Understanding the needs of all the stakeholders: Training and preparation for students and their supervisors

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Clinical placements have multiple stakeholders, each with their own set of expectations and requirements, both explicit and implicit. Placement negotiations happen at many levels and those at the coalface are often unaware of these multiple expectations. Teaching students and their supervisors to consider the stakeholders more broadly can build their capacity to manage the WIL experiences more skilfully, leading to better outcomes for all.

Two academics who work closely with a range of practice-based learning placements for students in Nursing and Allied health suggest that by developing the ability to consider what advantages and disadvantages there may be in one encounter for all the stakeholders, students and their clinical supervisors are in a strong position to maximise the benefits, limit the disadvantages and increase the satisfaction of the greater number of stakeholders. While this cannot be learnt by rote or ticked off against any particular checklist, social awareness, communication skills and relationship development and maintenance hold the key to success.

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