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## Current Status and Development Prospects of Legal Clinics in Russia

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**Abstract:**

*The paper deals with the issues of legal education quality improvement in Russia by means of involving clinical (practice-oriented) components. The concept and advantages of clinical legal education as a process of practice-oriented training based on legal clinics (higher educational institutions' structural units) established for practical training of law students are defined. The legal clinic should be a compulsory component of educational programs for both Bachelors and Masters. The essence of clinical education consisting in students' previous professional training and practical work regarding actual legal assistance to the population on a free-of-charge basis is revealed. The legal framework of organization and activity of legal clinics in Russia are analyzed. Gaps in statutory regulation are demonstrated. A comparative analysis of Russian clinics is carried out. Clinics' common features and differences are revealed by means of the analysis. In general, the operation of legal clinics in higher educational institutions is organized in different ways. Common problems many clinics face are distinguished, recommendations regarding their operation improvement are provided. An efficient, according to the author, operation model of legal clinics carrying out students' clinical (practice-oriented) training is offered. Clinical legal training stages are specified. The conditions for improving required quality of legal services rendered by students under the guidance of teachers are distinguished. Upcoming problems to solve for future development of legal clinics in Russia are distinguished.*

**Key Words:** *Legal clinic, clinical training, occupational skills, education, consulting, practice-oriented training, legal advice*

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduce the Problem**

Currently the level of legal students' training does not meet the conditions of modern society development. It primarily relates to the absence of due attention to the practical component of education. With a great number of laws and by-laws, the structure of which constantly changes and becomes more complex, the issue is quality of legal provisions enforcement by would-be lawyers or, in other words, by students recently graduated from university. This is because they have to study the basics of enforcement of law on specific life situations. Lawyers take part in such important areas of public life as delivery of justice, state administration, protection of citizens' and others' legal rights and interests, that's why they need strong occupational skills.

Such powerful element of education modernization and efficient legal education as practice-oriented training can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practice. For this purpose legal clinics have been actively established lately in Russia.

The core of the clinical part of legal education is mastering practical skills and professional ethics basics by students. That's why efficient development and improvement of practice-oriented forms of education is important under current conditions. Their use should become an essential condition and requirement for general educational process.

In this regard it's necessary to solve many questions: development of legal clinical doctrine; improvement of clinical practice in legal sphere; defining legal clinics' role as participants of the non-state system of free legal advice; determination of modern forms of education and legal enlightenment; development of forms of legal clinics' interaction with social structures and state bodies when rendering legal advice; etc. Continuous practical application of clinics' working model proposed in this research will allow efficiently shaping interviewing and consulting skills in respect to legal issues. The demonstrated option of modern clinical legal training will contribute to the improvement of quality of free legal services.

### **1.2 Importance of the Problem**

Modern clinical legal education faces a number of problems, i.a. the lack of clear regulation of legal clinics' organization and operation at legislative level; uncertainty over the legal clinics' status in the system of higher professional education; the issues of legal clinics' financing and legal clinics' personnel's salary; the lack of skilled staff able to teach students practical skills; the questions of innovation teaching methods effectiveness. Solution of these questions will contribute to the further development of legal clinics in Russia.

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It's necessary to create modern innovation model of clinical legal training based on the comparative analysis of different Russian clinics' experience, to define the conceptual framework, to develop educational technologies and interactive teaching methods related to rendering legal services to the population, to establish expected standards of legal clinics' operation, to elaborate proposals regarding the introduction of changes in federal legislation.

### 1.3 Background

The first theoretical apprehension and deep scientific and methodic foundation of the role of practice in the legal experts' training in Russia relates to well-known civil lawyer, Professor Meyer (1855) who organized a legal clinic at the law department of Kazan University, that existed for about 10 years. At the end of the 19th century a return to this idea took place. In particular, Professor Lyublinsky (1900) described requirements to clinics, the need for their formation was revealed. Only in the 1990-s a new stage (largely, with the support of international funds) of establishing legal clinics in Russia took place. It ended with integration of practical training experience carried out by Voskobitova, Gutnikov, Zakharov, Lysenko and others (Voskobitova et al., 2001) and minimal standards developed by Andreechev, Mikhailova, Shugrina, Zykina and others (Andreechev et al., 2003). Our practice is not exclusive. Foreign experience shows that clinical legal training developed in all countries in different forms in a non-formalized and creative way: Chavkin (2002), Sheppard and Enfield (2006).

