

AbstractID: 12841 Title: The medical physics specialization system in Poland

The aim of this paper is to present the situation of the profession of medical physicists in Poland. The official recognition of the profession of medical physicist in Polish legislation was done in 2002. In recent years, more and more Universities which have Physics Faculties introduce the medical physics specialty. At present there are about 15 Universities which offer such programs in medical physics. These Universities can graduate about 150 medical physicists per year. In 2002, the Ministry of Health introduced a program of postgraduate specialization in medical physics along the same rules used in specialization of physicians in various branches of medicine. Seven institutions were selected as teaching institutions, based on their experience, quality of the medical physics professionals, staffing levels, equipment availability, lecture halls, etc. The first cycle of specialization programme started in 2005 and the first candidates completed their training at the end of 2008 and passed their official state exams in May 2009, becoming medical physics experts. In 2006, the Ministry of Health issued a regulation specifying the required number of physicists and medical physics experts employed in radiotherapy and nuclear medicine departments. In radiotherapy, every department has to employ 3 physicists (including 2 medical physics experts) per 1000 new patients treated per year. At present, there are about 220 medical physicists employed in radiotherapy facilities. So far the overall number of medical physicist is sufficient, but the number of medical physics experts is too small. At present, the formation of medical physics professionals in Poland is well established. The principles of postgraduate training and specialization are well established and the curriculum of the training is very comprehensive and demanding. However, the system of specialization should be further strengthened and supported financially to meet the requirements established by the Polish Ministry of Health.