsupervised practice. Training should create a doctor who can keep pace with the rapid advances in medicine, recognise the patient's perspective, appreciate the skills of other health professionals, and work effectively in a team. The programme therefore needs to address not just clinical skills and knowledge, but also other aspects of clinical competence expected of a doctor such as communication skills, attitude, team working, audit, research, teaching, and self-directed learning. The training should offer closely supervised practical experience and protected time for both formal teaching and private study. Protected time for teaching applies to both the trainees and the trainers. The trainee should be provided with support. Every trainee should be nominated a specific educational adviser who can offer a channel for communication and give guidance and support. Current training programmes vary as to how they interpret this: some nominate a consultant trainer for each subspecialty attachment, others nominate a supervisor for the entire training programme. The latter arrangement would seem to offer the opportunity to establish a better support mechanism, but care needs to be taken to ensure appropriate selection of a supervisor for the individual trainee.

Teaching the teachers
Teaching is of vital importance, and those consultants who take on this role should be highly motivated; they should be taught how to teach and their efforts should be valued and rewarded. Teaching offered to trainers should include effective teaching techniques, appraisal and assessment skills, and giving constructive feedback. Teachers need to learn to be facilitators of learning rather than providers of information, and should encourage students to become self-directed learners with the desire and skills for lifelong learning. To achieve this, teachers must provide students with appropriate direction and guidance within a constructive and supportive educational environment. Such skills are generic to all specialties. Relevant courses are becoming more widely available and are usually set up by universities or royal colleges. Consultant trainers need to be made aware of the availability and relevance of such courses and should be encouraged to attend them.

Feedback, appraisal, and assessment
There should be regular two-way feedback between the trainee and trainer, to allow improvements both in the trainee’s learning and in the training offered. Training programmes should include integrated and structured appraisal and assessment mechanisms. Assessment should include both formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment should occur during a period of training to provide timely feedback to the trainee with the prime intention of helping him or her to progress. Summative assessment occurs at the end of a period of training to check that the objectives have been achieved. Trainers should also promote self-assessment by encouraging trainees to reflect on and critically evaluate their own work, so that they can identify their own strengths and weaknesses. The content of assessment should reflect the objectives of the training programme. Assessment should be competence-based and criterion referenced. This involves the setting of clear standards expected of the trainee at various stages in their training. Assessment has proved difficult in many specialties, reflecting the current lack of standards and the difficulties both trainees and trainers find in giving constructive feedback. In addition to formal feedback, there should be formal appraisal sessions, with planned confidential meetings taking place between the trainee and trainer at these times. These meetings provide an opportunity to step back from daily work in order to review and discuss performance and progress, so as to agree an educational action plan designed to help the student to progress.

Subspecialty training
The final years of training should be flexible and adapted to the individual trainee’s needs so as to allow acquisition of subspeciality training or general training according to the
trainee’s future career plans. Training centres should be encouraged to offer subspecialty training in areas of particular local expertise. Currently, such opportunities are not maximised in all specialties or training schemes. Likewise the trainee should be encouraged to transfer between centres to achieve a period of further training in his/her special interest, but again at present such transfer is not always made easy for trainees.

Role of research in training

It is generally agreed that an understanding of the principles of research and the ability to assess critically the results of published work are essential attributes of a doctor. The skills required include developing an inquiring mind, learning how to design studies, managing projects, collecting data, analysing results, writing reports, and presenting at scientific meetings. Active participation in research is the most effective means of acquiring such skills. All doctors should therefore be encouraged to undertake research during their training. Unfortunately some of the research currently performed by trainees is of questionable educational value. Common problems contributing to this are poor support and unsatisfactory supervision. Trainees should be supervised by a consultant with an interest in research. There should also be flexibility in the system to allow the trainee the choice to take time out from clinical training in order to carry out a period of research without this adversely affecting his/her future career.

If sports medicine can institute all of the above, it has the potential to develop a model training programme for higher specialist training.

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The role of a masters degree as part of higher training in sports and exercise medicine or why do a masters?

Sports medicine is now recognised as a specialty in some European countries. As an emerging discipline, sports and exercise medicine needs to develop a solid academic footing if it is to gain acceptance by the Royal Colleges in Great Britain and Ireland. A higher professional university degree is a requirement for work in sports and exercise medicine or why do a masters?