Currently Russia experiences a new surge of interest in legal clinics, besides, their organization and activity have been legally registered at federal level at some extent. The issues of clinical legal training have already been under discussion for several years running, the questions of legal education poor quality, excessive number of legal universities unable to provide proper rendering of educational services, the lack or non-efficient application of practice-oriented or innovation teaching methods are roused. Meanwhile, some ways of legal education quality improvement, measures regarding acquiring practical skills are offered, there are attempts to develop minimal requirements (standards) in respect to legal clinics' activity: Dranzhevsky (2011), Dobrokhotova (2012), Lukyanova (2011), Narutto (2013), Shugrina (2013), Kulakova, Markova and Samsonova (2014), Hudoykina (2014), etc.

Nonetheless, studying the experience of various legal clinics operating under Russian higher education institutions (HEI), undeveloped conceptual framework, gaps in legislative regulation, problems of financing, formation of legal clinics' staff schedule, uncertainty over the legal clinics' status in HEIs, issues of personnel's salary, improvement of innovative training methods effectiveness require serious research and practical development.

### 1.4 State Hypotheses and Their Correspondence to Research Design

An important task of modern legal education is development of its' practice-oriented focus. At his point, clinical legal training for socially oriented lawyers plays a prominent part.

Today such clinical (practice-oriented) training of students should be actively carried out based on legal clinics, which can be established under universities as an entity or educational organization's unit.

The experience of actual legal clinics, each of which is characterized by its specific features, is important. A particular legal clinic can be described in terms of structure and legal form (under or outside university). Step-by-step introduction of clinical legal training based on legal departments (universities), generalization and analysis of this experience, proposals regarding ways of its improvement will cumulatively contribute to the development of the modernization process of higher education institutions.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1 Document Analysis Method**

Legislative acts and by-laws that enshrine legal clinics' organization and activity basics are studied. Information materials and statistical data on the number of legal clinics established in Russia, their active working or passive existing, when there's only an establishment order, are reviewed. The analysis of provisions concerning these clinics, their codes of ethics, citizens' admission regulations made it possible to find out principles of these structures' work. Information of scientific and educational literature, research and practice conferences' proceedings, round tables, workshops, Internet sources, universities' official sites (legal departments, legal clinics) are generalized by means of content analysis (formalized, qualitative-quantitative study of documents). This method helped to reveal the actual need for applying new efficient forms of practice-oriented training, development of scientific doctrine. It provided the opportunity to assess the feasibility of including clinical courses to the curriculum, to pin down the problems legal clinics face.

### **2.2 Comparative Analysis Method**

Relative independence of legal clinics is defined, their similarities and significant differences are founded out, different approaches to clinical (practice-oriented) training organization in Russian higher education institutions are matched. Different organizational forms of legal clinics are revealed: they are largely established based on legal departments (of universities) what meets the idea of clinical legal education; there are clinics in the form of independent entity, but their work also relates to higher education institution; there are interuniversity legal clinics created by several HEIs. In addition, the positive experience of separate clinics is detected using comparative analysis. It can be useful to various legal clinics in the course of enhancing their work.

### 2.3 Generalized observation and logical deduction method

This method helped to found out general problems in the work of legal clinics and reveal ways to overcome them. Recommendations regarding improving legal clinics' activity are elaborated. Areas of their work (students' preliminary preparation and practical activity) efficient in the framework of clinical training and shaping professional skills of interviewing, consulting, executing legal documents are defined. An efficient model of legal clinics' activity is proposed. Conditions for achieving high quality of free legal services rendered are outlined. Recommendations on extending clinical (practical) legal education, its introduction to the educational process are given.

## 3. Results and Discussion

No doubt, the transition of Russian higher educational institutions to new educational standards owing to the Russian Federation's participation in the Bologna process complicated the tasks of modern lawyer's training. Accordingly, the concept of education core dramatically changes. According to Art. 2 of Federal law No. 273-FZ as of December 29, 2012 "Concerning education in the Russian Federation" this term is defined as a task-oriented process of education and training, providing students with the complex of knowledge, skills, abilities necessary for their professional development (Collection of Laws of the RF, 2012). It should be stated that a new formula should succeed the paradigm involving the synthesis of education and training: legal education is a task-oriented process of legal practitioner's training. In this respect foreign legal education has already experienced dramatic changes (Miller, 2011). If ability is quality of being able to do something, and skill is ability brought to automatism, then to-be lawyers acquire certain abilities and skills in the process of repetition, i.e. in the process of practicing. Professional competences are indicators of legal education quality. According to Dobrokhotova (2012) and other scientists, a part of professional competences can be shaped only under the actual conditions of practice.

