Clinician-Scientists in Physiotherapy: Are we ready?

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Double agents in physiotherapy?
Clinician-scientists shouldn’t feel like double agents
Just coping or thriving?
Session content

1. Definition of term “clinician-scientist”
2. Literature on clinician-scientists in physiotherapy
3. My experience
4. Interactive panel discussion (open to audience)
Definition

What is a clinician-scientist?

• Professional degree and works as clinician
• Graduate studies and works as a researcher
• Keeps a foot in both worlds

(MacDonald, Sharpe, Shikako-Thomas, Larsen, & MacKay, 2013; Snyder-Mackler, 2015)
Professional identity

Clinician first, researcher second?

Dual or unified professional identity?

Meta-identity: Broker

(Kluijtmans, de Haan, Akkerman, & van Tartwijk, 2017; Parker, Burrows, Nash, & Rosenblum, 2011)
Clinical experience informing scientific inquiries

- Bringing the science to the clinic

- Bridging the gap by facilitating a bidirectional flow between research and practice

- Students want profs who still work as clinicians (personal observation)

Benefits

Benefits

- Clinical experience informing scientific inquiries
- Bringing the science to the clinic
- Bridging the gap by facilitating a bidirectional flow between research and practice
- Students want profs who still work as clinicians (personal observation)

Challenges

- Lengthy education
- Balancing two jobs, two sets of priorities, two work cultures, etc.
- Time management challenge: how to split?
- Productivity appears smaller compared to a full-time researcher or clinician

“most [...] fail to achieve a combined role. Specifically, they have either

(1) an academic appointment in a university faculty with an adjunct appointment at a clinical health center without remuneration or

(2) a clinical position in which research is not a component of their job description but is conducted in their spare time.”
To thrive, not cope

• Tailored job positions
• Formal linkages

(MacDonald, Sharpe, Shikako-Thomas, Larsen, & MacKay, 2013)
“The Clinician Scientist program had two phases. Phase 1 provided stipends for up to six years of training support and is no longer being launched. Phase 2 provides a contribution to the salary of the recipient [...]”

https://www.researchnet-recherchenet.ca/

Clinician-scientist support

http://mskrehabnet.com/
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My pathway

- Professional Master’s in Physiotherapy (2013)
- Clinician in private practice (2013-present)
- Started PhD studies in rehabilitation science (2016-present)
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(Kluijtmans, de Haan, Akkerman, & van Tartwijk, 2017; Parker, Burrows, Nash, & Rosenblum, 2011)
Boundary-crossing identity, reflections, and innovations

Clinical practice
Research
Profession
Improving lives

Challenges

- Dual life
- Time-management
- Priority-setting
- Work-life balance
- Creating my “own job opportunities”

Support needed to thrive

- Tailored mentorship
- Tailored job positions
- Tailored salary and funding models

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Panelists

Dr. Linda Woodhouse

Dr. Laura Brunton

Dr. Eric Parent
Panel discussion

• How?
  ◦ I will ask questions to the panelists, but the audience can step up to the microphone at any moment to add questions

• Three main topic areas:
  ◦ Personal experience with the clinician-scientist role
  ◦ Perception of the current state of clinician-scientists in physiotherapy in Canada
  ◦ Next steps?

• Open Q&A from audience
Personal experience with the clinician-scientist role
Perception of the current state of clinician-scientists in physiotherapy in Canada
Next steps?
Open Q&A from audience
Recap
References


