# A Longitudinal Study of Knowledge and Attitudes Regarding Patient Safety in Physical Therapy

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#### Description

Patient safety is a branch of health care management with the goal of preventing and minimising risks, mistakes, and harm to patients throughout the delivery of medical care. Since one of the top ten causes of mortality and/ or disability worldwide is the incidence of adverse events due to unsafe health treatment, avoidable patient harm is consequently a significant public health concern. In addition, high-income countries have lower rates of patient harm when obtaining hospital care, with 2.6 million fatalities annually as a result, compared to low- and middle-income nations. The beliefs and values that professionals have towards the impression of security in the workplace are consistent with attitudes toward patient safety. In areas like cooperation, error inevitability, and the availability of specialised curricular training on patient security, students and professionals in their early stages typically have more positive views about patient security. There are already a number of tools available to evaluate patient safety knowledge and attitudes. In this context, the "Attitudes to Patient Safety Questionnaire" is a popular tool with exceptional psychometric qualities that has been approved in Spanish for versions with 7 and 5 response possibilities. Students studying nursing and medicine around the world have previously examined the current knowledge and attitudes about patient safety and come to the conclusion that adding particular patient safety curricula to the curriculum improves knowledge and attitudes. cite the need for improved skills and confidence in error reporting and disclosure, as well as the need for greater curricular attention to the causes of error and the effects of long work hours on safety, despite the fact that the majority of students have attitudes toward patient safety that are adequate. Physiotherapy students' attitudes and knowledge are still seldom ever evaluated.

A freshly created customized programme with nine sessions of systemsfocused patient safety instruction was created. Using a modified version, changes in knowledge and attitudes about patient care were evaluated [1]. Periods of clinical application of information during practical internships are typically used to finish a particular degree or subject. Internships provide a fantastic setting for enhancing perspectives, professional confidence, and competencies since they function as a period of professional immersion. For trainees to comprehend and apply the patient safety concepts in clinical practice, supervised practice experiences were critical [2]. Results indicate that internships in the field of physical therapy are a great way to close the theorypractice gap while also having good effects on clinical practice, confidence, employment possibilities, productivity, and governmental policy [3]. There have been no studies done to date that examine how internship experiences may alter students' understanding of and attitudes toward patient safety. Our study's average positive response rates are lower than those reported by other

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authors; a plausible reason could be found in the sample's characteristics. With regard to physical therapy, the curricular structure, academic requirements, and additional professional competencies significantly differ. A sizable portion (59.7%) of the sample from the Wetzel study had some prior knowledge of the healthcare industry. The limitations of the study's methodology should be taken into consideration when evaluating its findings [4].

Even though the assessors emphasised that the survey was optional. self-report bias still exists, like it does in all surveys that use self-reported questionnaires. Second, while some respondents were lost between the initial and final assessments, the drop-out rate was still less than 15%, indicating a low risk of attrition bias. There are still some psychometric factors to be evaluated. Fourth, further research in the subject should study and delve into the influence of the physical therapy-related field of the internship, the type of location, or the tutor. These influences may have a significant impact on students' attitudes and understanding regarding patient safety. Finally, there is a significant knowledge gap that the current study is framed around due to the paucity of contextual research on the impact of a clinical internship program on the attitudes and knowledge of physical therapy students toward patient care [5]. On the other hand hand, this lack of context - specific research prevents potential comparisons and contrasts. Therefore, more research should be done with the goal of coming to comprehensive conclusions in this area of study.

The level of study equated to a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) programme, even though the first survey was created before any systemsfocused patient safety content was delivered; normally, DPT programmes require students to have obtained a bachelor's degree prior to enrollment. Therefore, given our population, a more substantial prior history in general healthcare is plausible. The authors did not collect any further demographic information beyond the general class demographics to ensure anonymity in the limited sample size, however the mean class age upon matriculation in our study supports this claim. Regarding the second goal, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the adjustments made by physical therapy students' attitudes and understanding of patient safety after a clinical internship. In our study, the variables related to "Patient safety training received," "Error reporting confidence," and "Professional competence as an error reason" saw statistically meaningful changes. Since the students were set to begin their clinical placement in a centre with an unknown professional tutor in a few days, their uncertainty may have had an impact on the study's findings. In addition, Creswell et al. draw attention to the reality that most instruction is based in idealised environments, which provide few opportunities for interprofessional learning. Because of this, students frequently have minimal opportunity to learn about corporate policies and practises, such as incident reporting.

#### Conclusion

Team functioning", "Importance of patient safety in the curriculum", and "Error inevitability" displayed the highest scores for average positive response rates, in accordance with the current research literature. Following the clinical internship period, the dimensions "Patient safety training received", "Error reporting confidence", and "Professional incompetence as an error cause" showed significant changes. The current study highlights areas of strength and weaknesses in the knowledge and attitudes of students in physical therapy regarding patient safety. This study might be a foundation to adopt tailored programs to enhance students' competencies in patient safety.

## **Conflict of Interest**

None.

### References

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