

National Forums of Research and *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy

Three National Forums of Research and *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physiotherapy have taken place in Brazil since 1995. These forums originated important discussions regarding the consolidation of the area for production of knowledge.

Idealized by Coordinators of *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy and with the objective of gathering student and advisor physical therapists from different programs (Master's and Doctorate degree courses), the I National Forum of Research and *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy took place at the Federal University of São Carlos, in May 2005. It was the first national event of the kind. Important aspects that oriented the formulation of guidelines for Brazilian Graduate Programs were discussed. It is important to mention that the Brazilian Association of Research and Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy (ABRAPG-Ft), was created at this Forum. The (ABRAPG-Ft) is an associative organ that represents Brazilian Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy and is currently responsible for editing the Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy.

The II Forum was organized by the Federal University of Minas Gerais, in June 2006, where important indicators of development of the area were discussed. The "Diagnoses and Strategies for Research Development and Consolidation of Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy" were further discussed.

In order to continue with discussions, the Methodist University of Piracicaba hosted the III National Forum of Research and *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy, which took place on the 17th and 18th of May 2007. The central issues were the "Policies of Development for *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy in Brazil". At this opportunity lectures and debates were organized to tackle: Epistemological Basis of *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy; Policies of Organs for the Development of *Strictu Sensu* Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy; Policies of Scientific Development for Brazilian Physical Therapy; Policies of Organization of Research Lines of the PPG-Ft; Current Evaluation Criteria of the Area 21/CAPES and Graduate Programs Strategies to reach the criteria. It is also important to point out that the workshops discussed research lines of the graduate programs, and the central theme was the "Organization, Structure, and Development of the Research Lines of the PPG-Ft", which involved the areas of Musculoskeletal, Neurological, Cardiorespiratory and General Physical Therapy. The workshops allowed for direct contact between researchers and thus widened inter-institutional partnership possibilities.

Furthermore, a discussion about scientific journals was undertaken, emphasizing indexation in Scielo and the English language edition of the Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy. It is consensus that the consolidation of graduate programs is necessarily associated to the scientific journals that are responsible for the dissemination of knowledge. From this perspective, the Brazilian Journal of Physical Therapy, the journal Physical Therapy in Movement, and the journal Physical Therapy and Research have been important to disseminate the knowledge produced in the area so that it can be discussed both in national and international context.

From the I Forum onwards, the number of participants has increased considerably. The importance of the event has been confirmed by the fact that a total of 80 researchers from 15 academic institutions, coming from seven Brazilian states have registered to take part in the event. The event has counted with the participation of authorities from National Incentive Agencies, Class Entities and Representatives of the Area, from CAPES and CNPq. At the moment, there are eight Graduate Programs in Physical Therapy distributed over the states of São Paulo (five programs), Minas Gerais (two programs) and Rio Grande do Norte (one program).

At the end of the III Forum, a General Assembly of the Brazilian Association for Research and Graduation in Physical Therapy took place and defined, among other subjects, the location of the next Forum. It was decided that the IV Forum will be hosted in the city of São Paulo, and will be organized by the Graduate Programs of the University of São Paulo, University of the City of São Paulo and University Center Nove de Julho.

Finally, we shouldn't forget to mention the dinner party that took place at the Porto de Piracicaba Street, as well as the delicious *pamonhas* from Piracicaba that everyone could enjoy at the coffee-breaks.

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