

The Professional Qualification Program for Internationally Trained Physiotherapists: Review of the First Three Cohorts at the Université de Montréal

Sélène Lauzière, pht. Ph.D, **Chantal Besner**, pht, M.A.P.
Sylvie Nadeau, pht, Ph.D. École de réadaptation, Faculté de Médecine, Université de Montréal

Contact : selena.lauziere@umontreal.ca

- **Introduction**

Internationally trained physiotherapists are among the health professionals who request the most licenses to practice in Quebec. Before 2014, accessibility to qualification courses was insufficient to meet this demand at the Université de Montréal (UdeM). Therefore, UdeM developed a Qualification Program in Physiotherapy (QPP) of 16 months duration, which leads to a graduate level certificate recognized by the provincial regulatory body for practice in Quebec.

- **Objective**

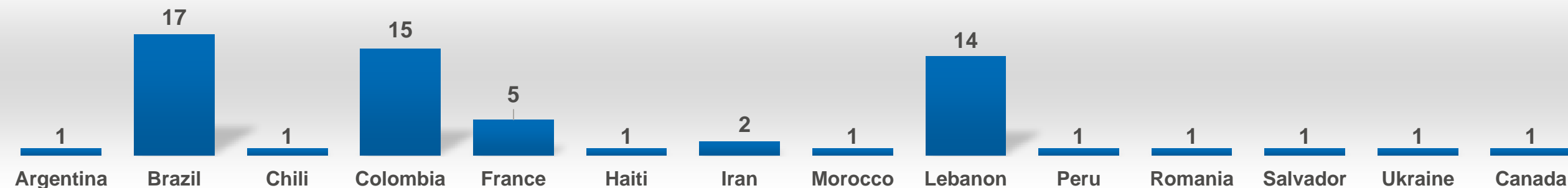
To present the results of the first three cohorts in terms of graduation, satisfaction and placement rates.

- **Methods**

To measure graduation success, data of internationally trained students admitted to the physiotherapy program between 1999 and 2009 were compared to data of QPP students admitted between 2014 and 2016. Surveys were used to measure internship instructors' satisfaction, students' satisfaction and placement rates.

- **Results**

Students' native countries



Results

Table 1. Student portrait

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Number of new admissions (n)	26	17	20
Age (average (min-max))	36 (27-55)	38 (29-49)	38 (28-53)
Years of clinical experience (average (min-max))	9 (2-22)	6 (0-13)	7 (1-17)
Years since graduation (average (min-max))	12 (6-28)	14 (5-25)	12 (3-26)
Heavy family responsibilities	90%	73%	85%
Employment (%)	20%	40%	10%
Inadequate financial situation (%)	75%	80%	48%
Immigration-related stress (%)	52%	67%	66%

Table 2. Attrition and time to complete the training program

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Number of students that completed training (n)	21	15	19
Number of withdrawals (n)	2	1	0
Number of exclusions (n)	3	1	1
Number of months between admission and completion (average (min-max))	18 (16-42)	17 (16-26)	17 (16-28)

Table 3. Comparaison before and after the program

	Before program	After program
Number of students that completed training by year (average)	4	18
Success rate	56%	87%
Number of months between admission and completion (average (min-max))	36	17

Table 4. Student satisfaction (%in agreement)

A) Perception of teaching	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
The teaching encourages me to be an active learner	100%	100%	95%
The teaching is well targeted	70%	73%	95%
The teaching is adequately centred on developing my competency	95%	80%	95%
B) Perception of teachers	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
The teachers have an adequate level of knowledge	100%	100%	100%
The teachers are properly prepared for their courses	100%	93%	100%
The teachers competently provide feedback to students	90%	80%	91%
C) Academic self-perception	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Most of what I have to learn appears relevant to my career in physiotherapy	95%	87%	95%
I have the feeling that I am well-prepared to practice my profession in Quebec	100%	93%	100%
D) Perception of workload	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
The workload is adequate in order to acheive the learning objectives	10%	33%	50%

Results

Table 5. Satisfaction of preceptors (% satisfied)

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Ability in assessing impairments and disabilities related to physical function	66%	73%	88%
Ability to analyze the findings of a physiotherapy assessment	87%	60%	60%
Ability to design and plan a physiotherapy intervention	80%	80%	82%
Ability to implement a physiotherapy intervention and ensure follow-up	93%	93%	88%
Ability to produce documents related to professional practice	66%	67%	64%
Know-how	87%	73%	71%
Theoretical knowledge	87%	73%	71%
Soft skills	87%	87%	88%
Overall training of students in the QPP program	87%	86%	80%

Table 6. Placement rate six months after training program

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Job in physical therapy (%)	91%	91%	92%
Average number of weeks spent finding a job (average (min-max))	6 (0-16)	6 (0-20)	4.5 (0-12)

Discussion and conclusion

In summary, the QPP program improves access to the profession and Quebec labour market for candidates educated internationally in physiotherapy. In fact, comparison with the data for non-program students taking courses piecewise (prior to QPP-program implementation in January 2014) reveals that the passing rate rose from 56% to 87%, the annual number of graduating students increased from 4 to 18 and the time required to complete the training program dropped from 36 to 17 months. The performance of the first three cohorts demonstrates the pertinence of the QPP program. Indeed, the program received the Award for Excellence in Innovation from the Office of the Dean of UdeM in 2016. Furthermore, analysis of the results for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 cohorts will enable us to ensure that the QPP program continually improves and innovates so as to optimize the development of candidate's competencies and ensure their integration as physiotherapists in Quebec's labour market.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to everyone involved in the development of the QPP program as well as to the rotation supervisors, who contribute greatly to the richness of student training. We also extend our appreciation to the OPPQ, MIDI and MEES for their contributions to the program's development.

