

Students Initiating Service Improvements

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Introduction

The assessment for the year 3, level 6 Interprofessional learning (IPL) module at the University of Suffolk requires students to write a 3,000 word report about an interprofessional service issue in practice.

The assessment is designed to allow individual students to select a service issue relevant to their practice and, in the context of that issue, to construct a lucid, precise and systematic report relating to improvements in service provision.

Students are encouraged to either: critically review and evaluate the impact of a national or local policy or guideline used within clinical practice or put forward ideas to improve an aspect of service provision whilst considering the impact of change on, for example the service, organisation or interprofessional team or recommend a course of action to solve a problem e.g. improve on a specified performance indicator.

The Impact of Student Work

There have been several occasions where student's reports have been used to instigate a change in practice and an improvement in service provision.

Student 1 – Midwifery student Support for Women with Autism on the labour suite.

This midwifery student suggested support for women with autism when in labour. She developed a 'pregnancy passport' that women could complete in their own time and which could be used to pass on information to all of the interprofessional team.

The report was presented at the Royal College of Midwives national conference in 2017, and has resulted in a change in practice at her training Trust.

"For many women with autism, pregnancy can provoke fear & anxiety due to a changing body & changing routines. Women are expected to understand information to enable decisions for care. This can be difficult for women who find listening & retaining information in new surroundings difficult due to sensory difficulties. For such women, differing methods of communication may be required."

Student 2 - Diagnostic Radiography student Changes to patient preparation for intravenous urogram (IVU) examinations.

This diagnostic radiography student reviewed the preparation that patients were being given for IVU examinations in light of the literature and suggested a change in practice based on the evidence.

There was a change in practice and patients were no longer given bowel preparation, reducing patient discomfort before the examination and saving the Trust money.

Conclusion

The development of skills in report writing and service improvement will help to develop change agents of the future.

Students are encouraged to share their service improvement ideas with their line managers and practice areas so that this work can be used in improving services.



Courtesy of The NHS Information Centre for health and social care. Full diagram available at: www.ic.nhs.uk/commissioning