Czech Association of Addictologists – lessons learnt

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Beginnings

BACKGROUND

- 1st Faculty of Medicine, Charles University
- October 2005 – a group of first students of the bachelor´s program, mainly experienced and really interested in the addictions topic but at the beginning of their professional journey
- Centre for Addictology of the Psychiatric Dept. (now independent Department of Addictology)
- Already existing professional organizations of medical doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists etc.
- Addictologist is a healthcare professional

WHO?

- First graduates encouraged and supported by Dept. of Addictology and its employees → professional organization Czech Association of Addictologists

Beginnings

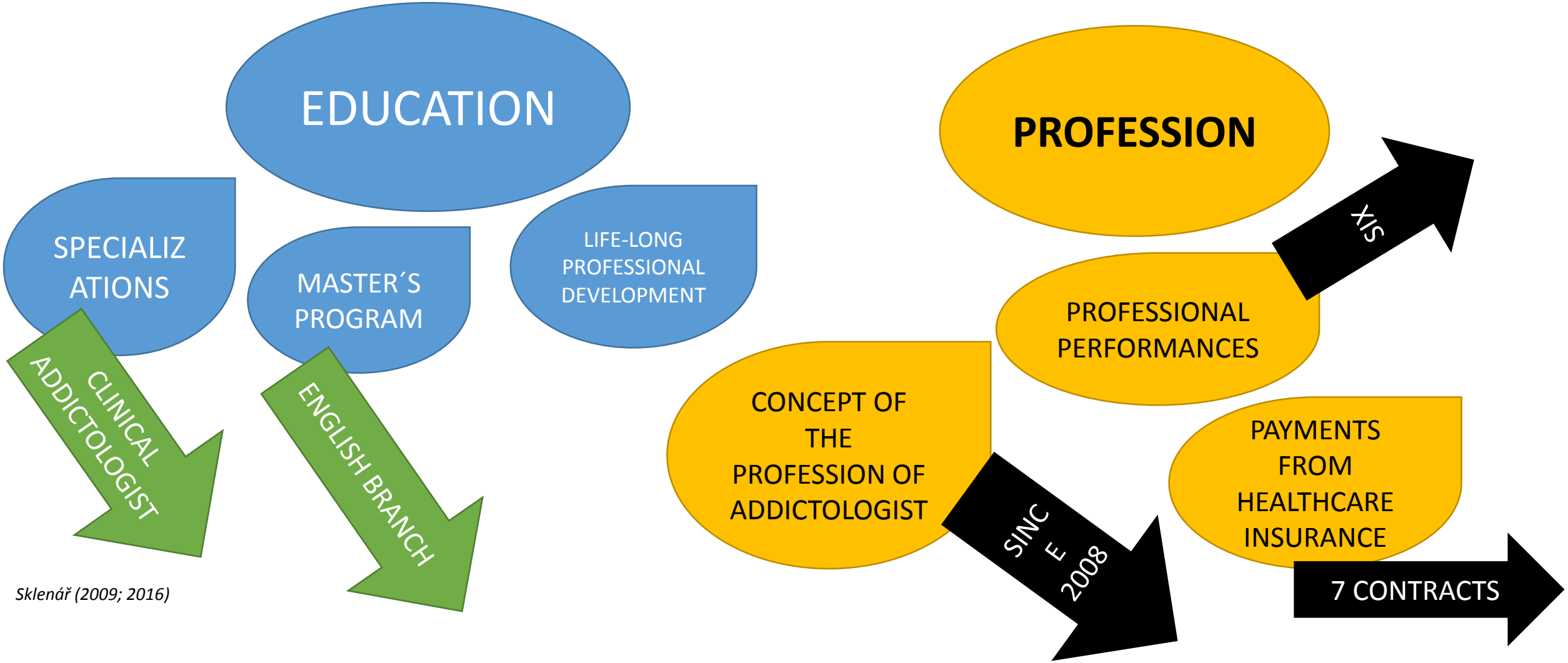
WHY? = AIMS

- Defend the CAA members´ interests
- Participate in preparing, promoting and realization of basic and professional life-long education
- Participate in preparing, improving and developing of the system and concept of the addictological services
- Propose the concept and other amendments to the relevant institutions and cooperate with other similar organizations
- Deputize the members in communication and acting with state, legal and other institutions
- Strengthen the position of and opportunities for the members in local and international context
- Iniciate and support development of research in the field

