



Pharm D Program Accreditation, the Most Important Step towards Promotion of Pharmacy Education

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In recent years, the number of pharmacy schools in Iran has increased from 9 in 1999 to more than 24. Many pharmacy students are being educated to become professional pharmacists. Monitoring the quality of education provided to the students and ensuring the continuance of this quality is critical.

Given the important role of the pharmacist in the health care system, accreditation is a great way to assess this higher education and to monitor its performance. Accreditation is a process in which a specific organization, uses a pool of experts from a specialized field, based on predefined standards, and conducts regular periodic evaluations of training units in the field. It decides whether a system has educational competency or not.

Accreditation can be done at either the Institutional level or the program level. So far, there have been two successful educational accreditation programs at the Ministry of Health in the country, including accreditation of national medical education institutions and educational hospital accreditation (both are the institutional level of accreditation). Similarly, the general physician educational programs at schools of medicine is currently in progress by the license of WFME (World Federation of Medical Education). The next step is to get their approval at the international standards.

Given the multiplicity of pharmacy schools, especially the newly founded ones, accreditation of the PharmD program can help to ensure its educational quality and enhance it. Due

to the long history and good quality of pharmacy education in Iran, Board of Pharmacy can design and implement the PharmD program accreditation, which leads to quality assurance.

Implementation of this program and relying on outcome-based assessments such as conducting a clinical competency test can be an important step in the evolution and enhancement of pharmacy education in Iran. This system also addresses the needs of the professionals and can improve economic productivity.

In the globalized environments of today's health care system, accreditation and quality assurance can create an active, dynamic platform. Communication, compliance with code of ethics, development of acceptable criteria, ... can lead to a fair and objective accreditation.

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