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Trinity College, Dublin masters course and the diploma in sports and exercise medicine at Bath University.

A full time degree taught partly by research, with academic standards upheld by university external examiners, allows the clinician to develop skills that would be impossible to develop in full or part time clinical practice. The new Intercollegiate Academic Board of Sport and Exercise Medicine plans to develop a curriculum and a four year higher specialty training in sport and exercise medicine.

Fellowship in Sports Medicine

The fellowship, first offered in 1982, is multifaceted and includes clinical exposure, course work, research, teaching, community work, and medical education. The clinical time is split between primary care sports medicine, orthopaedics, and physiotherapy, with the emphasis on primary care.

The fellowship, once familiar with the specific sports oriented history and physical, assesses and reviews the cases with one of the primary care doctors and is available at follow up. Training in research is an important part of the programme, and the fellow is required to complete, or have completed, a programme of study leading to a Master of Science degree. The fellow is also expected to organise for publication a clinical or basic science research paper. This paper is often generated from the thesis required for the masters degree.

Sports medicine courses are offered through the School of Human Kinetics at the University of British Columbia on a credit basis. They cover all musculoskeletal and organ systems and how these are affected by sports injury. A further component of the fellows training is teaching, both within and outside the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre, with family practice residents and in the medical and lay communities where the fellow is encouraged to participate in presenting lectures and seminars on a myriad of sports medicine topics. The fellow also participates in a number of sports medicine conferences organised each year by the centre and in national and international conferences.

Community service in the form of medical coverage for a team (either varsity or community based) and for sporting events (tournaments, runs, athletic meets, etc) is also a requirement for successful completion of the programme. The format is flexible, with the fellow spending 2.5 days per week in clinical training and the remainder of the time for course work, research, and sports medicine coverage.

We encourage full time participation in the programme. The fellows take the Canadian Academy of Sport Medicine diploma examination on completion of their training at the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre.

The German situation

Over the past century, education in sports medicine and exercise physiology in Germany has undergone various modifications. Furthermore, the reunification of the country over the last decade has caused political and economic changes resulting in fundamental and continuing changes in education and in the professions of general doctors, clinically orientated specialists, and basic and applied scientists in the field of sports medicine and exercise physiology. Currently, doctors in Germany do not have the opportunity to specialise in sports medicine. However, the introduction of such professional training is continuously being discussed. Every fully trained doctor can acquire additional certification in sports medicine. This consists of a course of 120 lessons on theory and practice in sports medicine, including basics and special aspects such as children, top level sports, prevention of injury and rehabilitation, psychology, movement science, biomechanics, and pedagogics, plus 120 lessons on the theory and practice of sports and exercise, covering areas such as prevention of injury and rehabilitation, recreational and elite sports, and also lifestyle, fun, and extreme events. This professional training is completed during a one year appointment as a part time team doctor or a comparable post. Alternatively, the certification in sports medicine can be attained during tenure of a one year full time position in a specially licenced medical unit, such as one of the very few state institutes of sports medicine, Olympic centres, and several university departments. Two years of training on the job as a clinician are a further prerequisite for the certificate.

Academic education in sports medicine and exercise physiology is also of interest to a broad spectrum of non-physicians. German universities provide numerous different courses in the field of physical education. This is also changing for the following reasons. The physical education system is still mainly focused on training to become a teacher specialised for selected school types, and jobs not associated with school teaching are rare. Up until now, there has been no other accepted field of professional activity that requires a highly qualified academic or scientific background. In addition, our educational system is not compatible with the internationally favoured Anglo-American system. This has encouraged us to reorganise our long standing diploma qualification and implement internationally accepted undergraduate and postgraduate opportunities. At selected universities, the European Network of Sport Science in higher Education using existing concepts such as the European Master in Health and Fitness is under discussion and construction.

