

Northumbria Research Link

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Making Practice Based Learning Work

FDTL Phase 4 Project

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Project Aim:

To make practitioners more effective at supporting & supervising students in the workplace across a range of healthcare disciplines –

Dietetics

Nursing

Occupational Therapy

Physiotherapy

Radiography

Consortium Partners: Universities of Ulster, Northumbria & Bournemouth

Phase One: Case Study

Identification and documentation of good practice on how practitioners are prepared for their educational role.

Inform development of learning materials for use by practitioners.

Phase Two: Development of Materials

Design, pilot and implement resources to:

- a. enhance preparation of practice educators.
- b. meet the needs of culturally diverse health & social care teams.

Phase Three: Dissemination

Review developed resources.

Disseminate and embed the project outcomes in a planned and comprehensive manner within and across health and social care disciplines.

Phase One: Case Study

Case study methodology (Yin 1994) underpinned data collection methods used to map the current nature of practice education in each of the five disciplines.

Data collection methods included:

- Survey questionnaire

- Focus groups

- Secondary documentary data

Key Themes: commonalities

All professions have statutory requirements regarding the nature of work-based learning within the curriculum.

All students are prepared for placement experiences.

All professions report to being under resourced in terms of time, staff, availability of placements.

Key Themes: more commonalities

All professional groups are required to function within the inter-professional learning and working environment.

Inter-professional learning is curriculum rather than work-based.

All practice educators are prepared but content, length and level vary across and within professions and may not have a statutory agreement.

Key Themes: more commonalities

No formal career pathway for practice educators exists.

All practice educators are involved in formative assessment and some in summative assessment.

Learning needs of practice educators are similar across the professions.

Key Themes: differences

Management, organisation and location of placements within the curriculum and between disciplines.

Methods used to determine placement quality and standards.

Titles, roles and responsibilities given to the practice educator.

Criteria for becoming a practice educator.

Key Themes: more differences

Recognition, accreditation and standing of the practice educator and method of reward differ within and between professional groups

Volume of students; student to practice educator ratios; and models of working with students

Supervision and assessment of work based learning by practice educators

Key Themes: more differences

Nature of preparation of practice educator - length, contents, monitoring

Support for practice educators is varied and reported to be insufficient in some instances

Divergence in student funding and reimbursement for work based learning

Multicultural issues were not fully explored

Developing the Resources

Enhance commissioned set of learning materials

- Supporting dyslexic students in practice
- Failure to fail
- Preparing new registrants for teaching in practice
- Introduction to reflection in practice
- Facilitating learning in practice
- Managing learning environments
- Communication skills workbook
- Learning & assessing through reflection
- Skills for facilitating placement learning
- Mentoring students

Developing the Resources

Develop portal of knowledge resources:

Learning & Teaching in Practice

Supporting Learning in Practice

Reflection

Assessment in Practice

Interprofessional Learning

Diversity

Generic & specific skills resources

The Resources

www.practicebasedlearning.org

The Themes

- How might the resources be used in IPL?
- What could be added to the resources to enhance IPL in practice settings?

Dissemination & Evaluation

- What are the most effective ways to disseminate the resources for use in IPL?
- How should the resources be evaluated?
 - By whom?
 - What method(s)?
 - What should be the criteria to judge success?