Creating Positive Student Experiences on Placement

Ali Dymmott and Ellice Willcourt
Positive placement experiences: Overview

• What does the research say?
• What do our students say?
• What do our supervisors say?
• What can you do to better support student placements?
  • Before
  • In the first week
  • In the body
  • At the end
  • After
Discussion

• Reflect on your own placement experience as a student and supervisor
• What went well and what didn’t go so well?
• How used these experiences to develop as a supervisor?
What does the research say – supervisors?

- Students are prepared for placement – theory/skill/work ethic
- Openly discussing, students learning needs and styles at the outset helps to plan a placement experience
- Planning and preparation
- Orientation is important
- Grading of learning program – individualised
- Feedback/supervision
- Open honest relationship – it flows both ways
- Supervision training is beneficial
- Willingness to have a student may be based on our own experiences as a student

(Ingwersen, Lyons, Hitch, 2017; Price & Whiteside, 2016; Rodgers et al, 2014; Rodgers et al, 2011; Varland, Cardell, Koski, McFadden, 2017)
What does the research say – students?

- Complex and highly individual
- Supervisor is key but larger team is important too.
- Good links with university
- Quality teaching and modelling
- Regular feedback
- Learning styles
- Workspace and resources
- Warm and welcoming
- Clear and consistent expectations
- Orientation

(Grenier, 2015; Rodgers et al, 2011; Mulholland & Hall, 2013; Smellie, Wilson & Cox, 2011; Thomas et al, 2007)
What do students say?

- Clear expectations,
- Observe then do, small tasks first
- Supervision prioritised and regular
- Being valued and feeling safe to speak
- Dual supervision on same page
- SPEF examples ring true, nothing new
- Feeling welcomed and included in team
- Given responsibility and opportunities to be independent
- Access to resources
What do supervisors say?

• When it goes well it goes really well
• When it goes bad it goes really bad
• ‘they got to the point where they were doing most of my job, I had a chance to do things I hadn’t had time to do’
• ‘student supervision has become part of our core business’
• ‘it can be hard to ascertain where the student role fits in this caseload’
• ‘it’s a lot of work’, ‘it’s not a lot of work’, ‘the amount of support I needed to provide reduced as the placement progressed’
What can you do to better support student placements?

• What do you do to support placements in your organisation?

• Training in supervision

• Setting up procedures – orientation manual, student expectations, customising the SPEF-r

• Organisational culture
Before the student arrives:

• Making contact with the student
• Early goals and expectations
• Learning needs
• Areas of interest
• Scoping out a caseload
• Talking to the team about placement
• Logistics
• Finding them somewhere to sit
• Computer access
• Access to the building
In the first week:

- First Impressions
- Orientation
- Meeting to set goals / expectations
- Set supervision schedule and expectations
- Discuss learning needs/styles
- Discuss previous placement experiences and feedback
In the body of placement

• Regular supervision / feedback
• Increasing independence as skills develop
• Giving opportunity for autonomy and responsibility
• Identify concerns early
• Feedback to the university to get support and advice
• Revisit goals and expectations
• Discuss and plan SPEF-r with the student
• Seek supervision and reflect on your own supervision style and the placement
• Share the load
At the end

- Plan for handover of caseload and exit requirements
- Prepare for SPEF-r early
- Give clear feedback on strengths and areas for future learning/development
- Ask for feedback and thank them for their contribution
- Be prepared to be asked to be a reference
After the placement has finished

• Pat yourself on the back – you did it
• Debrief and reflect with supervisor
• Plan for future placements; what worked, what didn’t work, what would I do differently next time
• Contact university with feedback as required
• Acknowledge support of multi-d team and shared responsibility
Take away messages

- Be prepared
- Notice concerns and issues early and seeking support
- Make students feel welcome and part of the team
- Give students opportunities to develop skills as an OT
References


“MY ACTIONS SHALL SPEAK TO THE WORLD.”

Matthew Flinders, 1804:

making a difference.