

FORUM ORTHOPAEDIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS - FOOT

(FORUM OPLEIDINGEN ORTHOPEDISCHE (SCHOEN)TECHNOLOGIE)

F. Holtkamp^{1,3*}, P. Valk², C. Beers³

¹Fontys University of Allied Health Professions, ²President NVOS-Orthobanda, ³NVOS-Orthobada

In the Netherlands and the Dutch speaking part of Belgium (Flanders) stakeholders in education and (shoe) orthopaedics have formed a consortium platform. This platform "Forum Orthopaedic Educational Programs (FOOT)" is established to reduce existing distance between cultures and backgrounds and provide a sound platform in exchanging and aggregating information. This article discusses the importance and objectives of this FOOT consortium, how it is formed and what the results are.

INTRODUCTION

Background Orthopaedic Technology sectors; small yet dynamic specific sectors, which have to find their way in an equally dynamic European economy. Quality improvement and professionalization are priorities for survival in a growing market.

Fundamental changes are occurring in the care sector and medical technology. An aging population and a growing number of (mobility) disorders invokes a larger demand of social medical and technological need. Health insurers and legislation have a strong, yet elusive influence in this area.

Although education and the labour market are gradually moving towards a European identity, it is difficult to survive in this environment as a unique specific vocational programme.

All these various influences make it necessary to join forces in organising the sector together with its knowledge development and educational basis. It is not only the need for intrinsic development, but more specifically the social forces that contribute towards the need for cooperation in Forum such as FOOT (Forum Orthopaedic Educational Programs, ie Forum Opleidingen Orthopedische Technologie).

FOOT started with a kick of meeting at March 4th 2004 in Geel, Belgium and is still active today.

OBJECTIVES

Purpose of the cooperation between the parties in the Forum is to realise a continuously aligned international system of education for the Orthopaedic Technology sectors, in the broadest possible sense, with a view to realising ongoing quality improvement and professionalization of the occupational group.

The partners in the Forum of Orthopaedic Technology Education Belgium - Netherlands consists of representatives of the sector organisations as well as secondary and higher education in orthopaedic shoe technology in Belgium and the Netherlands. Affiliated partners are:

Netherlands:

NVOS-Orthobanda, Dutch Association of Orthopaedic Shoe Technicians

Fontys University of Allied Health Professions Education

SVGB: Centre of Expertise and Education

SVGB-OSLO Vocational Training Center

Belgium:

BVOOS, Belgian Society of Orthopaedics, Orthesists and Shoe Technicians

KOGEKA-SJG, Catholic Vocational Education, St. Josephs

KHKempen University

MILESTONES

A number of intermediate targets and results are inferred to contribute to the objective of the joint partners in FOOT:

0. Memorandum of understanding, Covenant

1. Comparison of the profession (work field)
A comparison of the profession in both countries provides insight into similarities and differences of the profession. It uses any available job competency profiles (a description of a core set of professional practice, key challenges and job skills). Furthermore it looks at the developments and the perspective of technology, business and labor looked.

2. Comparison Qualifications (education specifications)
The qualification profiles of the two countries are compared. It looks at the standardized description of the starting position of the beginning practitioner in the workplace and in society. These various qualifications based on a structured and coherent set of core, core tasks and competencies. The alignment of secondary / secondary education and higher education were examined.

3. Comparison curriculum (the educational version),
The curriculum of the training in both countries is compared. It shall address the systematic and orderly learning content teaching. The distribution of theory and practice, teaching modules and the completion of the internship are compared

4. Recommendations, *For a reconciliation education coordinated international system of education for Orthopedic Tech industry in this phase may be given recommendations for further planning.*

5. Widening FOOT in Europe, *A first exploration to other countries in Europe similar to the objective of FOOT. It will particularly look at the countries in Scandinavia, Germany and the United Kingdom. Connection time is desirable. Alignment with European (vocational / interest) organizations like ISPO, Interbor and IVO are part of the exploration.*

6. "Expertise centre of Orthopaedic (Shoe) Technology" *Develop and create of research and research facilities serving deepening and broadening of knowledge and insights in the field of orthopaedic (shoe) technology.*