Introduction and development of clinical legal education based on legal departments can solve this problem. The development can be explained as a process of practice-oriented (clinical) training, which involves professional training of socially-oriented lawyers based on legal clinics as higher education institutions' units, where under the guidance of teachers or legal practitioners students work with "real" legal situations, solve legal questions and help clients in the enforcement of their rights. In this respect it's possible to interchange such categories as clinical legal education and clinical legal training.

On the one hand, the goal of legal clinics is students' acquisition of practical skills necessary in their future profession (educational component), and on the other hand – to render free legal services to the population (social component). Currently both components are enshrined in Russian legislation.

There is no uniform legal definition of the notion of “legal clinic” so far. This term is used in some legislative acts and sometimes in different meaning.

The carried out analysis of Russian legislation regarding the given subject allowed concluding the existence of certain legal framework for establishing legal clinics in our country before 2000.

Order of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation as of September 30, 1999 No. 433 “Concerning legal advice (“legal clinics”) for the population based on legal staff training universities” is the original regulatory act that gave rise to establishing many Russian legal clinics. This order supported the idea of organizing clinics on the basis of universities’ units, the list of HEIs (which trained lawyers), based on which clinics’ opening was provided, was approved (Ministry of education of the RF, 1999). In the beginning, the list counted 6 HEIs, 8 universities more were added later. Currently according to unofficial data available on the website of Legal clinics development center (created in 2011 upon the initiative of Student consultations) there are 220 clinics in the Russian Federation (“Tsentr razvitiya yuridicheskikh klinik” autonomous non-commercial organization, 2015).

The further development of legislation affecting activity of legal clinics to a greater or lesser degree took place both in an educational and social way (providing legal advice to lower-income social groups for free). The notion of “legal clinic” was included in the federal educational standards of Bachelor and Master qualifications approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the RF as of May 4, 2010 and December 14, 2010 No. 1763 correspondingly. The first standard defines “legal clinic” as a place of students’ academic and practical training (Ministry of Education and Science of the RF, 2010). The standard of Master degree uses the term of “legal clinic” in the following meanings: innovation technology of training, by means of which skills of consultation work, etc. are developed; a place of students’ training (both academic and practical, which may involve teaching practice, research practice, legal advice) (Ministry of Education and Science of the RF, 2011).

Fundamentals of the state policy of the Russian Federation in the area of citizens’ law knowledge and legal awareness development approved by Decree of the President of the RF No. Pr-1168 on April 28, 2011 mentions the social dimension of legal clinics. The document notes that dissemination of the positive experience of HEIs that train law students regarding legal clinics’ organization and working as a form of providing free legal servicing is one of the state policy’s measures in the area of education (Fundamentals, 2011).

The social dimension of the organization under study is also revealed in Federal Law as of November 21, 2011 No. 324-FZ “Concerning free legal advice in the Russian Federation”. Art. 22 states that legal clinics (student counsel offices, student judicial offices and others) are participants of non-state system of free legal advice. Their formation is possible only based on HEI. We consider that legal clinics are most

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correct name of these structures, and not student counsel offices or student judicial offices (and by no means teacher office). Art. 23 of the law enshrines that legal services in legal clinics are gratuitously provided by persons who are trained to be lawyers (students) under the guidance of persons with higher legal education responsible for clinical training (Collection of Laws of the RF, 2011). The latter are usually teachers (or invite practitioners).

Order No. 994 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation as of November 28, 2012 is a legislative document that regulates operation of legal clinics. It establishes the procedure of such clinics formation by HEIs and the order of their operation, goals and some other issues, i.a. holding retreats for persons who cannot address a clinic where it's located due to their health status (Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2012). The content analysis of this order revealed that legal clinics are largely considered means of rendering free legal aid; the educational process is only mentioned in the context of their creation.

