

Future Prospect

Akio Maruta

Key words : Collaborative education, inter-professional collaboration, core curriculum

The meaning and necessity of collaborative education in this university is to nurture cooperation of professionals in the areas of health, welfare and medicine (called specialist training university) has been reviewed earlier¹). However, such collaborative education in specialist training is the process of development and action toward establishment of the value, process and methods of education which are needed in Japan. Collaboration means cooperation between patients and various health professions based on the identity and human rights of patients, clients, local residents, and education means the training toward obtaining national qualifications in this university. This paper will review our future collaborative education.

Special measures in Japan.

Collaborative education programs in Japanese specialist training universities are currently trying to organize their curriculum under the key words of collaboration, collaborative work and unification. For example, Saitama Prefectural University, which are selected for its “Good practices for unique university education in 2005” by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, is carrying out education with the curriculum shown in Fig.1.

The specific feature of this curriculum is that a group of classes concerning collaboration and generalization and study continues progressively from the freshman year. Examples of specific courses are Human Development (2 units/30

hours) and field work study (1 unit/45 hours) for freshmen, and seminars for inter-professional collaboration (1 unit/30 hours). Especially, the latter is a core course of all departmental students (nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, health and nutrition, social welfare, and health development) to learn inter- professional skills.

Characteristics of collaborative education within our university.

In comparing the course group for collaboration and generalization of Saitama Prefectural University with ours, I would like to point out that ours is operated in the core system as indicated in Table 1.

The center of our core curriculum, educational idea and scope of collaborative education, has the following features;

(1) Training of QOL (quality of life) supporters.

This is our university’s educational principle. Our educational doctrine concentrates on “Quality of Life” and this is the basis of evaluation throughout collaborative education encouraging mutual interaction of all health professions. The basic design of the curriculum is set for our core system from introduction at freshman level to senior level of more special classes, as well as intermingling of preparatory classes and professional classes like a helix.

(2) Placing stress on life model.

Placing the idea of “Quality of Life” for finding common ground in inter-professional

Department of Social Welfare, School of Social Welfare, Niigata University of Health and Welfare
1398 Shimami-cho, Niigata-shi 950-3198, Japan
Tel./Fax.: 81-25-257-4473, E-mail: maruta@nuhw.ac.jp

collaboration means having direct interaction at various phase of life,- birth, development, sickness, disability, aging and death, and understanding patients, clients and local residents in relation to environmental factors in the background (physical environment and social environment) and installing the collaborative practice between professions. Namely, a common model of cooperation between professions means the conversion of a medical model to a life model.

(3) Collaboration between special professions after graduation from our university.

The significance of collaborative education in training at university should remain after the well planned and stepwise provision of education before and after registered qualification. We hope to provide a time schedule of collaborative education not only in the four years of education but in the work place after graduation. To this end, support will be carried out through meetings and publication from The Niigata Health and Welfare Society.

(4) Reputation of our graduates.

A survey carried out concerning our graduates, who are working in hospitals as social workers after the completion of four years of collaborative education, indicated the following:

- The education made a contribution about how to understand oneself and patients through human relations at every work place.
- It was useful for the establishment of collaboration for assessment of needs, planning of discharge and many other areas concerning patients.
- The education helped in practicing collaboration between professionals in hospitalization, early stage planning and discharge of patient, and care planning after discharge from hospital.

A question was raised about the junior year which has a rather weak core curriculum for collaborative education. The institution of 「case

study requiring collaboration of specialists」 and/or 「on site study of collaboration of specialists」 may be needed for improvement of the course.

The ability of communication, coordination and network formation among professional societies is indispensable for cooperative work. There is an opinion that only a core curriculum is not enough to build such ability, but service that learning to promote self improvement within four years is needed.

Perspectives.

Collaborative education at Niigata University of Health and Welfare is unique in idea and curriculum, however, a few problems have arise due to students' criticism. We are reviewing the coming year's core curriculum in relation to collaborative studies. In such aqn environment, Fig. 2 shows an image of the future of collaborative education.

- (1) We must establish an spirally interacting curriculum from the introductory class of the freshman year to integrated learning seminar in senior year.
- (2) Formation of not only communication ability but of a high sensitivity and creativity are indispensable to obtain high quality collaboration among QOL supporters. Thus, the introduction of voluntary learning to nurture one's own human development through four years of university life.
- (3) Collaborative education of our university aims at improving collaboration at the work places of our graduates. We must build an organized system, that checks and evaluates, at all times, for both education before obtaining national qualification and professional work area of our graduates.

