Recommended – not recommended: The essential parameters for high quality in clinical education. A students perspective.

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Introduction
Physiotherapy students in the BSc degree program in Physiotherapy at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) have to pass three different clinical placements each lasting twelve weeks. Clinical instructors, specially trained physiotherapists of the team at the clinical site, foster and promote students learning. At the same time they are responsible to assess the students’ performance.

Purpose
The purpose of this project was to identify the essential parameters for high clinical education quality out of the students’ perspective.

Results
Following results show the distribution of the 231 code units allocated into nine categories clustered in three main issues.

Issue 1: Clinical instructors 21% (49, 2 categories)
- Educational competencies
- Social competencies

Issue 2: Clinical sites, 32% (74, 4 categories)
- Social integration
- Engagement and support by the Team
- Clarity of processes and structures
- Disposed time for learning

Issue 3: Patients, 34% (79, 3 categories)
- Appropriate patients
- Variety of patients
- Participation in patient selection

Questions
1) Which characteristics did students for a successful clinical education mention?
2) What are the relevant mentioned criteria’s referring to patients?

Conclusion and implications
The education of clinical instructors, the careful selection of the patients and the development of an encouraging, stimulating learning environment at the clinical site support successful clinical placements. Those should be subjects of discussion with clinical instructors and responsible authority at clinical sites.

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