

CPN Strategic Projects

Case study

Central Hume interprofessional clinical placement pilot

Project summary

The project aimed to develop an agreed set of generic Terms and Conditions (T&C) for clinical placement providers (CPP) and education providers (EP) to use in negotiating nursing and allied health clinical placements within Central Hume (CH).

Drivers and challenges

One of the challenges to increasing student placement capacity was improving the understanding of all partners of the different organisations requirements and expectations in facilitating placements. One of the potential drivers by which the collaborative could increase student placements was identified as the facilitation of joint placements.

Arriving at a solution

The project partners proposed to establish a set of generic placement T&C. Some informal discussions had already been held between the project partners around establishing a generic set of T&C for nursing placements. Only one of the partners had begun work on articulating an organisational set of T&C for allied health placements.

Implementation process

A series of forums were hosted by CH project officer. The aim of the forums was to facilitate dialogue on the issues related to and supported the process of developing an agreed set of generic T&C specific to individual clinical disciplines.

Generic T&C for nursing students

Nursing representatives from the CH project partners were invited to a nursing student placement forum in late 2011 specifically to discuss placement T&C. As an outcome of the forum, the existing set of organisational T&Cs was collated into a single, standardised draft document. The draft was distributed to the nominated partner representatives to edit/amend. A follow-up forum was held to discuss the updated draft and develop recommendations to progress its adoption. In February 2012, a joint CPP and local EP forum was held to discuss the content and facilitate agreement on a final draft.

Generic T&C for allied health students

Representatives from CH project partners were invited to an allied health student placement forum in late 2011. Interest in attending the forum was also received from other regional stakeholders. As a result, with the aim of developing further collaborations with the potential to increase allied health placement capacity, invitations were also extended to public health services within the wider-region. Opinion amongst the attendees was widely divided on what issues related to terms and conditions for allied health placements – most particularly on the matter of a fee structure. In an effort to facilitate further dialogue and as few organisations had articulated their own set of T&C for allied health student placements, the membership agreed to progress discussions by developing a first draft of a generic document based on the nursing requirements. The draft was distributed to nominated representatives to amend/edit. A follow-up meeting between CPP and local EP was scheduled for March 2012. The forum was held and participants continued their dialogue on articulating the issues but as Victorian Clinical Placement Council (VCPC) had by that time made a statement advising that they would be discussing the matter of placement T&C no further progress or recommendations were made.

Outcomes and impacts

- Agreed set of T&C for nursing and allied health students comprise of six components.

Clinical practice supervision

This pertains to supervision models and requirements. Supervision is provided by the CPP. The type of supervision provided is a mix of clinical teaching/supervision and preceptor models and will vary for each organisation. (This will depend on the year level of the student and the type of placement i.e., specialty area).

Agreed nursing profile, for the purpose of assessment:

- TAFE students are required to be supervised by a TAE,
- University students are required to be supervised by a registered nurse (RN).

Shift duration

Details on shift duration and requirements are set by CPP according to their custom and practice. Rosters are by negotiation between the CPP and the student.

Compliance and pre-placement requirements

This component lists the requirements of students prior to commencing clinical placement i.e., online orientation, pre-reading, current Police Check and current Working with Children Check etc.

Fees and charges

There was little consistency for clinical placement fees and charges. VCPC announced in March 2012 that it will be discussing this at its March meeting; so progress on this criteria was halted pending recommendation from VCPC.

Cancellation policy

This pertains to the organisational policy on cancellation fees and conditions. The T&C listed under this heading detail the recuperation of costs incurred by the CPP for any administration and resourcing expenses associated with planning for places that are booked but cancelled.

Placement confirmation requirements

Placement confirmation provides the CPP with details on student numbers, type of clinical placements required, specific student and EP liaison contact details.

- Discussion related to a relevant fee structure for the provision of clinical supervision is ongoing. VCPC has developed a set of recommendations in regards to fees but as yet, these are still to be released.

- Allied health is a valued discipline therefore fees and charges for the clinical supervision and education of allied health students should be reflective of the costs.
- Common terms and conditions should be indicative of and support high-quality placements.
- Communication between EP and CPP should be transparent.

Limitations and management strategies

The most contentious issue in developing a generic set of T&C for both the CPP and EP is the matter of placement fees. Hume CPN is noted to have made a submission to VCPC requesting any recommendations related to T&C's, in particular in regards to a fee structure, be based on principles rather than being prescriptive.

Anecdotally placement cancellations remain a significant issue for some CPPs. Concern remains that the cancellation rate may have a masking effect on measuring current placement capacity. It is anticipated that the data gathered through viCPlace will assist in monitoring the cancellation rate and facilitate improved planning.

Evaluation

Key findings of this project included:

- There is general agreement across nursing and allied health that one factor influencing student placement capacity is the negotiation of reasonable T&C.
- Forum participants agreed that the implementation of the undergraduate stream of the Training and Development Grant will assist CPP in subsidising student placements.
- Forum participants acknowledged that the current level of funding does not cover service costs.
- Setting a standard fees across organisations and individual disciplines was acknowledged to be difficult because of issues related to:
 - achieving economies of scale in subregional and small rural CPPs,
 - disparity in models of care and capacity to provide supervision across different sized CPPs,
 - discrepancies in the quality of placement experience and outcomes.
- Negotiation of fees between individual CPPs and EPs can include agreement on exchange of monies, payment in kind, and/or a mix of both.
- A generic set of T&C was achieved based on an agreed set of principles and common components.
- CH project partners – Benalla Health and Northeast Health Wangaratta – achieved small number of shared nursing placements.

Future Directions

Into the future, CH project partners will:

- Disseminate, discuss and implement agreed recommendations on T&C from VCPC;
- Continue discussion on, identification of and inclusion within T&C of agreed quality measures appropriate/relevant to both CPP and EP; and
- Continue to look for opportunities to increase placement capacity through shared student experiences.

Further Information

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