The comparative analysis of different legal clinics' organization and activity in Russia allowed distinguishing their common features and differences. Individual similarities are the following:

1) form of organization (in most cases they are HEIs' structural units that train lawyers; there are individual clinics of corporate status, but their activity also relates to the university. There are other forms of legal clinics in the history of clinical movement in Russia: interuniversity legal clinics organized by several HEIs; legal clinics established under non-commercial organizations, under legal firms, legal aid offices, bar associations, etc. The educational component in these clinics takes a back seat, it's their disadvantage). Status of HEIs' legal clinics can be different: laboratories; centers; sections. They can be "structural units with no any specification" (Shugrina, 2013, p. 901);

2) participants of clinical training are students and teachers who are named differently (students clinicians, students consultants, students trainees; teachers curators, teachers practitioners, teachers specialists). Generally, students of the 3rd and 4th courses undertake practical training in clinics, however there are clinics where second year students are admitted to work;

3) educational goals (shaping practical skills) are main objectives in clinics which are universities' structural units. The student has a unique opportunity to learn how to interview a client in a proper way; how to adequately consult him; how to make a case and other legal documents completely and clearly; how to solve complex problems of lawyer's professional ethics and many other things (Hudoikina, 2014);

4) students work independently, but under the guidance of teachers. Teachers monitor students' core activity, check quality of developed consultations, documents, hold practical (individual and group) lessons, etc.

5) as a rule, legal advice is rendered to the poor (people whose income is lower than subsistence minimum) and other vulnerable categories of citizens (pensioners, the disabled, war and labor veterans, single mothers, the minors, etc.), but many clinics render legal advice to everyone who addresses them. For example, everyone can use legal services in student consultations of the legal department of Moscow State University (2014), in Student counsel office of the legal institute of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (2015) and others. "Probono" student legal advice center activity of Moscow State Law University (2015) provides free legal advice to all individuals and non-commercial organizations, but delivery of assistance to vulnerable groups and human rights organizations is of primary concern.

6) practical skills based on real cases (real-life situations) of different categories are shaped. Legal advice concerning civil matters, domestic, labor, land, housing cases, matters relating to succession, administrative, tax and other cases is rendered. Many legal clinics do not address problems related to criminal law and proceedings. There are clinics engaged in specific areas. For example, "Memorial" human rights association clinic regarding recourse to the European Court of Human Rights (Moscow), "EPRA" (Irkutsk) and "Ekodal" (Khabarovsk) ecological jurisprudence fund clinics, there are "Zhivoe pravo" clinics, which work with pupils in St. Petersburg, Moscow and some other cities and increase their level of legal culture (Dranzhevsky, 2011).

Despite the above-mentioned general characteristics one can state that activity of legal clinics in Russian higher education institutions and clinical legal training carried out on their base is organized in a different way. Let's specify the main differences.

1. Whether students' work in clinics is voluntary or obligatory. The majority of legal clinics are based on voluntary practical training. However there are some universities, where clinical training is obligatory for all students. For example, in St. Petersburg State University all students of the department are involved in the work in the clinic, but not all are admitted to consulting clients; there are functional groups: consultants; operators; information and analysis service; advertising and external relations group (St. Petersburg State University, 2015).

2. Whether there's "Legal clinic" theoretical course (it may be called "Rendering free legal advice"; "Legal consulting", etc.) in the general process of education. Today this theoretical course included in the general educational program plan as a main discipline for all students or as an elective course. For example, there's "Legal clinic" discipline in the curriculum of the legal department of the 3rd course of Bachelor's program and the 1st course of Master's program of the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Customs Academy (Legal clinic of the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Customs Academy, 2014) and others. There's positive tendency of further extension of HEI where such disciplines become obligatory for all students.



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“Rendering free legal advice” course is included in the curriculum of legal departments in regional branches of the Russian Law Academy of the Ministry of Justice of the RF (Kazan Legal Institute, 2014).

3. Whether special theoretical training of students-clinicians for their preparation to practice activity in legal clinic is obligatory. Such training relevance is admitted by many clinics, but it is carried out not everywhere. Teaching methodology of clinical courses may significantly vary in different HEI. They are usually based on the own methodic developments of teachers involved in clinical education. Besides, corresponding foreign experience is also various. Brain, Duncan and Grimes (1998) state that each educational institution defines the training task and change training as experiences is gained in its own way within the framework of clinical education. There is no special “curators training for teachers” in many Russian clinics (Kulakova, Markova & Samsonova, 2014, p.11). Unfortunately, methodological provision of clinical disciplines in Russia is insufficient so far. There are many foreign researchers’ scientific, didactic, and teaching and practical publications, which may be useful for these purposes: Eaton and May (2009); Milner (2011); Selby (2009); Selby and Freckelton (2013); Freeman and Smith (2013); and others.

4. Whether the labor of teachers who work in clinics is remunerated. In most cases there’s insignificant remuneration of labor of generally one teacher or this wage is shared between several employees, payments are made on an hourly basis or considered in teacher’s academic workload.

