

PHD program “Social work and social policy”

Professional training of social workers for providing educational services for older adults

Natalia Tkachenko

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email: natalinda777@gmail.com

The initiation and development of educational services, educational programs for older adults and the universities of third age, as a result of humanization of educational system and meeting the educational needs of the elderly, leads to the necessity of professional training of social workers for providing such services for this group of clients.

The investigations concerning this problem refer either to the principles of geragogy and peculiarities of the elderly “students”, or to the general standards of professional training of social workers. That`s why the aim of this research is to find the connection points between these two groups of investigations by defining the components of professional competence of social workers, who provide educational services for older adults, and the pedagogical conditions, which would help to develop these competences during university education.

As a result of the critical literature analysis, four groups of professional competences of mentioned professionals have been defined: general, specific, personal and ethical. They can be effectively developed during the process of professional education through: using personal approach of education, using interactive methods, developing the students` need for professional self-education, their motivation for future professional practice and ethical attitude towards older adults, and, finally, through students` practice in social services, which provide educational services for the elderly.

The functioning and effectiveness of mentioned conditions for developing professional competence of these professionals will be experimentally tested through implementing the optional course “Providing educational services for older adults” into educational process.

Key words: older adults, social workers, educational services, professional training, professional competence.