

Training students in the use of video conferencing for supervision

In the experience gained through this pilot program, we recognise the importance of educating students about the goal of using video conferencing. The goals associated with using this tool may be different for each health service and there may be individual goals for each student. However, some common goals may be:

- to enable the student to develop their therapeutic style
- to develop communication skills
- to increase progression towards independent practice

Determining readiness for independent practice

Within the pilot project, in order to determine if a student is ready to commence video-conferencing, students need to be assessed using the Student Practice Evaluation Form (SPEF-R). Students should reach a level of 'adequate' or '3' in the areas of professional behaviour, self management, communication and information gathering (Refer to output no. 5d(i) "Determining readiness to participate in iPad project"). This evaluation form is designed for occupational therapy students. As this pilot project was focused on occupational therapy students, the use of other evaluation tools was not considered. Organisations planning to use video conferencing with other disciplines will need to investigate alternate methods in determining student readiness for independent practice and the most appropriate time to incorporate video-conferencing in training.

Using the Tablet

Occupational therapy students need to have the basic skills to operate the Tablet device. This includes turning the device on and off, charging and locating applications. It can be beneficial if students are provided with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the device and encouraged to use the device for tasks other than video conferencing, early in the placement.

Accessing the Tablet

Students should be aware of the process of accessing the Tablet device, this includes being trained about the physical location of the devices and procedures to 'check-in / out' the device. Students should also be aware of where the specific device can be used, for example internally only, or both internally and externally.

Setting up the video conference

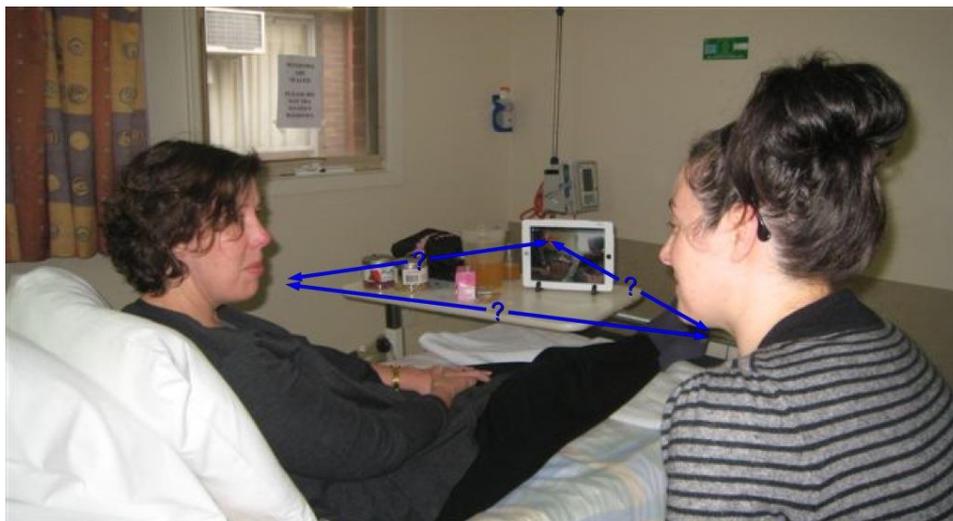
Students should be educated on the process of setting up a video conference, this includes locating the application and making and accepting video calls. This process will vary depending on what application is utilised in your health service. Students should participate in practical and contextual training sessions to ensure they are competent in operating the software.

Setting up the Tablet device

Students benefit from training about setting up the Tablet device to capture visual and audio data. Supervisors will need to guide the student further if the visual or audio information displayed during the video conference requires adjustment. eg. the device may need to be closer to increase volume or it may need to be further away to increase the picture quality/amount captured. Students will set-up the iPad in the relevant treatment area and should aim to create a triangle between the patient, the student and the iPad (see picture below). In noisy environments such as a ward room with multiple beds, an external microphone can be added to amplify the sound captured. An appropriate stand or cover is required to ensure the iPad camera can capture the required visual information (Refer to output no. 5c(iii) "Hardware to Support use of iPads").

Students may need to see their supervisor during the video conference; therefore it is important that the supervisor sets up the iPad so they can also be seen if required. This is particularly important for clients so they are aware that there is another person involved in the session.

Students will require specific training in relation to the set-up of the iPad in the relevant clinical treatment areas. Set-up may vary between treatment areas.



Conducting the video conference

Students are encouraged to explain to their clients why they are using the iPad. Students are also encouraged to introduce their supervisor to the client before commencing the session to acknowledge their presence “in the room”. The supervisor can then provide guidance, instruction and support as required.

Managing technical issues

Supervisors and students should be trained in managing common errors in the technology. For example, they should be able to identify that the ‘Wi-Fi’ is not turned on then go into the Tablet’s settings to turn it on again. A list of common errors can be developed with simple instructions to guide students and supervisors on correcting these technical errors. Occasionally, students and supervisors may experience significant technical issues and will require greater guidance. Departments are encouraged to have an agreed pathway for managing technical issues. This could be a designated member of the department who is familiar with the device and its programs, or for more complex issues, the IT department within your organisation.

Demonstration and practice!

Students should be provided with opportunities to practice using the video-conferencing program, as well as testing and trailing the system with their supervisor prior to using it within clinical sessions. During the pilot project, students were provided with a presentation and demonstration of the video-conferencing system in a group setting, followed by an individual training session alongside the supervisor. During this session the supervisor and student set up the video conference and were provided with guidance as necessary. Once confident they were able to commence using the devices independently.

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