

Improving Quality in Professional Practice Placements - iQIPP

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INTRODUCTION

The provision of quality occupational therapy professional practice placements is critical for students to attain graduate attributes and professional competency standards. The identification of quality indicators and the development of a tool for reflecting on them are essential for enhancing student placement learning experiences.

OBJECTIVES

The iQUIPP© Guide, developed at The University of Queensland, is a tool to support structured reflection by practice and university educators. It details quality indicators and provides action prompts for changing practice to enhance student professional learning opportunities.

METHODS

Consultation with key stakeholders (students, practice educators and university academics) was undertaken using focus groups and telephone interviews. Indicators of placement quality were analysed from the transcripts. A mechanism to reflect on and enhance placement quality was developed.

RESULTS

The iQIPP © Guide provides a self assessment of placement quality. It comprises two sections, one for placement facilities and practice educators, and another for Universities. Each section comprises Quality Domains, Key Quality Indicators, and Probe Questions. Indicators of placement quality identified from our research were developed into quality domains corresponding to key stages in placement development and management. Within each domain are itemised quality indicators and a series of probe questions that assist the user to consider ways that the quality indicator might be enacted or operationalised.

CONCLUSION

The iQUIPP© Guide enables placement organisations, practice educators and university staff to work together to review practices with a focus on enhancing the quality of occupational therapy placements.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE PRACTICE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY.

Various researchers have attempted to ascertain the essential elements that contribute to a quality student experience from the perspective of practice educators (Kirke et al., 2007), and few have sought student perspectives (Costa, 2004). This study has incorporated multiple stakeholders' perspectives on quality issues in the placement environment.

Costa, D. M (2004). *The essential guide to occupational therapy fieldwork education: Resources for today's educators and practitioners*. Bethesda, MD:

The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.

Kirke,P Layton,N. & Sim,J.(2007). Informing fieldwork design: Key elements in fieldwork education for undergraduate occupational therapy students Australian Occupational Therapy Journal, 54,S13-S22