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An indirect supervision model: sharing good practice

Kate H Knight, Head of Practice Learning, Faculty of Health and Social Care, University of Chester (K.Knight@Chester.ac.uk), **Linda Sanderson,** Head of Practice Education (Blended Learning), University of Huddersfield, and **Jonathan Hay**, Research Assistant, University of Chester

The University of Chester and the University of Huddersfield are leading the way in implementing an indirect supervision model for learners (Knight et al, 2022). The universities are Nursing and Midwifery Council-approved education institutes (AEIs). They use a flexible bank of nurses to support learners in environments that do not have practice supervisors and practice assessors. Placement capacities have increased significantly using this model. The uptake of this innovative practice has been supported with inter-institutional dialogue, fostering a productive relationship between these two universities.

Implementation of this model has established students' opportunities to undertake innovative placements extending beyond the NHS, which promote vital alternative and relevant skillsets across diverse cultural and situational backgrounds.

As Hodge et al (2021) have outlined, pre-registration student nurse training must offer an introduction to care within communities. They note that broadminded placement opportunities ensure that students are actively 'afforded an opportunity to think about future career opportunities they might not have considered' (Hodge et al, 2021: 1196).

The indirect supervision model, developed by the University of Chester, is pivotal in extending the range of placements available to pre-registration learners. Principally, the model uses a flexible bank of nurses, employed by the AEI, to supervise and assess student nurses in a diverse range of non-traditional learning environments – private, independent and voluntary organisations (PIVOs) – which do not employ registered practitioners. This inter-institutional sharing of good practice has benefitted student nurses' learning opportunities.

The model extends the capacity of AEI training programmes since it allows more supervision time within a comparable budgetary expenditure, hence, allowing more pre-registration learners to undertake placements on a year-by-year basis. The indirect supervision model becomes a valuable contributor to the necessary paradigm shift towards preparing nursing students for the changing health and social care landscape in the UK. It ensures that learners' experiential knowledge developed at the pre-registration level will subsequently benefit a wide range of health and social care bodies.

The University of Chester has opened more than 80 new placements using this model. At the University of Huddersfield, funding from Health Education England (HEE) has enabled the piloting and adoption of the same innovative model. Six new learning environments were established during the project, which required support from indirect supervisors/ assessors, as there were otherwise no, or a limited number of, health or social care registrants working in these environments. These include a private social care organisation and residential homes for people with learning disabilities (Sanderson, 2022).

In feedback for the model at Huddersfield, placement providers stated both that indirect supervision promotes a positive learning environment in the organisation, and that it successfully promotes consideration of nursing roles in the social care environment. Pre-registrants appreciated gaining support from many different people, and supervisors found that it enabled opportunities for students to learn in non-traditional settings. These positive responses are fully in line with feedback collated from those who have participated in the indirect supervision model at the University of Chester.

We have been pleased to witness the transferability of the indirect supervision model first-hand between the University of Chester and the University of Huddersfield, and hence, we strongly recommend its potential to be exported even more broadly across AEIs nationwide. **BJN**

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