

Implementation of the Physiotherapy Code of Ethics in the Application of Health Service Management by UWHS Physiotherapy Students during Clinical Practice in the Field

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the application of the physiotherapy code of ethics within the management of health services delivered by Physiotherapy students at Universitas Widya Husada Semarang (UWHS) during their clinical practice. A qualitative approach with an empirical juridical design was employed. Data were gathered through literature review, direct observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The study involved diploma-level physiotherapy students from UWHS undertaking clinical placements across various healthcare institutions. The findings indicate that students implemented health service management in accordance with the Indonesian Ministry of Health Regulation No. 65 of 2015 concerning Physiotherapy Service Standards. The adherence to the physiotherapy code of ethics was found to be a fundamental element in maintaining service quality, ensuring patient safety, and fostering student professionalism in clinical settings.

Keywords: Physiotherapy code of ethics; health service management; clinical practice; physiotherapy students; professionalism.

BACKGROUND

Clinical practice is a learning forum for health students, including those in physiotherapy, to apply theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and integrate it with practical skills. During this process, students have the opportunity to learn and practice various procedures that differ from those taught in lectures, thereby providing real experiences that prepare them for future clinical situations. However, many physiotherapy students who have undertaken clinical practice report discrepancies between the theories they studied and the actions required in hospitals or other healthcare institutions. This situation often creates challenges in delivering physiotherapy services, even though students have received prior training. Previous studies also indicate that most physiotherapy students experience a significant gap between theory and practice in the implementation of physiotherapy services (1).

Health services are a fundamental right of every Indonesian citizen, as mandated by Article 28H paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution, which states that every individual has the right to live in physical and spiritual well-being, reside in a proper and healthy environment, and obtain access to healthcare. Furthermore, the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia No. 75 of 2014 defines healthcare services as a series of government efforts provided to the community, encompassing planning, implementation, evaluation, documentation, and reporting, all of which are integrated into a comprehensive system (2).

Health service management can be defined as a series of efforts carried out either individually or collectively within an organization to maintain and improve the health of individuals, families, groups, and communities (Lestari, 2020). One of the key indicators of healthcare quality is patient satisfaction. However, not all healthcare professionals are able to meet this standard. In fact, issues related to inadequate healthcare services are still frequently reported, including concerns about unequal treatment in the delivery of care (3). Patients generally expect healthcare services to be delivered promptly and accurately, at an affordable cost, and supported by medical personnel who are friendly and communicative. However, only a limited number of healthcare institutions are able to fully meet these expectations, particularly with regard to patient satisfaction (4).

The enhancement of healthcare personnel is a crucial component in supporting comprehensive health development. This effort is directed at producing professionals who are not only skilled and competent in line with advancements in science and technology, but also grounded in faith, integrity, dedication to the nation, and adherence to professional ethics. The primary objective of healthcare workforce development is to strengthen empowerment, optimize workforce utilization, and ensure both the quantity and quality of healthcare providers

from society and government who are capable of contributing to national health development. The recruitment and preparation of healthcare professionals are carried out through higher education in health sciences, with the aim of producing qualified graduates in accordance with professional service standards (5). Physiotherapy, as part of the healthcare workforce, plays a vital role in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To provide optimal services to the community, physiotherapists are required to undergo formal education in accordance with existing regulations. This is emphasized in the Indonesian Health Act No. 36 of 2009, Article 1 paragraph (6), which defines healthcare personnel as individuals dedicated to the health sector who possess knowledge and skills acquired through health education, with certain professions requiring specific authorization to carry out healthcare practices (6). Health education, particularly in the field of physiotherapy, can be pursued through higher education institutions that offer physiotherapy programs, with the aim of producing competent vocational physiotherapists. The Higher Education Act states that higher education is a level of study undertaken after secondary education, encompassing diploma, bachelor, master, doctoral, professional, and specialist programs. These programs are organized by universities and are grounded in the cultural values of the Indonesian nation (7).

Clinical training sites for health science students are regulated under the Regulation of the Minister of Health No. 1192 of 2004 concerning the Establishment of Diploma Programs in Health Sciences, which stipulates that professional practice settings include hospitals, community health centers (*Puskesmas*), maternity clinics, and other community health service units. Furthermore, the role of hospitals as training facilities for health profession students is reinforced in Article 5 (c) of Law No. 44 of 2009 on Hospitals, which states that one of the hospital's functions is to provide education and training for human resources in order to enhance their competencies in delivering healthcare services (8).

The physiotherapy education program is often referred to as a process of clinical learning. This term is used because professional training in physiotherapy is largely carried out in clinical settings such as hospitals (types A, B, and C), community health centers (*Puskesmas*), clinics, as well as within family and community environments. In these contexts, students are given the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom to real clinical cases (9). Clinical practice settings function as a medium for students to translate theoretical knowledge gained in lectures into the management of real clinical cases (10).

In fulfilling the clinical practice requirements at healthcare institutions, physiotherapy students are expected to implement health service management for patients, which involves direct interventions carried out by the students themselves. Each of these interventions carries potential risks and a high probability of errors, including malpractice, if not performed in accordance with physiotherapy service management standards as regulated by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Regulation No. 65 of 2015 on Physiotherapy Service Standards. Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyze the implementation of health service management in the clinical practice of UWS physiotherapy students in line with the aforementioned regulation.

METHOD

According to Bogdan and Biklen, descriptive qualitative research emphasizes data collection in the form of words or descriptions rather than numerical figures (Sugiyono, 2020). A sociological juridical approach is applied to examine issues of legality within social dynamics by analyzing causal relationships among various social factors (11)(12).

