

Akinori AKAIKE

Wakayama Medical University

---

In 2006, the education system of pharmaceutical sciences has been changed. A new education system consisted of the 6- and the 4-year courses. I joined efforts in promoting the new education system by participating committees for model core curriculum of undergraduate course of pharmaceutical sciences (core-curriculum), pharmacist educator workshop, pharmaceutical common achievement test, evaluation of pharmaceutical education programs and national examination for pharmacists conducted by ministry of health, labour and welfare. Thus, I will outline the efforts for reforming these pharmaceutical education systems.

The purpose of the 6-year undergraduate course in pharmaceutical sciences is to educate pharmacists who play an important role in medical care and medicinal sciences. Core-curriculum was prepared under the initiative of the Pharmaceutical Society of Japan in 2002. The pharmacist educator workshops were frequently held for training and development of educators engaged in the 6-year undergraduate course. Subcommittee of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Science Council of Japan also held workshops for development of educational systems of pharmaceutical sciences. Under those efforts, education system consisted of the 6- and the 4-year courses started in 2006. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare revised the national examination for pharmacists along with the advancement of the 6-year course for pharmacist education. A new national exam consisting of essential and general exam questions (theoretical and practical questions) started in 2012. More than 10 years after formulating the former core curriculum, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology led the reform of the core curriculum in 2013. Basic idea of the revised core curriculum is outcome-based education. Moreover, the trend of the social environment surrounding pharmacists in recent years was positively reflected. Minor revisions of the national examination for pharmacists were also made following the revision of core-curriculum. Subcommittee of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Science Council of Japan conducted reference standards for pharmaceutical sciences to promote education and research in 4-year course.

Goal of human resources education in 6-year education of pharmaceutical sciences is considered to develop pharmacists as medicinal experts who positively participate in medical teams to relieve people suffering from disease through disease prevention and treatment in medical teams. Furthermore, it is important to construct and develop new systems for education and research in response to recent changes in the environment surrounding medicinal fields including basic and translational research. In particular, we have to develop education systems for raising pharmacists and researchers who are able to respond to changes in society due to advances in informatics technology and the arrival of ultra-aging society.