German sports medicine and exercise physiology research units, like university institutes, do not exclusively
Sports and exercise medicine in Finland

Sports and exercise medicine has a long tradition in Finland. Organised medical care of athletes has been available since the 1930s. The Finnish Society of Sports Medicine was founded in 1939 and is probably the oldest nationwide sports medicine society in the world. Today, the society has about 500 physician members (5.2 million population) and publishes, along with the Finnish Society of Sports Physical Therapists, its own journal (three or four issues a year). The society supports congresses, the national Scandinavian Congress on Medicine and Science in Sports, and about 10 other sports institutes provide facilities for research, education, fitness testing, and/or sports medicine services. One or two private (orthopaedic) sports medicine clinics also operate in the largest cities of Finland.

In 1946, the first sports medical centre was opened at the Olympic Stadium of Helsinki. In 1956, a similar unit was founded in Turku. Today, Finland has six sports and exercise medicine research centres funded by the Ministry of Education (Helsinki, Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Oulu, and Kuopio). Each has a staff of between five and eight full time workers and a varying number of part time workers such as consulting doctors. The tasks of the full time staff are to carry out research work in sports and exercise medicine (research should cover about 50% of the work), offer sports medical services, exercise tests, laboratory services, doping control, and physical therapy services to competitive and recreational athletes (25%), look after resident education, and organise symposia and lectures for doctors, medical and physical therapy students, coaches, athletes, and the general public (25%). In addition to these centres, the University of Jyväskylä, Research Institute of Olympic Sports, and about 10 other sports institutes provide facilities for research, education, fitness testing, and/or sports medicine services. One or two private (orthopaedic) sports medicine clinics also operate in the largest cities of Finland.

In 1985, sports and exercise medicine was accepted as a full university based medical specialty in Finland—that is, in line with the other large specialties such as surgery, internal medicine, and paediatrics. From the very beginning, it was recognised that the specialty should be more than just taking care of sporting elite: the basis of the new specialty was accepted to be public health work and medical care of all people who exercise and improving the general well-being and health of the population through promotion of an active lifestyle. Until 1998, the education programme in sports and exercise medicine lasted six years, but after the major reorganisation of medical specialties in Finland in 1998, sports and exercise medicine was reduced to a five year curriculum. This would appear to be a backward step, but considering that during the 1998 reorganisation about 50% of the medical specialties were abolished, the five year curriculum was actually a major victory for sports and exercise medicine in Finland.

Thus, after the six years in medical school, residents of sports and exercise medicine serve an additional five years in a specialisation programme. Eight resident positions are available, and the programme includes one year of general training (as a general practitioner in the community based primary care centres) and four years of specialist training. The entire education programme is based on general practice—that is, the specialty of sports and exercise medicine in Finland is not a subspecialty or fellowship of orthopaedic surgery (or any other full specialty)—although 1–1.5 years of the specialist training has to be served in at least two of the following areas: surgery, orthopaedics and traumatology, physical medicine and rehabilitation, internal medicine (including rheumatology), clinical physiology, clinical chemistry, paediatrics, neurology, or radiology.

The remaining 2.5–3 years of specialist training is carried out as a resident of the specialty. These resident posts are located in the six sports and exercise medicine research centres mentioned above. During this period of training, the residents take part in practical work as well as a wide selection of instructional courses and symposia on sports and exercise medicine—as a participant as well as a speaker. It is also stated in the curriculum that they must participate in research work during the residency. As a result, many of the resident doctors publish their academic thesis during or after their residency. The specialist training culminates in the national specialist examination, which
Sports medicine education in Australia

Fellowship of the Australian College of Sports Physicians (FACSP)

This is recognised as the specialist training programme in sports medicine in both New Zealand and Australia, although government recognition as a medical specialty in Australia is still awaited. In New Zealand, sports medicine has been recognised as a specialist discipline.

The term “sports physician” is reserved for Fellows of the Australian College of Sports Physicians (ACSP) and “sports medicine practitioner” is used for all other doctors with a qualification—for example, Master of Sports Medicine, Diploma of Sports Medicine—and/or interest in sports medicine.

Fellowship of the ACSP is obtained after a minimum of seven years approved postgraduate medical experience and training. Trainees must be registered to practise in Australia.

An initial three years of internship or hospital residency and primary care experience is prescribed before a prospective trainee can sit the part 1 fellowship examination of the college. This consists of two three hour multiple choice examination papers which cover anatomy, physiology, radiology, and pathology. It is a college specific examination but equivalence has been granted for part 1 examinations of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians and the Royal Australian College of Surgeons.

