Allied Health Student Clinical Placements: Is the placement mix right?

Kassie Shardlow - Queensland Physiotherapy Clinical Education and Training Program Manager, Metro South Hospital and Health Service
Mark Gooding - Assistant Director Physiotherapy, Townsville Hospital and Health Service
Susan Stoikov - Senior Physiotherapist, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Metro South Hospital and Health Service

How do students spend their time during clinical placements?

Background
Student Contribution Project (2015 – 2018)

• ↑ student numbers and placement requirements from Uni’s
• ↑ Service delivery demands
• Activity Based Funding
• New graduate support requirements
• How do students contribute to service delivery (clinical care) while on placement?
  • Individual student
  • Group of students compared with HP3 & HP4
• What other activities are students undertaking while on placement?
  • How do students transition into practice?
  • Individual student compared with NG
  • Perceptions of NG and experienced CEs and HPs on transition

Acknowledgements
Student Contribution Project Team

Project team
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Context
Clinical Training Profile for Physiotherapy

• Physiotherapy profession requires significant levels of clinical training prior to registration.
• Clinical placements involve physiotherapy students working under supervision in a specific health setting/clinical area (eg cardiorespiratory, neurorehabilitation, musculoskeletal etc).
• Clinical Training Time: overall an average of 1000 clinical training hours per student
  • In Queensland, consists of 4-6, 5-week placements
  • Queensland Public Health Sector utilises a state-wide, coordinated Central Allocation Process (CAP)
  • Queensland Public Health System is the major provider of clinical placements (~60% of all Queensland physiotherapy program placements each year).

Ethics & Governance

• Ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the Princess Alexandra Hospital Human Research Ethics Committee: Approval No - HREC/13/QPAH/113 and HREC/17/QPAH/926
• SAs at each participating facility

Health Workforce Australia (2014): Clinical Training Profile: Physiotherapy

Context
Clinical Training Profile for Physiotherapy
How do physiotherapy students spend their time during clinical placements?

What information do we already have?

Health Activity Hierarchy

Objectives

• To develop a data collection tool to capture student activity during student placements, including a breakdown of clinical and non-clinical tasks.

• To determine the activity profile of physiotherapy students during clinical placements, specifically identifying a breakdown of their non-clinical tasks.

Student activity tool

• The student activity tool captured daily:
  - Clinical Care
    • Occasions of service,
    • Length of occasion of service,
    • Group clinical activity
  - Non-clinical Care / Other Activities
    • Self-directed learning
    • Attending tutorials/in-services
    • Peer assisted learning
    • Work shadowing
  - Data was collected ‘in real time’

Student Activity Tool

• 2 purposes:
  1. Verify and improve clinical care activity data entered into the Information Management System
  2. Provide breakdown of student data that is not entered into information management systems (ie everything other than direct clinical care)
Student activity tool (instructions)

The Data Set

Site selection

Data collection

Site selection

- 5 Queensland public hospitals
- 2 metro hospitals
- 2 regional hospitals
- Bed numbers range from 325-950
- 4 different information management systems used across 5 hospitals

Data collection

- 165 (out of 183) eligible students on 5/52 clinical placements (92%)
- Data collected over 20 weeks
- 4 clinical areas
  - Cardiopulmonary
  - Neurological Physiotherapy
  - Orthopaedics
  - Musculoskeletal

Results

Profile of student clinical & non-clinical time

Student average time/day: non-clinical tasks

Student average time/day: clinical vs non-clinical tasks - all clinical areas
Student average time/day: clinical vs non-clinical tasks – Musculoskeletal OPD

Student average time/day: non-clinical tasks

• Majority of student non-clinical time was spent in self directed learning with minimal change in time allocation over the duration of placement
• High demand for orientation & inservices / tutorials early in placements, but decreased over time
• Peer supervision and work-shadowing decreased over the duration of the placement
• Other activities remained constant throughout placement

Summary

So have we got the placement mix right?

What have we learnt from other studies?
What have we learnt from other studies?
Length of Occasion of Service

What have we learnt from our qualitative studies?
The transition from student to new graduate is challenging

- Large increase in workload & complexity from student to new graduate is difficult and at times leaves new grads feeling unprepared for their roles
- Students are typically protected from realistic workloads

Clinical placements play an essential role in preparing students in becoming a new graduate.
- Supporting students to have realistic physiotherapy practice experience including both clinical and non-clinical tasks may assist the transition from student to new graduate.
- Stakeholder collaboration is essential to enhance the student transition to new graduate.

What can we learn from teaching and learning literature?
- Learners need to develop ‘the capacity to evaluate evidence, appraise situations and circumstances astutely, to draw sound conclusions and act in accordance with this analysis’ (Boud, 2007, p.19).
- Learners need to develop their evaluative judgment (Tai et al., 2017).
- Encourage learners to judge their own performance and the performance of others
- Elicit from learners their understanding of their performance
- Engage in a feedback dialogue that enables them to refine their evaluative judgment abilities

Practice points
- Shift some non-clinical care time to clinical care
- Re-distribute time allocated to non-clinical tasks?
- e.g. shift some ‘student self-directed learning’ time towards Peer Assisted Learning and Work-shadowing of CEs or near peers
  - Facilitate development of students’ evaluative judgement abilities
  - Increase student exposure to higher volume caseload
- Non-clinical demands will be higher early in placement and then plateau
  - Staffing / resourcing should support this

References
Appendices

Background
Student Contribution Project (2015 – 2018)

- Evaluation of Physiotherapy students during clinical placements: Australian Health Review
- Investigation of clinical education credibility: Australian Health Review
- Strategies developed to improve level of clinical education: Australian Health Review
- Collection of student and clinical educator activity data from classroom management systems
- Investigation of students and clinical educators: Australian Health Review
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Background
Student Contribution Project (2016)

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