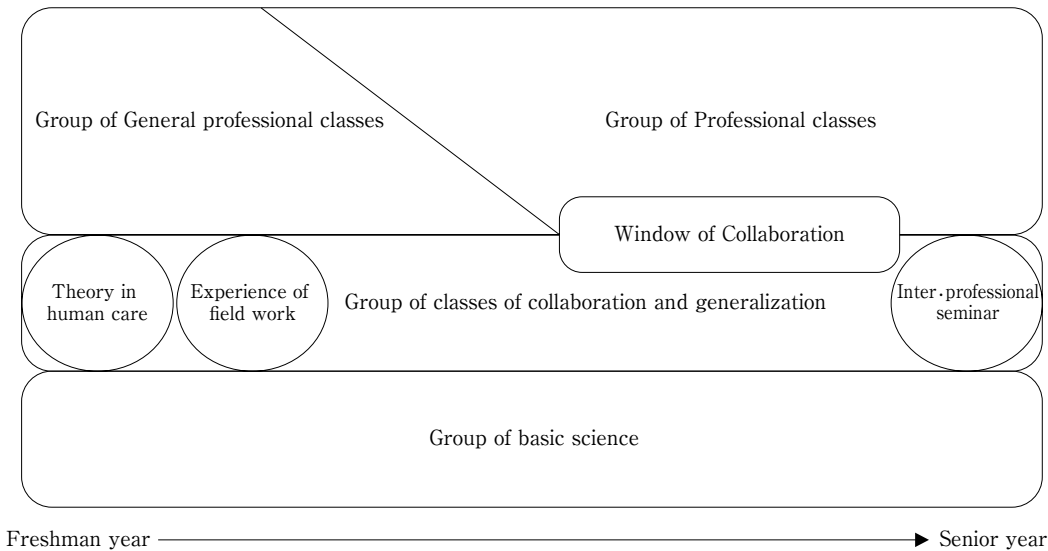
Refernce

- 1) Takahashi, Hideaki (2006): Overview of collaborative education. Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare, this issue.

Table 1 Major classes of collaborative education.

Niigata University of Health and Welfare	Saitama Prefectural University
(Introductory education)	(Group of classes for collaborative and Generalization
*Freshman seminar I and II	* Discussion of human care
	*Field work experience
(Core curriculum)	*Practice for inter professional collaboration
*Quality of Life Studies	
*Human Nature	(Window of collaboration)
*Health and Welfare	* Professional classes of other departments
* Collaboration Theory in Health and Welfare	
:	
*Communication Skills in health and welfare	
*Discussion on service of Health and Social Care	
* Health and Social Welfare	
*Integrated Learning Seminar	
1) Only major classes of collaborative education for core curriculum of Niigata University of Health and Welfare.	
2) Niigata University of Health and Welfare consists of seven departments, namely, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Health and Nutrition , Health and Sports, Nursing and Social Welfare.	
3) Saitama Prefectural University consists of five departments, namely, Nursing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Social Welfare and Health and Development.	

Fig.1 Design of curriculum



Drived from Saitama Prefectural University, Home page (<http://www.spu.ac.jp/saipe/index.htm>).

Major classes for collaborative education.

Niigata University of Health and Welfare

(Introductory classes)

* Freshman seminar I.II

(Core curriculum)

* Quality of Life Studies

* Human Nature

* Health and Welfare

* Collaboration Theory in Health and Welfare

* Communication Skills in Health and Social Care

* Health and Social Services

* Health and Social Welfare

Saitama Prefectural University

(Class Group for collaboration and integration)

Theory of Human Care

Fieldwork Practice

Inter-professional Seminar

(Window of Collaboration)

* Special courses from other departments

- 1) Only major collaborative education courses were listed for Niigata University of Health and Welfare.
- 2) In 2007, the University consists of seven departments, Physical therapy, Occupational therapy, Speech therapy, Health and Nutrition, Health and Sports, Nursing and Social Welfare.
- 3) Saitama Prefectural University operates with five departments, Nursing, Physical therapy, Occupational therapy, Social Welfare and Health development.

Fig.2 Collaborative education in Niigata University Health and Welfare.