Successful completion of these papers confers eligibility to apply for a training position with the Advanced Training Program of the ACSP. At the time of writing, there are 11 training posts in Australia and New Zealand. All teaching is carried out by Fellows of the ACSP and fellows of other specialist colleges appointed by the ACSP, and advanced training takes at least four years. The requirements of each trainee (registrar in sports medicine) are demanding and training takes at least four years. The requirements of each specialist trainee (registrar in sports medicine) are demanding and training takes at least four years. The requirements of each specialist college appointed by the ACSP, and advanced training takes at least four years. The requirements of each specialist college appointed by the ACSP, and advanced training takes at least four years.

Fellows of the ACSP are used to indicate Fellowship of the College and expertise as a sports physician.

Master of Sports Medicine (University of Canberra/Australian Institute of Sport)

This degree is offered to medical graduates from around the world as a fee paying course. No medical registration in Australia is required. The course is conducted over one calendar year at the University of Canberra and the Australian Institute of Sport.

Four nine week terms (900 hours of teaching) cover the basic sciences (physiology, biomechanics, etc), traumatic and overuse injuries in sport and exercise, internal medicine, and special considerations in sport such as doping, medicolegal aspects, special groups, and team coverage. Teaching is face to face in the classroom and at the bedside in sports medicine clinics, and a component of the course includes laboratory experience in cardiology, chest medicine, rheumatology, and podiatry. There is also a compulsory research element which necessitates a comprehensive literature review and research proposal.

Examinations are conducted at the end of each term by written papers (short essays) and by a final clinical
Melbourne in the early 1900s. Initially, registration to pract-
area of physiotherapy began in Australia at the University of
professional development activities.
sports physiotherapy experience can be gained through
in the neuromusculoskeletal area. After graduation, further
course focuses on theoretical knowledge and practical skills
otherapists in sports and exercise begins in undergraduate
the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. Educating physi-
ery and research in Australia, a country renowned for its
Physiotherapists play a major role in sports medicine deliv-
and research in Australia, a country renowned for its
sporting achievements and sporting culture. Sports
education requiring an emphasis on di-
with real patients, and a viva voce examination
(with a range of medical imaging, pathology tests, ECG,
and lung function tests, etc).

The masters degree is accredited by the ACSP towards
advances for training by its registrars.

Master of Medicine (Sports Medicine) (Edith
Cowan University)
This degree is offered by course work as a distance educa-
to medical graduates around the world. It
is operated by Edith Cowan University (in Perth, Western
Australia), and is serviced by the Australian Institute of
Sport. It is a fee paying course and can be completed in
a minimum of two years. A number of modules have been
prepared which cover the basic sciences (anatomy, physiol-
ogy, nutrition, psychology, etc.), research methodology and
statistics, trauma and overuse injury, aspects of internal
medicine, and special topics such as doping in sport. Each
module comes as prepared text and supporting references,
together with recommended reading and core texts.

A Diploma in Medicine (Sports Medicine) has been
offered to those who have completed the first half of the
course.

Examination is by “closed book” short essay questions at
the end of each module, and a component of practical
teaching (and assessment) is specified before either a
diploma or masters degree is conferred.

Certificate of Advanced Sports Medicine (Sports
Medicine Australia South Australian branch)
This course is being proposed for CME accreditation by
the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
(RACGP) and is intended for the development of skills in
sports medicine by general practitioners. Sports Medicine
Australia is a national body comprising clinicians,
scientists, educators, and administrators with an interest in
sports medicine. It is essentially multidisciplinary and aims
to serve its own members by the provision of education
services and to serve the community.

The Certificate is a fee paying course which is conducted
as a set of three compulsory unit modules. The modules
cover the scientific basis of clinical sports medicine—for
example, anatomy, physiology, nutrition—special consid-
erations in sports medicine—for example, soft tissue injury,
drugs in sport, screening, dental problems—and clinical

sports injury management (including diagnosis and
management of injury, data acquisition, and research).
The time commitment over the three units totals 74
contact hours of teaching plus 80 hours practical
experience. Teaching is carried out in small groups, using
formal lectures, case studies, videotapes, and clinical soft-
ware. Teachers are drawn from general practice, orthopae-
dics, musculoskeletal medicine, and sports medicine. Can-
didates spend time in sports medical clinics, operating
theatres, and rehabilitation centres.

