

A Proposal by Professor Iain Graham Coehre – Education and learning strategy

Introduction

Over the years co-operation at European level within education and training has come to play a decisive role in creating the future European society.

Economic and social developments in Europe over the last decade have increasingly underlined the need for a European dimension to education and training. Furthermore, the transition towards a knowledge based economy capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion brings new challenges to the development of human resources.

The enlargement of the European Union adds a new dimension and a number of challenges, opportunities and requirements to the work in the field of education and training. It is particularly important that acceding member states should be integrated as partners in future cooperation on education and training initiatives at European level from the very beginning.

The successive development of the European education and training programmes has been a key factor for improving cooperation at European level.

The Bologna declaration on higher education in June 1999 marked the introduction of a new enhanced European cooperation in this area.

The Lisbon European Council in March 2000 recognised the important role of education as an integral part of economic and social policies, as an instrument for strengthening Europe's competitive power worldwide, and as a guarantee for ensuring the cohesion of our societies and the full development of its citizens. The European Council set the strategic objective for the European Union to become the world's most dynamic knowledge-based economy. The development of high quality vocational education and training is a crucial and integral part of this strategy, notably in terms of promoting social inclusion, cohesion, mobility, employability and competitiveness.

The report on the 'Concrete Future Objectives of Education and Training Systems', endorsed by the Stockholm European Council in March 2001, identified new areas for joint actions at European level in order to achieve the goals set at the Lisbon European Council. These areas are based on the three strategic objectives of the report; i.e. improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the European Union, facilitating access for all to education and training systems, and opening up education and training systems to the wider world.

In Barcelona, in March 2002 the European Council endorsed the Work Programme on the follow-up of the Objectives Report calling for European education and training to become a world quality reference by 2010. Furthermore, it called for further action to introduce instruments to ensure the transparency of diplomas and qualifications, including promoting action similar to the Bologna-process, but adapted to the field of vocational education and training.

In response to the Barcelona mandate, the Council of the European Union (Education, Youth and Culture) adopted on 12 November 2002 a Resolution on enhanced cooperation in vocational education and training. This resolution invites the Member States, and the Commission, within the framework of their responsibilities, to involve the candidate countries and the EFTA-EEA countries, as

well as the social partners, in promoting an increased cooperation in vocational education and training.

Strategies for lifelong learning and mobility are essential to promote employability, active citizenship, social inclusion and personal development. Developing a knowledge based Europe and ensuring that the European labour market is open to all is a major challenge to the vocational educational and training systems in Europe and to all actors involved. The same is true of the need for these systems to continuously adapt to new developments and changing demands of society. An enhanced cooperation in vocational education and training will be an important contribution towards ensuring a successful enlargement of the European Union and fulfilling the objectives identified by the European Council in Lisbon. Cedefop and the European Training Foundation are important bodies for supporting this cooperation.

In the consideration of these policies the importance of academic partners coming together is highly relevant and logical. Over the coming years Cohehre will need to assume the responsibility for facilitating and coaching these partnerships across Europe and beyond.

Over the next five years it is anticipated that the following may occur:

- Planned curricula development
- Problem – based learning
- Emphasis on knowledge management and skill acquisition
- Integrate curricula
- Learner – centred and self-directed learning
- Care curricula and options
- Distance – e-based and blending learning
- Multi-professional education
- Training for a professional career
- Life-long learning
- Evidence based education

Therefore Cohehre, through its interest groups focused upon curriculum development and student experience can help steer the debate in these areas.

This will then feed into the common ground that exists a cross Europe and beyond for curriculum topics that cross discipline and national barriers.

European issues for consideration with regard to the curriculum.

Curriculum topic	Selected reasons for current and future importance
Professionalism/ethics	Public and media look at health care professions more critically than before (e.g. reports on corruption in public health care). If professions do not regulate themselves better, external agencies will take over (some have).
Health care economics	Health care systems are changing (evidenced by the case studies), professionals need to learn how to work within them and advocate for their patients. Providers have more responsibility for cost-containment and resource allocation.

