Resources for successful work integrated learning in health science placements: A qualitative study of student experiences

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BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

Flinders University Health Sciences students represent varying health majors and undertake Work Integrated Learning (WIL) in their final year of study. Mostly the WIL experience is of a health promotion nature and aims to deliver an invaluable experience. Whilst a core topic to the degree, clinical or industry specific competencies are not required. According to Billett (2011) WIL opportunities can be provided to students; however is that enough to meet needs, expectations and future career aspirations? This project investigated what resources, whether practical or theoretical, are required by students to ensure a positive WIL outcome.

INITIATIVE/PRACTICE

This presentation will showcase research examining the management of a Flinders University Health Sciences WIL program and how it has been altered to accommodate the changing needs of the student cohort.

METHOD(S) OF EVALUATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Von Treuer et al., (2011), have identified a lack of evaluation of the benefits of WIL seen through the eyes of the student. This project extrapolated the “lived experience” of students who completed a Health Sciences WIL placement. Qualitative research and analysis methods (Patton, 2002) were used to determine the facilitators and challenges that differentiate a successful WIL experience from simply completing another degree topic.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

The outcomes of this research will inform and support capacity building of those who partake and facilitate WIL programs particularly where clinical or industry specific competencies are not required.

THEMES ADDRESSED

- Building institutional capacity
- Teaching and learning capacity for Work Integrated Learning programs
- Staff and student capacity building for Work Integrated Learning

REFERENCES