

The 16th Congress of Japanese Medical Shoe

Date: 27 and 28 September 2002

Venue: Sendai Citizen Hall (Sendai Shimin Kaikan Hall)

Abstract

Germany:

Education in the field of Orthopaedic Shoe Technique in Germany is part of the Handwerksmeister system. Other health related professions like the prosthetist – orthotist in Germany are educated in the same system. It is divided into 3 stages.

The first stage typically begins after high school with a 3.5 years apprenticeship (Lehrezeit). This stage is highly regulated by the law. The apprentice makes an educational contract with an Orthopaedic Shoemaker Meister (OSM). The contract must be registered with the Chamber of Trade. Further, the OSM must provide an educational plan to the Chamber of Trade as part of the educational contract. The educational plan must stay within the educational regulations and by laws. This is to insure that the “on the job training” part of the apprenticeship contains the required contents within the regulated time frame.

During the apprenticeship, the typical apprentice spends about 980 hours in a college to learn theory and about 4600 hours on the job training within the set educational plan. This is called the dual education system. Additionally the apprentice spends about 3 weeks in a dedicated college to learn theoretical and practical skills that he/she may have not been able to study in his/her regular college or at his/her apprentice place.

There are 2 examinations held during the process and the final examination (Gesellenprüfung) after the end of the 3.5 years. The examinations are nationwide conducted in the same way and content.

The second stage is the journeyman time (Gesellenzeit). It has to be at least 36 months long, but can be longer. It is a non-regulated part of the educational process. During this time the Geselle makes practical experiences and works for pay with registered OSMs. The Geselle is encouraged to work in different places to broaden his/her skill and experiences. Further, it is strongly suggested to attend the various Meister Schools for short courses on selected subjects. Some may choose not to proceed to the Meister level and choose regular employment at the Geselle level.

After completing the second stage, the Geselle can enter the Meister School. The Meister School takes about 1500 teaching hours crammed into usually 9 months full-time. The subjects are concentrated on orthopaedic shoe technology, medical and clinical aspects, medical foot care and treatment related issues. Most Meisters are expected to run small companies and to train apprentices, therefore further content deals with business and legal matters as well as education processes. At the end of the school stands the Meisterprüfung (master exam). The chairperson of the Meister examination board is an orthopaedic doctor.

Starting in the year 2003, a 3,5-year full-time university course will be offered. Prerequisite will be to have passed the stage 1 that is why the academically 4-year course is shortened to 3,5 years.

Japan:

When I came to Japan in 1987, I learned that Japan did not have any system. At that time there was no education available to teach about Orthopaedic Shoe Technique in Japan. I taught in a first course in early 1988 in Kobe. In 1989, I started the Foot and Shoe Academy courses in Nagoya together with Mr. Shimizu of the Foot and Shoe Science Institute. It was the first structured teaching program in Japan.

The aim of the course was and is to set up a basic training structure that is ongoing. We selected a curriculum that enables the participants to deal with the most common foot – footwear problems. The Foot and Shoe Academy course stretches over 2 years a total of 256 hours. It is set parallel to the participants working to get on the job experience. After graduation, there is ongoing support and a number of updating courses are held regularly.

Over the years we have updated the system. The current situation has the entry level of a 6-day course (48 hours). This leads into the first section of the Foot and Shoe Academy course of 16 days (128 hours). The second section is another 16 days (128 hours). The follow-on courses are concentrated on consultation and assessment skills (128 hours) as well as advanced modification courses (128 hours).

All graduates have the option of resitting the course they graduated from at a no cost. This will allow them to revisit training sections they are not sure about or to freshen up on subjects.

Even if one does all the courses, it is still short of what the German systems does and may leave the graduate with facing customers' foot problems they have never seen. To help our graduates and their customers, we offer our graduates a cooperation system that provides ongoing support and training. The participants will have access to all technologies the orthopaedic shoe technology has to offer. This includes that I have clinics in their shops on request to help the participants to handle their unusual or complex cases and to provide follow up. We place a strong emphasis on this ongoing relationship and support.

We took the dual education model from Germany and adopted it to our system here in Japan: on the job training, theoretical education and follow up and support.

Conclusion:

The German system has a history going back many hundreds of years. However, because of the aftermath of the 2 World Wars, the system became what it is today. Instrumental in the development has been the involvement of medical doctors, in particular orthopaedic doctors. The German society orthopaedics and traumatology (DGOT), now called German society for orthopaedics and orthopaedic surgery (DGOOC), has a special committee consisting of orthopaedic doctors and orthopaedic shoe meisters. This advisory committee, since many years, has been actively involved in educational matters as well as establishing treatment systems. In Japan such a committee does not exist at this stage, but is urgently needed to establish a much-needed Japanese national system.

REFERENCES

1. Rahmenlehrplan für den Ausbildungsberuf des

Orthopädieschuhmacher/Orthopädieschuhmacherin

(Beschluss der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 25.03.1999)

2. Gesetz zur Ordnung des Handwerks (HWO)

§ 25 Abs. 1 in Verbindung mit Abs. 2 Satz in der Fassung der Bekanntmachung vom 28. Dezember 1965 (BGBl. 1966 I S. 1), der zuletzt durch Artikel 1 Nr.9 des Gesetzes vom 25. März 1998 (BGBl. I S. 596) geändert ist