Assessment is by take home examination papers, practical
assessments, review of research activity, and self evaluation.

University of New South Wales courses in sports
medicine
The University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney
offers three fee paying distance education courses in sports
medicine. These are available to medical graduates around
the world.

The Graduate Certificate in Sports Medicine comprises
four subjects (sports injuries 1 and 2, medical applications of
exercise 1 and 2) which are delivered over one to two years.

The Graduate Diploma in Sports Medicine covers the
content of the Graduate Certificate and adds four modules
on applied sports medicine, sports science, nutrition, phar-
macology, psychology, and clinical biomechanics. This is
presented over two to three years.

The Masters Degree in Sports Medicine is offered over
two to three years and adds research methods and a
research project to the content of the Graduate Diploma.

Teaching uses videotape, CD-ROM, email, and web-
based teaching and standard texts and reference papers.
Face to face teaching is arranged, and progress is
monitored with log books and a case history. Examination
is by supervised written examinations at the end of each 14
week teaching period (which covers one “subject”). A final
clinical examination is structured on the objective
structured clinical examination (OSCE) model.

Teaching staff at UNSW comprise sports physicians and
researchers.

PETER FRICKER
Acting Coordinator Sports Science and Sports Medicine AIS,
Chair of Sports Medicine,
University of Canberra,
Canberra, Australia

Educating Australian physiotherapists: striving for excellence in
sport and exercise medicine

Physiotherapists play a major role in sports medicine deliv-
ery and research in Australia, a country renowned for its
sporting achievements and sporting culture. Sports
medicine in this country is a relatively young specialty
which has undergone rapid development particularly since
the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games. Educating physi-
otherapists in sports and exercise begins in undergraduate
training where a large proportion of the physiotherapy
course focuses on theoretical knowledge and practical skills
in the neuromusculoskeletal area. After graduation, further
sports physiotherapy experience can be gained through
formal postgraduate university qualifications or a variety of
professional development activities.

The first formal education programme for students in the
area of physiotherapy began in Australia at the University of
Melbourne in the early 1900s. Initially, registration to prac-
tice physiotherapy in Australia was licensed under the Mas-
sage Registration Board and the Massage Act. In the 1970s,
der under the auspices of the Physiotherapy Registration Board,
physiotherapists in Australia were granted primary contact
practitioner status. This was a first in the world for
physiotherapy. The responsibility associated with primary
practitioner status had a profound effect on undergraduate
education requiring an emphasis on differential diagnosis by
way of clinical reasoning and clinical decision making.

Undergraduate training
In Australia in the year 2000, seven universities offer
physiotherapy undergraduate programmes with about 650
students in total graduating each year. Two more
programmes have started and will have graduates in the
near future. A further university has advertised for a new
chair of physiotherapy, and other universities are considering establishing programmes. This is a clear demonstration of the popularity of physiotherapy as a choice of career for Australian students. In particular, many students are interested in the area of sports physiotherapy. The programmes are very competitive to enter and the students entering the programmes come from the top 2-5% of secondary school leavers. There is also a great demand for places from students who have completed other degrees and wish to enter physiotherapy—for example, science and human movement (physical education). Although each university has its own entry requirements, these would all include English and a variety of biological and physical science subjects. At present, all physiotherapy programmes in Australia are four year bachelor degrees. Plans are in place at a number of universities for entry level masters programmes.

Physiotherapy curriculums from all universities must now be accredited by the Australian Council of Physiotherapy Regulating Authorities (ACOPRA). There are no national examination requirements for graduating physiotherapists, as the accreditation process is rigorous covering all aspects of physiotherapy programmes.

In the environment in which physiotherapists will work in the 21st century, graduates should understand the need and have the desire to be lifelong learners responsible for their own professional development. To continue to strive for excellence, educational programmes need to reflect the demands of the community for health professionals well versed in evidence based practice with the ability to communicate effectively with their stakeholders. With these societal requirements, the emphasis throughout Australian undergraduate physiotherapy educational programmes is a framework of study that focuses on biomedicine and science subjects integrated with extensive clinical experience and evidence based physiotherapy practice.

