

2012

International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation Madrid (Spain) 15-17th Nov 2010

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Recommended Citation

Sheen, J. (2011). International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation Madrid (Spain) 15-17th Nov 2010. *Australasian Journal of Paramedicine*, 9(1).
Retrieved from <http://ro.ecu.edu.au/jephc/vol9/iss1/9>

This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.
<http://ro.ecu.edu.au/jephc/vol9/iss1/9>



ISSN 1447-4999

CONFERENCE REVIEW

International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation, Madrid (Spain) 15-17th Nov 2010

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The third annual International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI 2010) was held in Madrid (Spain) on the 15th, 16th and 17th of November, 2010. ICERI 2010 was designed as an international forum for educators to share projects and innovations in educational research and practice. It included more than seven hundred delegates from sixty-five countries.

ICERI 2010 was organised by the International Association for Technology, Education and Development (IATED), a non-profit private association dedicated to the promotion of international education and university cooperation in the field of Technology and Science. IATED arranged the proceedings and also published a CD of abstracts and papers from the conference that are currently available on their website, with an aim to promoting international co-operation and developing closer links between relevant educational institutions. Abstracts were selected under the following categories:

- Global Issues in Education and Research (e.g. student support and barriers to learning)
- Education: New Trends and Experiences (e.g. assessment of student learning)
- Research: New Trends and Experiences (e.g. research methodologies)
- New challenges in the higher education area (e.g. joint-degree programs)
- Teacher training (e.g. human resource development)
- Curriculum design (new experiences for curriculum design)
- Accreditation and quality assurance (e.g. quality processes and national and international level)
- University-industry cooperation (e.g. workplace learning)
- International projects (e.g. university networks)
- Technology in teaching and learning (e.g. online laboratories)
- E-content management and development (e.g. digital libraries)

The flexible presentation modes, including posters, oral and virtual presentations, was certainly beneficial and allowed delegates to attend presentations based on individual

preferences and learning needs.

The author presented a paper titled 'Developing a multidisciplinary education framework: challenges and incentive' which outlined a project undertaken by members of Monash University and funded by the Department of Health and Aging. The project was designed to promote optimal management of mental health consumers during times of crisis in the prehospital sector and was delivered to undergraduate health students in disciplines such as nursing, occupational therapy, medicine and paramedics. The paper discussed the team's experiences in developing and applying the multidisciplinary teaching program.

Interdisciplinary education was a theme picked up in other presentations, with challenges such as timetabling and the integration of different health philosophies noted. Delegates at the conference shared other teaching experiences with professionals from law, medicine, pharmacy, paramedics and IT to name a few. Unfortunately, with such a broad scope of practice included, there was little depth of discussion or development of the conference themes. Moreover, while the conference was very well organised, the sheer number of presentations meant that it was easy to miss presentations of interest.

Despite the varied faculties and professions presenting, key themes and challenges outside those specified by the conference organisers, were noted amongst the university level lecturers present. It seems that issues such as decreasing student attendance, limited access to field placement opportunities and concerns regarding the rapid evolution of educational technology, are universal. For this reason, the use of simulated practice environments in higher education was a key theme, as was developments in educational theory designed to channel the ever growing field of e-learning.

ICERI 2011 is being held in Madrid, Spain, from 14th-16th November. This conference is recommended for educators wishing to expand their professional network and share innovations in teaching practice and research.