



AHP Student Placement Flashcard Series

Virtual Placements

Workforce challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, have necessitated that Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) explore different ways of delivering patient care, and in turn student placements.

Virtual sessions have taken place across the country to meet the demand for student placements, and to continue patient care using technology.

Nationally, a variety of methods have been used, including online simulation suites, Go-Pro cameras, telehealth, self-care apps, emails, video conferencing and online meeting rooms. These may also be referred to as TECS Placements (Technologically Enhanced Care Services) (1).

Students can complete their placement from either their own home, which has been particularly useful for students who are shielding, or organisations whose services have space limitations.

Peer Enhanced e-Placement's (PEEP) have provided an alternative to the more traditional face to face placements for some AHP roles, including Occupational Therapy (2).

Many clinicians are now favouring a hybrid approach that includes virtual placements when facilitating students. This involves students incorporating their virtual days with clinical days; this cross-over of skills and experiences can help consolidate learning and help put any projects and learning into context.

Examples

Virtual placement within KMPT

A 2:1 virtual placement within KMPT for the Acute Mental Health Inpatient Service for Younger People team. This creative placement was one hundred per cent virtual for shielding Occupational Therapy students from the University of Brighton. The style of placement allowed them to virtually attend ward handovers, assessments, governance meetings and many other strategic level meetings, gaining them a variety of knowledge and skills.

Virtual Musculoskeletal (MSK) placement at Maidstone Hospital

During the COVID-19 pandemic this one hundred per cent virtual placement allowed students to be involved with patient assessments virtually, using online-video conferencing. "Breakout rooms" were used to discuss findings and treatments with their practice educator and days were allocated for learning about set conditions. The design was so successful that, going forward, the team is keeping elements of virtual working in future placements and patient assessments.

For some more guidance and information:

<https://www.csp.org.uk/professional-clinical/practice-based-learning/creating-quality-learning-environment>

<https://www.rcot.co.uk/alternative-practice-placements>
<http://www.e-placements.net>

References

1. <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/allied-health-professions/occupational-therapy-virtual-practice-placement>
2. <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/allied-health-professions/helping-ensure-essential-supply-ahps/placement-expansion-innovation/resources>

Created by Nicki Mcrae & Iain Spink

Brilliant care through brilliant people



Visit us at www.kmpt.nhs.uk

