

Stricto sensu graduate course in Physiotherapy in Brazil: current scenario

Pós-graduação stricto sensu em Fisioterapia no Brasil: cenário atual

Posgrado stricto sensu en Fisioterapia en Brasil: contexto actual

Nowadays, 30 *stricto sensu* Graduate Programs in Physiotherapy in Brazil are currently in operation, evaluated and recognized by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes). The subarea of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy is part of Capes area 21, which also includes physical education and speech therapy programs. Among the 30 graduate courses authorized by Capes, 16 are academic master's courses, 13 are academic master's and doctorate courses, and one is a professional master's course¹, totaling, 43 courses, 30 master's and 13 doctorate courses.

The highest concentration of *stricto sensu* graduate courses in physiotherapy and occupational therapy in Brazil is in the Southeast region (50%), followed by the Northeast (20%) and South (16.7%) regions, even though all regions of the country showed an expansion in recent years, with the most recent new graduate courses in Physiotherapy opening in the North (state of Pará) region, in 2019².

In the last 10 years, due to the expansion of graduate courses, the formation of human resources and the production of knowledge has grown considerably^{2,3}. The last document of area 21 published in 2019, on the Capes website, shows that, in the last decade (2005–2015), the number of masters and Ph.Ds increased in 106% and 506%, respectively². The generation of quality scientific knowledge for Physiotherapy and greater national and international visibility of our science added to the evolution of training³. Moreover, the evolution of *stricto sensu* graduate studies in Brazil impacts on advances in Brazilian physiotherapy, in the training of teachers and physiotherapists⁴⁻⁶.

In 1996, the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar) obtained Capes authorization to start the first master's program in Physiotherapy⁴. Since then, the creation of new programs has sustainably grown and the evaluation criteria used by Capes have matured². The graduate courses of the

Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy subarea of Capes area 21 are named as Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation Sciences, Human Movement and Rehabilitation, Motion Sciences, Rehabilitation and Functional Performance¹.

The first National Forum for Research and Graduate Studies in Physiotherapy was held in 2005 at UFSCar, and brought together professors to discuss policies for organizing the area, guidelines, lines of research and for strengthening Brazilian scientific journals⁴. In this same event, the Brazilian Association of Research and Graduate Studies in Physiotherapy (ABRAPG-Ft) was created^{4,5}, which celebrated 15 years of existence in 2020 in an online event, due to the pandemic, in which the current and perspectives of research and graduate studies in Brazil were discussed.

What do we expect in the coming years for *stricto sensu* graduate courses in Physiotherapy in Brazil in the current scenario? We see some very sustainable programs, which tend to strengthen and remain at high levels of quality, innovating and expanding internationalization. All this even in the face of financial resources restrictions of the funding agencies and difficulties of other natures. As for smaller programs, what has been happening already is the union of graduate courses to strengthen one another.

The debates organized by ABRAPG-Ft⁶ with the coordinators, professors, and students of the courses have promoted, in addition to the growth of the area, concrete results for research in Physiotherapy in the country. This shows that we are moving towards a very promising future in the context of research and graduate studies in Physiotherapy in Brazil.

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