Acknowledging the fact that most Australian physiotherapists work in the area of musculoskeletal and sports physiotherapy, emphasis in the undergraduate programmes is on those subjects particularly relevant to sport and exercise including biomechanics, kinesiology, physiology, and in particular exercise physiology, anatomy and applied biomechanics, neuroscience, motor control, and soft tissue pathologies. The understanding of normal structure and function and therefore the ability to analyse abnormal structure and function is a major element of sports physiotherapy practice. Added to this, students develop skills in the management of sporting injuries, exercise prescription, injury prevention, and health promotion. Many undergraduate students gain first aid and sports trainer qualifications in order to further their experience in sports coverage. Such programmes ensure that the graduating physiotherapist is well placed to take a significant role in physiotherapy practice. The multidisciplinary nature of physiotherapy practice and an understanding of the need for lifelong learning. This is a competency based model which is very broad in its scope and requires members to be responsible for their own continuing professional development in a framework of continuing education. The APA facilitates this in a number of ways. In 1999, it introduced a mandatory continuing education programme to promote excellence in physiotherapy practice and an understanding of the need for lifelong learning. This is a competency based model which is very broad in its scope and requires members to be responsible for their own continuing professional development in a framework of continuing education. The APA has also accepted in principle a Charter of Educational Standards. This document facilitates the APA to work with universities and national special groups to promote and support appropriate standards for the training of physiotherapists in areas of clinical specialty such as sports physiotherapy. The APA Charter of Educational Standards is based on the relation between course outcomes and defined levels of competency. This strong link between the professional association and the universities acknowledges that both sectors provide different ongoing educational opportunities that allow physiotherapists to be constantly enhancing their practice.

Sports physiotherapy was one of the first specialty areas developed within the APA during the 1960s. It is currently one of the largest clinical areas in the association representing practitioners working in all sectors including private practice, sporting clubs, the national and state sports institutes, public hospitals, and community centres. Members of the National Sports Physiotherapy Group have access to continuing education in the form of lectures, seminars, workshops, and sports courses. They are encouraged to participate in organised sports coverage and are required to maintain current first aid certificates.

The APA is in the midst of developing a process of specialisation, which will encourage and enable their members to continue to develop their expertise in their areas of interest. This specialisation process will be multi-level and will reflect formal postgraduate qualifications as well as continuing education. The APA Sports Physiotherapist title is awarded to physiotherapists who attain a nationally recognised academic and clinical standard paving the way for entry into the specialisation process. Criteria include involvement with sporting teams, coverage of sports events,
continuing professional education in sports physiotherapy, teaching in the area, and promotion of the discipline through research, publications, community service, and community education in sports injury prevention and management. APA sports physiotherapists maintain their title through a mandatory continuing professional development scheme. Benefits of achieving the title include raised public awareness of sports physiotherapy and the specific skills that title holders possess, enhanced marketing opportunities, recognition of the title by outside agencies, and greater opportunities for employment in the sports and exercise medicine setting.

**Participation in other activities**

In Australia, the multidisciplinary nature of sports medicine has been facilitated by the establishment of Sports Medicine Australia (SMA). This organisation is Australia’s peak authority on all issues relating to sports medicine, sports science, and exercise for the physically active. It is a national umbrella body representing a membership base of health professionals, sporting organisations, and individual participants at both the grass roots and the elite level. Physiotherapists show a commitment to excellence in sports medicine by their level of participation in SMA. For example, membership (of the 3340 members in SMA, 22% are physiotherapists), committee participation, and organisation of and attendance at the annual scientific conference. In the past six years, three physiotherapists have been recipients of the Young Investigator Award for outstanding research at the SMA conference. Many other physiotherapists also present their research at this forum.

**Conclusion**

Educating physiotherapists in sports and exercise science continues to develop as new knowledge and evidence based research is made available. There is a strong ethos in physiotherapy for continuing education and professional development. The commitment by the APA and universities to continue to develop programmes that strive for excellence ensures that Australian physiotherapists are at the forefront of sports medicine practice and research.