Error reduction and Continuous quality Improvement	<p>Medical errors have come to the forefront of public attention.</p> <p>Health care professionals are made responsible for identifying best practice and adhering to standards and guidelines; they are held accountable for their actions (e.g. lawsuits).</p>
Medical informatics	<p>Computers help to manage the dramatically increasing knowledge base and facilitate evidence-based practice. Electronic record-keeping is becoming more widespread.</p> <p>Computer-based instructions can disseminate training programmes across geographical barriers and scheduling limitations.</p>
Prevention	<p>Prevention is cost-effective.</p> <p>Population-based thinking is becoming more prevalent. Behaviour change (e.g. smoking cessation, traffic safety/accident avoidance) are important factors in reducing morbidity and mortality.</p>
Cultural competence	<p>There is a global migration of patients and health care professionals.</p> <p>Language barriers and a lack of cultural competence can interfere with health care.</p> <p>Complementary/alternative medicine is used widely.</p>
Geriatric care	<p>Populations are ageing rapidly.</p>
Genetics	<p>The Genome project may revolutionise future care.</p> <p>Concerns about ethical complications.</p>
Primary care	<p>A strong primary care system may lead to more efficient and cost-effective health care delivery.</p> <p>Primary care is seen as enhancing prevention.</p>
Teamwork	<p>Most clinical work is performed in teams.</p> <p>'Disruptive innovations' and automation permit certain tasks to be passed down to lower-level practitioners and technicians (Christensen et al 2000).</p> <p>Most errors are systems-based.</p>
Community-based care	<p>Expensive, unnecessary and potentially dangerous hospital care is becoming less popular.</p> <p>Ambulatory and home care is used increasingly.</p> <p>Rural health care is understaffed and often neglected.</p>
Telemedicine	<p>Networks and new delivery mechanisms of care are being created.</p> <p>Opportunity to provide care to underserved rural and remote sites.</p>

Assessment of the student may well feature the following processes:

- Computer and performance based testing
- Matrix-based, integrative exams
- Summarise and formative assessment
- course-based and progress testing
- external and self-assessment

Again Coehre's interest groups which focus their attention on curriculum development but also teacher development and experience could provide the steer for debate here. Whilst the interest group that looks into management and leadership issues needs to address all of these areas of debate.

However, it must also be stated that the policy drivers within Europe are having a profound effect upon the status of nursing and the allied health professions within Europe.

In response to Bologna, Copenhagen and Lisbon big implications exist because of the ripple effect on the up-grading of the various health professions within Europe.

This effect is being driven by change to the health workforce and health care provision across Europe. The changing of roles and job demanding new and different responsibilities has lead to new institutions and curricula being called for. This will require changes to the role of health teachers and academics and due to demographics and career options new types of students in the health care field. A new professional culture is developing, Kendall and Lissauer, (2003) one that will develop different relationships with patients and learners which in turn will change jobs and roles within health care. The following diagram represents the change that will occur to health professionals educations as a consequence of being university based (figure 1).

