Leeds Health and Care Academy

PIVO PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE: A PROVIDER PERSEPCTIVE

CAROLINE BRENNAN, CLINICAL EDUCATOR AT ST GEMMA'S HOSPICE

INTRODUCTION

Caroline has been a clinical educator at St Gemma's for 4 and a half years and part of her role is to support nursing students on placements. She is passionate about giving students the best preparation for what is a challenging placement in a palliative care setting.

One practical step to address this is the development of a welcome session for students on their first morning of placement, where Caroline spends around 3 hours with them to provide practical information about the hospice and about palliative care and also some work around self-care and resilience.

St Gemma's have been hosting student placements for around 46 years and take Nursing students, Nursing Associates, 4th year Medical students, Physician Associates, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Apprentice Nurses and Apprentice Paramedics.

EXPERIENCE

Students bring fresh ideas and often have more up to date clinical knowledge from placements in acute hospital wards and increasingly, they bring such diversity to the workforce which make staff think about their own cultural awareness but also great for patients to see staff that represent the communities they are serving.

Students helps staff to look at their own ways of working, thinking about why do I/we do things in a particular way, developing their coaching and mentoring skills and that bodes well for them in terms of professional development and career progression.

LEARNING

St Gemma's encourage students to attend ward rounds and multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings, to work with different members of the team (Healthcare Assistants, Nurses, Physios) to embed them and promote multi-professional learning. Students are encouraged to attend in house training for staff because it is an easy decision to want to educate students as much as possible and teach them skills to take away and that all helps with their integration into the team.

OUTCOMES

St Gemma's have a nurse who has been employed for about 18 months. She came as a student and absolutely loved it. They put together a preceptorship for her first year and Caroline believes that the things she saw and did as a student influenced her decision to want to come back once qualified.

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ADVICE

Caroline's advice to other organisations thinking about hosting students would be:

- Prepare in advance.
- Prepare and support your staff.
- Through education, create a culture and environment that welcomes students as enriching the team rather than burdening it.
- Help your organisation understand that taking students is a win win situation. Healthcare is a field where staff turnover can be high due to the nature of the work so organisations need to do all they can to protect their potential future workforce.
- See placements as an opportunity to invest in student experience. We know that the professions are currently struggling to get students on their courses, let alone to the point of qualifying. organisations can give students a positive experience, build resilience and make this an appealing work environment for them to progress in their career.

I have been a nurse for almost 40 years and feel really strongly that with just a bit of investment, compassion and nurturing our students will feel supported and want to stay and thrive in the profession.

St. Gemma's Hospice