This study employs a descriptive-analytical design, aiming to provide a comprehensive and systematic overview of the influence of implementing the physiotherapy code of ethics on health service management in the clinical practice of UWS physiotherapy students, in accordance with the Indonesian Ministry of Health Regulation No. 65 of 2015 on Physiotherapy Service Standards (13).

1. Research Subjects and Objects

- a. The subjects of this study were Diploma III Physiotherapy students of Universitas Widya Husada Semarang who were undertaking clinical practice.
- b. The object of this study was the implementation of health service management in the clinical practice of UWS physiotherapy students, in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia No. 65 of 2015 on Physiotherapy Service Standards.

2. Research Setting and Period

- a. The research was conducted in healthcare institutions where students carried out their clinical

practice.

b. The study was conducted from December 13, 2024, to June 13, 2025.

3. Data Collection Techniques

According to Sugiyono (2020), there are four main data collection methods: observation, interviews, documentation, and triangulation. Observation involves direct examination of social situations to gain a comprehensive understanding. Interviews are conducted as a question-and-answer process to exchange information and meaning. Documentation is used to collect data from records, written materials, or images. Triangulation combines multiple techniques and data sources to enhance the validity of the findings.

4. Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is carried out systematically through data collection, reduction, display, and conclusion drawing until saturation is reached

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Health Services by Physiotherapy Students in Clinical Practice Settings

The main objective of conducting field practice for physiotherapy students is to provide them with direct experience in dealing with various patient problems while preparing them to become professional, knowledgeable, and competent healthcare practitioners. Through this learning process, students are directly involved in delivering healthcare services to patients by applying the theoretical knowledge they have acquired in the classroom. It is expected that students will be able to apply their knowledge by analyzing patient problems and providing appropriate physiotherapy interventions according to the patients' needs (14).

One of the clinical practice settings for health science students is hospitals, as regulated in Law Number 4 of 2009 on Hospitals. Article 5 (c) states that hospitals serve as facilities for educating and training future healthcare professionals in order to develop competent and professional human resources in providing health services. Therefore, teaching hospitals are considered the most suitable clinical training sites, as they meet the required standards to support the learning process of future healthcare workers (15).

Legally, clinical field practice is part of the training organized by educational institutions in collaboration with healthcare facilities, where students provide direct patient care under the supervision of a Clinical Instructor (CI). This program should be carried out based on a written agreement that specifies the rights, obligations, and duration of physiotherapy students' practice (16).

Legal protection plays an important role in maintaining professionalism and strengthening public trust in both physiotherapists and students during clinical practice. The possibility of negligence or ethical violations highlights the need for legal safeguards, allowing physiotherapists to carry out their duties without fear of legal consequences. Therefore, the government and relevant stakeholders should establish specific regulations, enforce strict legal measures, and enhance support for education and training. With adequate legal protection, physiotherapists are expected to provide optimal services while upholding professionalism in their practice. (17).

Healthcare services are a vital component of the care system, involving various medical professionals, including clinical practice students. Due to their multidisciplinary nature, these services require teamwork among different health professionals. Each practitioner plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality and safety of care in accordance with professional standards (18). Competence is essential for healthcare professionals, including clinical practice students, in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. It represents a combination of knowledge, skills, and work discipline required in patient care, with emphasis on developing both technical and practical aspects (19).

Physiotherapy services are a form of healthcare provided to individuals and groups with the aim of developing, maintaining, and restoring movement and body function throughout the lifespan. These services are carried out through manual therapy, movement exercises, functional training equipment, and communication. The standards for physiotherapy services are regulated in the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 65 of 2015 on Physiotherapy Service Standards (20). The Physiotherapy Service Standards are established as guidelines to ensure the delivery of high-quality and accountable physiotherapy services. These standards cover the implementation of services, service management, and the role of healthcare professionals known as physiotherapists (21). Physiotherapy service

standards must be applied by physiotherapists as well as clinical practice students when delivering healthcare services to patients in clinical settings.

Based on interviews and questionnaire summaries with academic supervisors, clinical instructors, and clinical practice coordinators, it was found that UWHS physiotherapy students undertaking clinical practice in healthcare facilities have implemented health service management in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 65 of 2015 on Physiotherapy Service Standards in providing care to patients. with the following details:

1. Clinical Practice Implementation
Students carry out clinical practice in hospitals, community health centers, and UWHS partner clinics under the supervision of academic supervisors and clinical instructors (CI). During practice, students encounter various patient cases involving musculoskeletal, neurological, and geriatric conditions.
2. Implementation of Service Management
Interview results indicate that most students have applied physiotherapy service standards in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 65 of 2015. This process includes initial assessment, formulation of a physiotherapy diagnosis, provision of interventions according to patient needs, and evaluation of therapy outcomes.
3. Code of Ethics and Professionalism
Students demonstrate compliance with the principles of the physiotherapy code of ethics, such as maintaining patient confidentiality, providing fair treatment, and communicating respectfully. However, weaknesses remain in aspects of therapeutic communication and self-confidence.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

1. Conclusion:
UWHS physiotherapy students have implemented clinical practice health service management in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 65 of 2015, while adhering to the physiotherapy code of ethics. This implementation supports the improvement of service quality, patient safety, and student professionalism.
2. Recommendations:
 - a. The institution should strengthen preparatory training in therapeutic communication before clinical practice.
 - b. Stronger legal protection is needed for students during clinical practice.
 - c. Research findings should be integrated into the Professional Ethics and Health Law course to enrich the learning materials.

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