Parkinson’s Foundation Physical Therapy Faculty Program Evaluation

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KEY FINDINGS:
The Parkinson’s Foundation Physical Therapy Faculty Program improves curriculum content, teaching and treatment confidence, and specialized knowledge related to PD.

Background

• In 2016, the Parkinson’s Foundation partnered with clinical and research experts to implement a training program for physical therapy (PT) faculty who want to develop skills in teaching entry-level PT students about Parkinson’s disease (PD).
• The program is offered free to PT faculty.
• Purpose: This report describes the PT Faculty Program and its outcomes from 2016-2019.

Methodology

• The PT Faculty Program provides faculty with PD-specific didactic and observational training at expert clinical and research centers.
• The 4-day curriculum was aligned across the two centers to include PD medical and surgical management, PT delivery models for PD, PT evaluation and treatment for PD, and curriculum planning.
• Program evaluation surveys include knowledge and confidence domains.

Results

• Reach: As of March 2020, 44 faculty members have completed the program, 16 in 2019. These 44 faculty have taught approximately 5580 PT students since the inception of the PT Faculty Training Program.
• Knowledge Improved: Participants significantly increased their knowledge from before to after the training on a five question test (p=0.009).
• Teaching and Treating Confidence: Participants had improved confidence teaching about PD and treating people with PD (p<0.0001 and p<0.001, respectively).
• Benefits of PT Faculty Training: Themes related to benefits of PT Faculty Training in 2019 included impact related to improved curriculum content.

Conclusion

• Training PT Faculty in the teaching and clinical expertise for people with PD improves teaching and curriculum.
• Future Directions:
  • Grants have been offered through competitive applications to further develop PT Faculty and facilitate their success.
  • An online educational platform has been developed by the Parkinson’s Foundation to share curriculum development resources with faculty trainees.
  • The PT Faculty Alumni Association continues to share resources and education between Faculty.

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