5. Whether consulting teachers-specialists of different areas of law are involved in working with students clinicists; whether legal practitioners are invited or not. Clinics differ with the number of working teachers (usually 1 or 2 teachers curators responsible for the quality of legal advice rendered by students).

6. Whether HEI is interested in clinic’s development. Currently the availability of legal clinic is one of the criteria for HEI public accreditation carried out by Association of Lawyers of Russia. It may contribute to such interest.

7. Whether there is a special furnished room equipped with computers and duplicators in the clinic; whether there’s access to legal reference system. The majority of clinics have a special premise or its separate part, but they are different in terms of equipment.

8. Whether there are full-time employees providing clinic’s regular working. There are support personnel – lab assistant, secretary or supervisor and full-time manager only in some legal clinics.

9. Whether there is documentation management. Special applications and forms – clients’ admission cards, registration logs, reports on services rendered, etc. are

developed and filled in many clinics in some or other way. Opening the cases on legal issues clients address is rarity. Some clinics have information storage systems.

10. Whether there are documents that enshrine legal clinic's status. All legal clinics officially registered as HEIs' (lab's, center's, departments') structural units have regulations for legal clinic. Clinics operating as a separate legal entity have their charters. Not many clinics developed their code of ethics and rules for citizens' admission.

11. Whether students work with clients during summer and other student vacations. Only in individual cases, for example, in Moscow State University where several student consultations operate, students solve citizens' legal issues all year round (as scheduled). Clients' receptions frequency is different (1-6 times a week). For example, the legal clinic of the Nizhny Novgorod University provides services to citizens 6 times a week (Nizhny Novgorod State University, 2014), the legal clinic of the Mari State University serves clients on a day-to-day basis during afternoon, except Sunday and Monday (Mari State University, 2014). Clinical program duration is different in different clinics (several months; 1 year; 1,5 year; 2 years; 2,5 years; 3 years).

12. Whether students' work in the clinic is counted towards practical training. Many clinics provide it. For example, according to the decision of the academic council of Ogarev Mordovia State University the law department students' work in the legal clinic can be considered practical training. Students-clinicists are granted certificates upon the completion of clinical (practical) legal training (Ogarev Mordovia State University, 2014).

13. Whether the clinic cooperates with government bodies and local government, non-commercial organizations. The analysis of different documents (Internet websites, scientific papers, reports, information folders) suggests that almost all clinics demonstrate cooperation with one or another body, official non-governmental organization, etc. in some or other way. Some clinics cooperate with mass media (for example, they write a Q. and A. column in printed media).

14. Whether consulting of citizens takes place or other projects focused on shaping students' practical skills are carried out. The analysis of different published scientific papers, research and practice conferences' reports suggests that the best part of legal clinics (student consultations, bureaus, centers) carry out other projects. For example, within the context of population's legal enlightenment the Student Legal Advice Center of Moscow State Legal University gives free legal classes to first-eleventh graders, collegians and HEIs' students on different topics: protection of consumers; property, domestic, and employment relations; responsibility for causing harm; rights when detained by law-enforcement agencies, etc. (Moscow State Legal University, 2014). The legal clinic of Ogarev Mordovia State University holds field events: there were visits to municipal areas of the Republic of Mordovia where legal

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advice was rendered to citizens; events in homes for the aged and disabled were held; visits to foster homes (cognitive games with charity children); field workshops concerning rights and benefits of the disabled, topical workshop in non-governmental organizations and others (Ogarev Mordovia State University, 2014).

Let's offer an efficient, in our opinion, operation model of legal clinics carrying out students' clinical (practice-oriented) training. The activity of these organizations should be based on the following scenario. Within the framework of clinical legal training students firstly take special academic course, in the course of which they adopt rules for client interviewing, case analysis, legal consulting, professional ethics peculiarities, communicative interaction specifics, legal documents execution technique, etc. Then they apply gained knowledge in the process of practical activity (acquiring professional skills).

Therefore such training must include two stages: students' previous teaching and their practical work.

The stage of previous preparation in the course of clinical legal training is taking special (clinical) courses during which students should learn how to interview clients, manage documentation, analyze a case, develop his opinion on a case, prepare legal consultation, execute documents, etc.