Czech Association of Addictologists

- = professional, voluntary, non-profit, non-political organization with legal personality
- Open to the Addictology programs graduates and other workers in addictology field in the Czech Republic
- Purpose – to gather and unify addiction professionals with the same focus and professional interests and to develop non-medical healthcare profession of addictologists
- Established in 2009
- March 2018 – 137 registered members
- Activities – development of the field, longterm professional education, research and strengthening the position and opportunities of its members in the CR and in abroad
- Collaboration with other institutions, such as ministries, professional associations in other disciplines, Department of Addictology (ČAA, 2016)
- Important in integrating a new profession (infrastructure)

First tasks and focus



Sklenář (2009; 2016)

Where CAA was a part of the development

- Continuous emancipation of the addictology field and its clear definition and position in the healthcare system and improvement of relationship with other professions
- 2010 – first attempt in history in changing the position of the healthcare profession of addictologist through asking the Ministry of Health for the profession having its own healthcare performances, and so being paid from the general insurance sources in future
  - At least part of our work should be paid from the healtcare system sources
  - Recourse to payments only from the social system meant most of the services were classified as social services x payment of the healthcare was missing with inadequate capacity
  - Negotations with the healthcare insurance companies and ministries
- Collaboration in preparation of the first concept of network of the integrated addictological services – with other professional organizations and ministries and Department of Addictology

Role, functions = what CAA realized

- Ensure enough money to the addictology field
- Development of the addictological services network
- Negotiation and education in the opinions, attitudes, explanations, dialogue mediation – i.e. harmony in the healthcare and social systems
- Working group for the healthcare performances – describe the comprehensive activity of the addictologist
  - Analysis of the previously prepared documents (mostly by Dept. of Addictology)
  - Preparation of the draft of performances, description
  - Negotiations (Sklenář, 2013)
- The performances are intended for the outpatient services, with the aim to develop the network of this kind of services, according to the concept → clients have available healthcare in the outpatient addictological services for free (paid from the insurance)

Space for improvement in CAA

- 1) MEMBERSHIP
- Promotion of the membership in CAA
- Low number of members = lower strength in negotations with the state institutions
- Members must be active
- Membership is voluntary (x medical doctors must be members of the professional organization)
- 2) GUARANTEE OF QUALITY OF CARE
- Supervision of keeping the ethical issues and quality of professional performance is missing + no consequenses in case of mistakes
- 3) INTERNATIONALIZATION
- Limited information in English = harder sharing of knowledge

Benefits of being part of CAA

- Low membership fee (less than 10 dollars/year)
- Better prices for the conferences, education, professional journals
- Strong personalities as leaders (necessary and key)
- Graduates working in the field bring new opportunities for the practical education in real, as they enable current students to undergo practice in there for free
- Connection between education and research and practice

Future steps

- Cooperation, creating of the international organization (ISSUP)
- Synchronicity is a key element in this field that can bring desirable efect – a synergy (Miovský, 2011)
- Knowledge sharing, support
- Advocacy strengthening (change of the status?)
- Necessity of cooperation within the local context, discussions and working hand-in-hand for a clear result

Similar associations

NAADAC (Association for Addiction Professionals) www.naadac.org

- Represents the professional interests of addiction counselors, educators and other addiction-focused health care professionals who specialize in addiction prevention, treatment, recovery support and education in the United States, Canada and abroad
- Provides education, clinical training and certification
- Functions - government relations and advocacy, membership, a code of ethics and certification
- Chapters in each state in the USA and elsewhere, such as Asia Pacific Association for Addiction Professionals (http://apaap.tungwahcsd.org/main/)

International Association of Addiction Professionals (IAAP) https://iaapro.org/

International Association of Addictions & Offender Counselor (IAAOC)
http://www.iaaoc.org/about.html

WHAT YOU NEED IF SOMETHING LIKE CAA NEEDS TO BE CREATED

- ADDICTOLOGISTS/ WORKERS IN THE ADDICTIONS FIELD INTERESTED IN IT AND WILLING TO BE ACTIVE
- SUPPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY, OTHER PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- COMMUNICATION & COMMUNICATION & COMMUNICATION
- NEGOTIATIONS
- MOTIVATION, PATIENCE AND STRENGTH
- TIME

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