**What is a sports medicine specialist? A pilot study**

**Aim**

Sports medicine is a rapidly expanding and developing specialty in the United Kingdom, but there is, currently, no defined training programme or higher career specialist qualification for those wishing to work in this field. A Medline search using keywords “sports medicine”, “specialist”, “training”, and “qualities” found no literature to help define this specialism. The aim of the study was to help define the role of the sports medicine specialist. The specific objective was to seek consensus among those practitioners already working in the field on those qualities considered desirable or essential in a sports medicine specialist.

**Method**

The study used a modified Delphi technique to seek the views of all 13 doctors in Northern Ireland who possess the basic qualification of a Diploma in Sports Medicine and who work in a variety of clinical settings. In the first round, we invited these doctors to record all those qualities they considered important for a sports medicine specialist under 11 headings (table 1) identified from similar Delphi studies. We included examples of these studies to help illustrate how this technique had been applied in defining other professional roles and also relevant consensus statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Areas of expertise considered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Access, availability, and administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Clinical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Education, teaching, and research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Team work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Use of resources and investigations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Communication skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Application of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Treatment modalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Self management skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Practical sports applications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Top 18 rated qualities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>Can ensure injured athlete is transferred safely in emergency situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>Should be competent at cervical spine immobilisation and protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>Should have appropriate medical insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>Updates and maintains clinical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>Be very competent at full musculoskeletal examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>Should be competent at CPR/basic life support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>Should be competent in assessment and management of emergencies on the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>Remains sober while on duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Identifies and prioritises urgent cases by clinical need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Available for referral, including urgent referral from general practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Aware of legal implications and responsibilities of involvement in sports medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of how injury affects sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Ability to take detailed systematic, general, and sports related history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Ability to perform detailed, systematic general and injury related examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Ability to assimilate information from history and examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Postgraduate qualification in sports medicine, Diploma in Sports Medicine, or equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>Has access to physiotherapist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>When the sports participant is a child/adolescent, the doctor must give first consideration to the participant’s growth and stage of development*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Taken from the World Medical Association declaration on the principles of health care for sports medicine.
Conclusions
This consensus study highlights areas of ethical, medicolegal, and emergency medicine as being those most desirable or essential in a sports medicine specialist. A number of these statements could equally apply to any medical practitioner. We have only identified the top 18 qualities. It is interesting to note that, of the 311 other qualities identified, the lowest scores of 2.88 and 3 were received by the statements “has a formal attachment to a team or sport” and “experience as a player at different levels” respectively. Furthermore no quality was rated 5 by all respondents.

This is a small geographically isolated study but it uses a recognised method to seek consensus among those who have shown their commitment by undertaking a higher specialist qualification. A further, United Kingdom wide study is in preparation.

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable help received from the participants in this pilot study. They are M Webb, D McCready, P McCormack, D Irwin, T Forde, B Fair, M Cunningham, M Callen, J Corry, B Abernethy, M Hampton.

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Sport and exercise medicine in undergraduate medical schools in the United Kingdom and Ireland

Introduction
The formation of the Intercollegiate Academic Board in Sport and Exercise Medicine represents the first step towards recognition of sport and exercise medicine as an individual specialty, with its own higher specialist training programmes, leading to the establishment of sport and exercise medicine departments within the NHS. However, sports medicine is not an exclusively postgraduate activity and there is increasing interest among medical students. The opportunity for students to direct their own learning goals is in keeping with changes to undergraduate medical education suggested by the General Medical Council (GMC) in their paper entitled Tomorrow’s doctors. One of their recommendations was to supplement the core curriculum with “special study modules”, offering students the opportunity to study, in depth, areas of particular interest. This “new” undergraduate curriculum was introduced into medical schools in the academic year 1997/1998.

Our aim was to study the level of interest in the teaching of sport and exercise medicine in undergraduate medical schools, with specific objectives to record the proportion of schools with formal and informal teaching of sport and exercise medicine, the extent of teaching, and in what context it was taught.