While passive, active, and interactive techniques can be applied in the process of general education, only interactive means should be used in the context of clinical legal training, since they're focused on direct involvement of students in the real process of perceiving information, opinion exchange and "experiencing the situation". That's why all classes should be held in an interactive form: hands on training; role and business games; exhibition performances; works in small groups; group discussions, etc. For example, such clinical techniques as workshop, supervision and field work, etc. are extensively used in foreign clinical legal training (Bryant, Milstein and Shalleck, 2014). Clinical workshop topics can be the following: communications, interviewing, non-formal fact-finding inquiry, investigation of stories, case theory, cooperation, opening statements and final arguments, and others (Epstein, Aiken & Mlyniec, 2014).

The stage of practical work in the context of clinical legal training is the main process of acquiring professional skills. It's conducted in the course of rendering real legal advice to the population. Students independently serve citizens, interview them, act as a consultant, are involved in the work with human rights organizations (colleges of lawyers), law enforcement bodies, adopt specialists' experience. Student carry out all lawyer's actions by themselves (individually, in pairs, small group), but under the guidance of teachers. A teacher should not intervene in student's and client's contact (except for intricate situations).

A teacher – a specific law branch specialist – should exercise control over each case. A student clinician provides the teacher with prepared consultations, legal documents drafts for check. All these actions contribute to achieving quality final result – free legal advice becomes competent (Hudoykina and Evteeva, 2013).

In our opinion, foreign experience of legal advice costs insurance appears potentially productive: Regan (2001); Kilian (2009); Kilian and Regan (2004); Faure and Mot (2012) and others. Russian scientists should study these mechanisms and consider the issue of introduction of legal insurance system similarly to the principles of medical insurance.

Legal advice is always address legal assistance, it is focused on a specific person and “specific problematic legal situation” (Panchenko, 2012, p. 7). Its free-of-charge basis refers to a person to whom such services are rendered in the context of clinical training, and teachers’ guidance over students who render legal advice should be paid from the federal budget or from educational organization’s own funds.

Students provide services to citizens (by previous appointment or without) when they’re free from the main education activity. Work in legal clinic can be included in general education classes schedule if provided by the curriculum.

According to Federal law regarding free legal advice students working in clinics have no right to represent and protect their clients’ interests in judicial authorities or other government agencies, they can only consult concerning various legal issues and draw up document of legal nature (including but not limited to statements of claim, petitions, certificates, complaints, letters, etc.). Legal clinics have a right to render other services as they see fit: for example, to exercise populations’ legal information sharing; to engage in legal enlightenment (to hold topical workshops for different categories of citizens, develop and disseminate booklets regarding relevant questions of legislation, etc.).

#### **4. Conclusion**

Thus, clinical legal education as student’s practice training should be carried out based on legal clinics. It appears to be a powerful addition to the standard legal education, it provides students with the opportunity to put theoretical knowledge into practice and gain necessary experience in the area of jurisprudence (to learn how to interview citizens, prepare consultations, draw up different legal documents, address government and municipal agencies, etc.).

More clear definition of the legal clinics’ status is necessary due to insignificant regulation of legal clinics’ organization and operation. Uncertainty over the legal clinics’ status in the legal system caused the problem of organizational form in practice. Legal clinics established under legal HEIs (departments) can be laboratories, centers or departments.

Current regulatory acts do not stipulate HEI's commitment to establishing legal clinics, do not specify requirements for their organizational form, content and methods of teaching students practical skills. Everything is done at the discretion of higher educational institutions (obligation of traineeship in legal clinic, clinical training programs, etc.). It's necessary to include more regulations, which would regulate operation issues of legal clinics based on educational organizations, to the Russian legal system what will contribute to the further development and improvement of these structures.

It's necessary to solve legal clinics financing issues, problems of staffing HEI's structural units with qualified teachers who have lawyer real-life experience, to solve in many HEIS the question of academic workload of teachers who guide students clinicists' work. It's important to create the system of special curators training for teachers engaged in the process of students' practice-oriented training.

Legal clinics should become a compulsory element of education program for both Bachelors and Masters. They should operate only when all conditions for rendering competent legal assistance are provided.

Since legal clinic's activity should be primarily focused on educational tasks fulfillment, it cannot solve all problems in the region regarding rendering legal services. However, the main thing is high quality services rendered. Procedures in the clinic should contribute to this point: students' special training – taking clinical course (all classes should be held in an interactive form); clinicists' joint working in subgroups; check of works by teachers; opportunity to contact specialists-practicians. We still have a lot to do in the area of law students' clinical (practice-oriented) training development.

The further development of legal clinics, efficient introduction of clinical legal training will contribute to establishing independent, professionally intelligent legal experts qualified for complicated practical activity.

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