Inclusive Strategies for Supporting Students with Disabilities during Practice Training

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Aims of Session

- Introduce drivers for supporting disabled people to enter the workforce
- Discuss placements in health and social care & barriers
- Responsibilities under the Equality Act (Universities and Placement providers)
- Research on placement experiences
- Practical solutions for students and mentors
- Successful Placement App
Barriers in General Society

- **Attitudinal Barriers**
  - Cognitive: Assumptions
  - Emotional: Fear, disgust
  - Behavioural: Common Practices

- **Environmental Barriers**
  - Language
  - Institutional policies, rules and regulations
  - Professional practice
    - Assessment
    - Care management
  - Lack of access

- **Structural Barriers**
  - Hierarchical power relations
  - Denial of rights
  - Structural Inequalities

SEAwall Model of Discrimination. (Swain, French and Cameron 2003)
Good Practice Framework: Disabled students (OIA 2017)

- Public Equality Duty
- Flexible policies & procedures
- Publicise information to students
- Support development of self-advocacy skills
- Sharing of information with consent
  - Health & safety on placement may require disclosure
- Reasonable adjustments
  - Anticipatory
  - Design courses in consultation with disabled students
  - Be open minded
  - Record & monitor
Research on Placement Issues

- Adjustments are readily made in educational environments to support disabled students; in placement settings, they are more difficult to implement. Hargreaves & Walker (2014, 1748)
- Tension ‘between inclusive policies, competing needs, including patient safety, public confidence and professional regulation
- Many students do not disclose disability as they wanted to be treated the same as their peers. Brown, James & McKenzie (2006).
- Mentors/Educators have poor understanding of disabilities. Radiography students with dyslexia on placement stressed the importance of having an understanding educator for success. Murphy (2011).
Research on factors that contribute to successful placement experiences

- Procedure to facilitate effective disclosure of a disability (Botham & Nicholson, 2014).

- A tripartite partnership between practice learning team, disability service and student placement facilitator smooths transition into practice (Griffiths, Worth, Scullard & Gilbert, 2010).

- Inclusion of student stories in resources used to prepare mentors to support students with disabilities was found useful in promoting understanding of support needs and reasonable adjustments (Tee & Cowen, 2012).
# Solutions: Student recommendations (Opie 2015)

| Pre-placement communication | Forward planning (before students arrive) and good communication between the student, university and placement to negotiate putting into place reasonable adjustments | Pre placement visit  
Three-way communication between student, placement and HEI pays off |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Overall support             | Information pack  
Part-time delivery  
Disabled student mentor  
Training in computer software/ hardware in advance of course  
More open-minded responses from tutors  
Changes in support for disabilities within the profession  
Make information more accessible | “My placements were carefully chosen for me based on my academic needs, accessibility and other factors, and I had an input” (SLT student). |
| Placements                  | Assistance with informing placements of learning needs  
Need to consider the fatigue factor  
Get to know student as a person  
Effective & efficient more important than pretty  
Improved understanding from placement mentors | |
## Reasonable Adjustments
(Clouder et al 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Support</th>
<th>Altered working hours</th>
<th>Extra time for report writing</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Placement close to home if possible to avoid increased stress of staying away</td>
<td>• Regular breaks</td>
<td>• Facility to have written reports double checked by someone else</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Paired placements for peer support</td>
<td>• Access to computers</td>
<td>• Use of a communications support worker or assistive technology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Adjusted seating arrangements</td>
<td>• Provision of a quiet space for report writing</td>
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Practical solutions for students and mentors

**STRUCTURE**
- Direct links between university and placement.
- Provide information packs.
- Use the PSED as a driver.
- Develop universal curricula.

**ENVIRONMENT**
- Positive information.
- Review policies.
- Provide ongoing resources (develop repositories).
- Share good practice.

**ATTITUDES**
- Attitudes that affirm.
- Encourage students to act as drivers for change.
- Encourage open minds.
Successful Placement App

https://studentsupport.herokuapp.com/

Interventions for Success

https://studentsupport.herokuapp.com/
Pledge for Change

Think of one thing that you will follow up in your own workplace after today’s conference that could make a difference for students going out on placement.
Questions

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