

Development of professional rehabilitation training system in Latvia

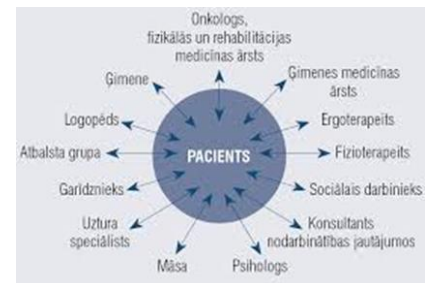
Aivars Vētra*, Rūdolfs Vētra**, Jānis Vētra*

*Rīga Stradins University **Latvian University

When Latvia regained its independence, significant changes were made to the Latvian health care system, especially to rehabilitation sector - a system of medical rehabilitation services was established instead of sanatorium / health resort treatment. The most important of these changes was the provision of professional training for the main occupations of rehabilitation service providers and the specialization of doctors in rehabilitation. From 1993 to 2000 Rīga Stradins University (RSU) prepared and accredited study programs in physiotherapy (1993), occupational therapy (1995), prosthetic / orthotic (1997), audio and speech therapy (1998). Between 1995 and 1996, a modified residency training for rehabilitation doctors was organized and, since 1997, social workers have been trained at RSU.

It is important to mention the establishment of the Faculty of Rehabilitation at RSU in 1995, additional qualification program of graduates of Latvian Academy of Sports Medicine in 1996-1997, as well as joint project of NRC Vaivari, Daugavpils City Council, Daugavpils Regional Hospital and RSU in Daugavpils, that created physiotherapy programs in Daugavpils.

Consequently, after the restoration of independence, during the first ten years study programs were prepared in all the major professions required for the provision of multiprofessional rehabilitation services.



In addition, the professional activities of these rehabilitation professionals in health care have also created a steady demand for rehabilitation services from other medical professionals and the general public.

