

Presentation and evaluation of a multi-disciplinary graduate program for nursing, occupational and music therapy

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The transition from student to allied health professional is significant and may be a confronting and complex time for new graduates. The idea of negotiating the bridge between student and clinician brings with it an intricate adaption of ideals and expectations, including navigation of workplace culture. Development of the new graduate is optimised when they receive support to gain enhanced confidence in clinical skills, greater sense of professional identity and a collection of positive experiences. This can increase the likelihood of the graduate continuing to work in the profession after their graduate year.

New graduate programs are of benefit to both the organisation and graduate clinician. The inclusion of music therapy in 2014 as part of the previously nursing based Graduate Program at Calvary Healthcare Bethlehem was an Australian first, and has continued to develop as a multidisciplinary program with the inclusion of Occupational Therapy in 2015. The program provides graduates with a wide variety of clinical experiences in progressive neurological illness, palliative and aged care. This clinical experience, combined with multi disciplinary education sessions is aimed at developing a well rounded clinician who understands not only their own role but how it aligns with the roles of those around them.

This presentation will explore the allied health graduate program through the lens of workforce development, training and education. A multifaceted review of the program including reflection and evaluation from managers, hospital educators, supervisors, past and current graduates will be provided. Ongoing development and expansion of the program including projections about the future growth of allied health new graduate programs will also be explored.