

POST-DEGREE EDUCATION FOR THE PHARMACIST: CURRENT PROBLEMS

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Post-degree courses have two main aims: 1. to complete the professional education of a doctor in Pharmacy, 2. to provide an instrument of life-long learning.

In the Faculty of Pharmacy, the pre-degree courses are markedly multidisciplinary and with a variety of scientific interests. Therefore, highly professional post-degree education is strongly needed, particularly if the University, at which the degree was obtained, devoted marginal attention to professional training. In this context, a key role is played by the School of Specialization in Hospital Pharmacy. This is the only School of Specialization that has been awarded to the Faculty of Pharmacy, and represents the only one that addresses all the professional roles of the Pharmacist, both in hospital and territorial setting. However, even though it has been a success to keep the School in the Faculty of Pharmacy, it should be emphasized that the School, which has been recently approved, includes only chemical and technological, but not pharmacological disciplines among those defined as “specific for the typology of the School”. This has important implications in terms of post-degree education for the Pharmacist. The scientific Societies SIF and SIFO have expressed their disappointment about the exclusion of pharmacology from the disciplines “specific for the typology of the School”.

According to the law 509/99, Universities can offer post-degree courses called “Master Universitari” and “Corsi di perfezionamento”. In addition the Health Ministry promotes events of Continuous Education in Medicine (CEM). These university courses, and the CEM courses are mostly instruments of life-long learning, rather than courses aimed at completing the professional education. The university courses usually have high standards of quality, but often have rather high costs that limit the number of participants. CEM courses provide an opportunity for cultural updating, but probably much remains to be done to improve their quality in terms of scientific content and the modalities of delivery. CEM courses content is usually solid when they are organized by Scientific Societies or Universities in collaboration with Professional Orders; other organizers very often provide courses that are influenced by economical or scientific interests. Probably it is time to switch to e-learning modalities for CEM courses, rather than going on with in-person teaching after (or even during) dinner on working days or during week-ends.