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### **Developing a bespoke skill faced post graduate module for local occupational therapy practitioners**

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**Introduction:** Local practitioners' ability to study at M level has been inhibited by a number of factors including the design of current provision that makes release from practice difficult; practitioners' lack of confidence in their ability to study at post graduate level and the tension between their perceived need for skill based professional development rather than theoretical programmes at master's level. A joint group of practitioners and educators worked to develop a post graduate module to address these issues.

**Description/report:** To address lack of confidence the module allows practitioners to study their individual scope of practice thus allowing them to bring their unique knowledge base to their studies.

In developing a skill faced module practitioners saw their immediate practice needs were addressed. By extending the study of these skills to include exploration of their evidence base and a critical reflection of their use by the practitioners in daily practice, students were introduced to the higher level academic skills relevant to post graduate study.

By designing the module around the delivery of 3 one day workshops practitioners were able to get release from practice to attend the university and have access to learning resources to underpin their assessment needs.

**Results/discussion:** The module was marketed as a 'bridging module' specifically to allow practitioners to test out their abilities for study at this level. They were able to register for the module on a 'stand alone' basis rather than committing to a full programme of study. The module has seen a 200% rise in students and feedback shows students' delight in their ability to both attend and be successful in higher level study. Statistics show that many have decided to register for the full master's programme.

**Conclusion:** The resulting module shows a new trend in future provision that both meets the needs of practitioners while fulfilling university standards.

**Contribution to practice/evidence base of OT:** The module design shows how local practitioners can be encouraged to critically evaluate and develop their practice by gaining confidence to study at post graduate level.