Bologna Copenhagen Lisbon – E.U. – Wider

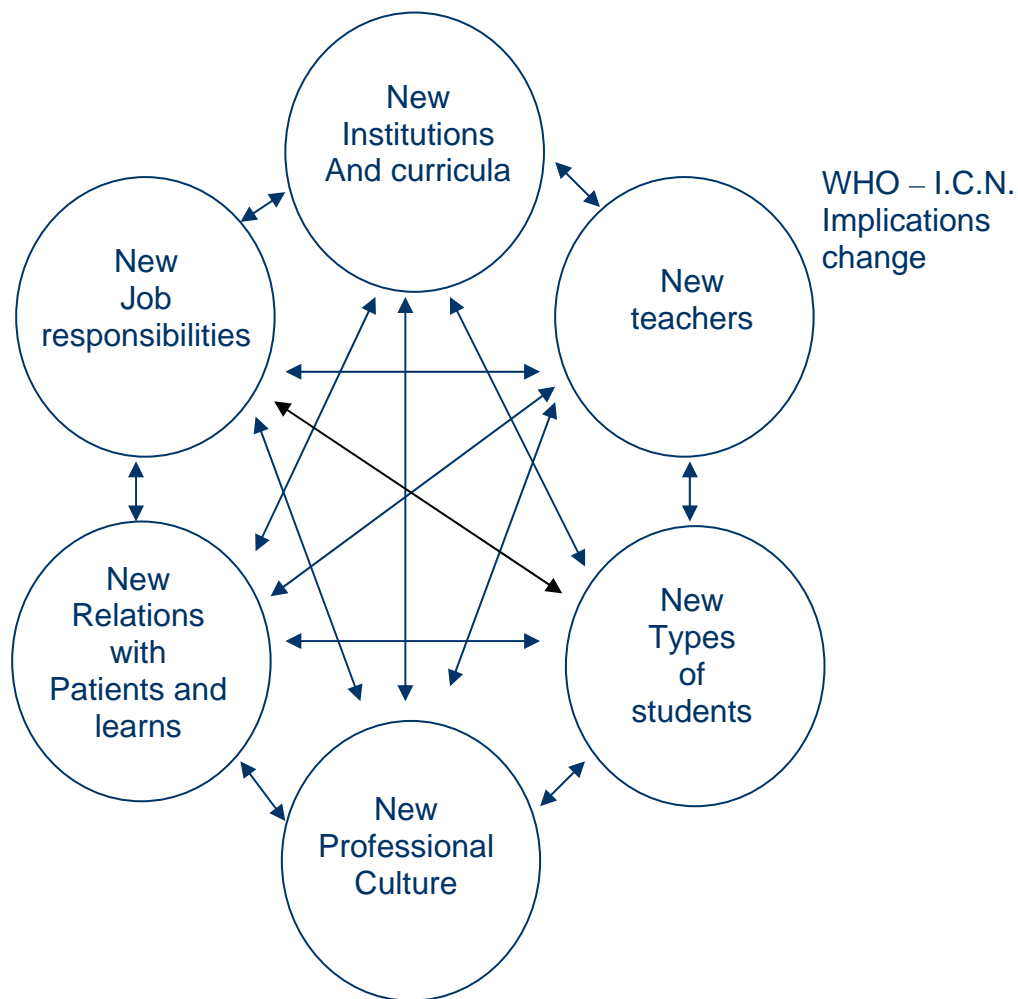


Figure 1

When one looks at the development of health care in the 21st century one can see that fundamental change is going to occur. The aim of 21st century health care is represented by the Institute of Medicine 2001 declaration.

Establishing Aims for the 21st Century Health Care System (Institute of Medicine 2001)

- Safe – avoiding injuries to patients from the care that is intended to help them
- Effective – providing services based on scientific knowledge to all who could benefit and refraining from provided services to those not likely to benefit (avoiding under-use and overuse, respectively)
- Patient-centred – providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values and ensuring that patient's values guide all clinical decisions.
- Timely – reducing waits and sometimes harmful delays for both those who receive and those who give care
- Efficient – avoiding waste, including waste of equipment, supplies, ideas and energy

- Equitable – providing care that does not vary in quality because of personal characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, geographic location, and socio-economic status.

This emerging health care environment will need a different notion of professionalism.

Old and new concepts of professionalism (Davies 1996)

Old professionalism

Mastery of knowledge
 Unilateral decision process (Patient as Dependent, colleagues as deferential)
 Autonomy and self-management
 Individual accountability
 Detachment
 Specificity of practitioners' strengths

New professionalism

Reflective practice
 Interdependent decision process (Patient as empowered, colleagues as Involved)
 Supported practice
 Collective responsibility
 Engagement
 Inter-changeability of practitioners

Therefore Cohehre in its development of its education and learning strategy must seek to adhere to these drives and changes. It must foster and support activities which will and institutions and their teachers to change, it must engage with health care reform and development so to allow the modern health care service to evolve and the new sense of professionalism be realised.

It can do these by hosting conferences which support this agenda, sponsoring scholarship to allow investigation into these debates, support student and staff exchanges so to allow partner institutions and colleagues to witness change and by support people to write and publish their analysis and insights.

References

The future health worker 2003
 Authors: Liz Kendall and Rachel Lissauer
 Publisher IPPR
 ISBN 1 86030 2149

References: As proposed by Professor Iain Graham

Key web-sites:

Tuning Project <http://european.eu.int/comm/education/socrates/tuningproject>

UUK Europe Unit www.europeunit.ac.uk

UK Narie <http://www.aria.org.uk/ds/asp>

EU Site – Socrates site European.eu.int/comm/education.erasmus.html

Key background policy papers

Convention on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European Region.

Council of Europe – Conserl de L'Europe

European Treaty Series – No. 165

The Bologna Declaration

The Tuning Project