Method
This was a questionnaire study of medical schools in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The first draft of the questionnaire was drawn up by the authors. It was appraised for content and face validity by six members of the Northern Ireland Sports Medicine Interest Group, who had attended five different medical schools and each of whom was involved in sports medicine teaching at some level. The questionnaire was sent to the deans of all medical schools throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland, with a postal reminder after three weeks and a phone call to the secretary to the dean after a further three weeks. Respondents were asked to identify in which year sport and exercise medicine was formally taught as a lecture, as a study module, or as a clinical attachment and we used the following definitions to promote consistency. A study module was defined as: a student undertakes a period of study as part of the core curriculum, and, in six schools, taught sport and exercise medicine in a formal context within the core curriculum, and, in six schools, sport and exercise medicine was offered as an optional module. The proportion of students who were taught sport and exercise medicine ranged from 10% to 100% in different schools. We identified in which year sport and exercise medicine was formally taught as a lecture, as a study module, or as a clinical attachment (table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year when available</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Study module</th>
<th>Clinical attachment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results
Of 30 questionnaires issued, 26 were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 87%. Seven medical schools taught sport and exercise medicine in a formal context within the core curriculum, and, in six schools, sport and exercise medicine was offered as an optional module. The proportion of students who were taught sport and exercise medicine ranged from 10% to 100% in different schools. We identified in which year sport and exercise medicine was formally taught as a lecture, as a study module, or as a clinical attachment (table 1). Results are expressed as number of medical schools where this is available.

When asked which specialists were primarily responsible for teaching sport and exercise medicine, an accident and emergency consultant, general practitioner, orthopaedic surgeon, and rheumatologist were each cited once and a sport and exercise medicine consultant was cited on three occasions. Non-clinicians identified included a lecturer in anatomy, an exercise physiologist, and a biochemist. We were also interested to record that formal sport and exercise medicine assessment took place in 12 medical schools in a variety of formats (table 2).

Respondents were asked about other opportunities for students to obtain further teaching in sport and exercise medicine. Of those who responded, two universities offered an intercalated degree in sport and exercise medicine, 10 would allow students to undertake an elective in sport and exercise medicine, and seven stated that there was an opportunity for interested students to attend additional sport and exercise medicine clinics. Only two stated that their university had ever awarded a higher research degree (MD/DM/PhD) to a medical doctor in this discipline.

Those universities that did not currently teach sport and exercise medicine were asked if they intended to introduce undergraduate teaching in sport and exercise medicine within the next five years. Five medical schools replied in the affirmative and nine replied that they did not intend to introduce teaching. The most important barriers to the introduction of undergraduate teaching in sport and exercise medicine were “no space in the current curriculum” (four universities), “there is enough sport and exercise medicine taught informally during normal teaching” (four universities), or “no-one qualified to teach sport and exercise medicine in the university” (one university).

Discussion
Sport and exercise medicine is a relatively new discipline, which has not yet achieved formal recognition as a specialty. According to the findings of this single study, it is taught either formally or informally in 13 of the 28 medical schools who replied to our questionnaire. A further five intend to introduce teaching within the next five years. There is considerable optimism that the Intercollegiate Academic Board will promote specialty recognition, and if, in five years time, two thirds of medical schools include sport and exercise medicine in undergraduate education, the future is bright. It is also interesting to note that almost all those who teach the discipline have some form of assessment, which may be interpreted as a further sign that it is taken seriously.

Medical students would prefer more exposure to sport and exercise medicine, applaud recent developments, and even suggest compulsory sports medicine education. General practitioners think likewise, and, in a recent survey, 72% felt inadequately trained to practice sport and exercise medicine, 76% would welcome more training, and 36% felt that their undergraduate orthopaedic training was of no value in primary care. The Intercollegiate Academic Board of Sport and Exercise Medicine hopes that the development of postgraduate training programmes in sport and exercise medicine will encourage universities to recognise the value of teaching special study modules and electives in the discipline.

Sport and exercise medicine is a multidisciplinary specialty, which has the potential to provide a medical student with valuable learning opportunities at various stages of his/her training. With particular interest in the health benefits of exercise, there are important public health implications. One could argue strongly that sport and exercise medicine is well placed to meet the recommendations of the GMC for the medical curriculum and that it should become an integral part of the curriculum in all medical schools. It is difficult to know who should be teaching it at present, and this is reflected in the variety of doctors identified as responsible for teaching.

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