

INTERPROFESSIONAL
COLLABORATION IN A
STUDENT RUN PRO
BONO CLINIC:
FACILITATING CLINICAL
EXCELLENCE IN THE
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT OF
OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY STUDENTS

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Nexus
Learning
Grant
Proposal
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University

Project Title: Interprofessional Collaboration in a Student Run Pro-Bono Clinic: Facilitating Clinical Excellence in the Professional Development of Occupational Therapy Students

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Abstract

Students enrolled in the Occupational Therapy (OT) program have limited opportunity to collaborate with those from other healthcare disciplines. Additionally, eight OT programs exist in the greater Philadelphia area. All programs compete for mandatory fieldwork sites. It is the context in which students implement knowledge from the classroom into real –world situations. Students have the opportunity to work with patients, practice clinical skills, and build confidence in their abilities. However, with the increased number of fieldwork programs and limited sites available, programs continue to be challenged in providing adequate experiences. In January 2016, student volunteers from the OT Program began collaborations with Widener University’s physical therapy (PT) program providing services one night a week in a student run pro-bono clinic located on Widener’s campus. A pilot program was established through receipt of a Nexus Grant in 2016 to expand services to two nights a week allowing for Level I fieldwork opportunities for OT students. The proposed research project aims to expand this opportunity by increasing the number of Level I fieldwork experiences circumventing the challenges of student placements. In addition, this will allow a greater number of students to benefit from this unique off-campus Nexus Learning opportunity. Preliminary outcomes from the pilot program indicate higher confidence levels pre and post fieldwork compared to peers in traditional settings in clinical reasoning, decision making and interprofessional collaboration.

Explanation of How the Project Advances Nexus Learning

Through the fieldwork experience, students learn to apply concepts learned in the didactic portion of the academic curriculum in order to address patient needs and develop a professional identity as an occupational therapy practitioner (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2012). Gray (2008) suggests traditional methods of fieldwork education may be inadequate to meet the needs of Generation Y students and participation in pro-bono clinics would be an appropriate solution to providing a quality fieldwork education to improve student’s real world experiences.

AOTA “asserts that entry-level occupational therapy (OT) curricula should include interprofessional education (IPE) in which students have opportunities to learn and apply the knowledge and skills necessary for interprofessional collaborative practice” (Gray, Coker-Bolt, Gupta, Hissong, Hartmann, & Kern, 2015, p.1). Improved health outcomes and reduction of health care costs are critical in the provision of care. In order to achieve these goals, practitioners must be prepared to contribute to interprofessional care teams (Earnest & Brandt, 2014 as cited in Gray et al, 2015).

Provision of services in today’s healthcare arena requires one to perform the following set of skills at a higher level of proficiency: critical thinking or clinical reasoning skills; decision making skills; professionalism; time management; self-directed learning; cultural competency; leadership and advocacy; and interprofessional collaboration (Jung, Sainsbury, Grum, Wilkins, & Tryssenaar, 2002; Jungnickel, Kelley, Hammer, Haines, & Marlowe, 2009; Westin, 2010;

Black, Palombaro, & Dole, 2013). Interprofessional collaboration within a pro-bono clinic not only provides the context for development of these skills, but development of skills and/or real life experience with particular service recipients and conditions (Black, Palombaro & Dole, 2013). According to Kavannah, Kearns, and McGarry (2015) students reported pro bono placements provided a positive learning experience and great opportunities for professional and collaborative learning, abundance of support from supervisors with constructive feedback and improved confidence compared to traditional placements. In summary, this project advances Nexus Learning at the University by providing real world experiences in a pro bono clinic with mentoring by both authors to all volunteer and fieldwork students. In addition, second year and fieldwork students will have the opportunity to mentor and supervise first year students. Students will be engaged in leadership and administrative responsibilities in an interdisciplinary facility that is located outside of Philadelphia University in an underserved area. It is hoped by engaging in this experience student's professional skills and personal confidence will also increase.

Specific Project Goals and Learning Outcomes

Overarching Goal: Increase innovative fieldwork sites for Philadelphia University OT students. Due to the lack of fieldwork sites, particularly in the field of adult physical disability, this clinical site will double placements (from 7 to 14 Level I placements) for our students in a collaborative, interprofessional facility.

Learning Outcome: To determine if providing students an opportunity to work in a student run pro bono clinic is an effective and more efficient way to provide a clinical fieldwork experience through increasing participant pool for outcome study.

Goal: Provide 14 students with real world clinical and leadership responsibilities within a student run pro bono clinic.

Learning Outcome: To determine if providing students the experience (opportunity) to work in a student run pro bono clinic promotes development of clinical skills in a clinical setting.

Goal: To provide clinical experience to Level I fieldwork students demonstrating a gain of at least 1-point on a 5-point Likert scale between pre and post perceptions in the areas of clinical reasoning, decision making, interprofessional collaboration, and preparedness for Level II fieldwork.

Description of Activities and Timeframe

- Identification and vetting of additional funding sources for sustained viability of fieldwork program. These include student fundraising events; donations from local businesses, clinicians and alumni; grant funding through Widener University's Pro-Bono Network – Summer – Fall 2017
- Identification of Level I Fieldwork students for Fall 2017 – Summer 2017
- Identification and training of (3) Fieldwork Educators outside of authors of proposal – Summer 2017
- Submission of presentation proposal for Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association Conference - Summer 2017

- Submission of presentation proposal for New Jersey Occupational Therapy Association Conference - Summer 2017
- Submission of presentation proposal for American Occupational Therapy Association Conference - Summer 2017
- Present at Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association Conference - October 2017
- Present at New Jersey Occupational Therapy Association Conference – October 2017
- Present at American Occupational Therapy Association Education Summit – October 2017
- Submission of presentation proposal for Annual Faculty Conference on Teaching Excellence – Fall 2017
- Present at American Occupational Therapy Association Conference - April 2018
- Submission of manuscript for publication in OT Practice - Spring 2018
- Submission of poster presentation for the CSHLA Research Symposium - Spring 2018

Project Assessment

Assessment of program outcomes will be completed through:

- A Student Participation Questionnaire via Survey Monkey. This questionnaire will be completed by OT student volunteers and Level I fieldwork students.
- An Interprofessional Collaboration Questionnaire via Survey Monkey. This questionnaire will be completed by OT student volunteers and fieldwork students.
- A Perceived Skills/Confidence Questionnaire via Survey Monkey. This questionnaire will be completed by OT students who did not participate in the Pro Bono clinic as a fieldwork student or volunteer but did participate in a traditional fieldwork experience in another clinic. This will be used to compare data from same questions posed to students who did participate in pro bono clinic.
- Performance of Level I fieldwork students will also be assessed using the Philadelphia Regional Fieldwork Consortium evaluation forms and the Philadelphia University OT Program's Clinical Skills Checklist.

Documentation and Dissemination

Grant proposal authors plan to attend conferences and/or conference sessions focused on Interprofessional Collaboration, Student Run Pro-Bono Clinics, and Fieldwork Education. Presentation proposals will be submitted for Philadelphia University's College of Health, Science and Liberal Arts Research Day, state and national Occupational Therapy association conferences as well as a local conference for Student Run Pro-Bono Clinics. In addition, authors will submit a manuscript for publication to OT Practice.

Project Personnel

Wendy Wachter-Schutz, OTD, MS, OTR/L and Bridget Trivinia, OTD, MS, OTR/L will serve as on-site clinical supervisors during the provision of direct patient care. Faculty will review and provide feedback on all documentation and patient treatment plans as well as student administrative responsibilities. In addition, both faculty will mentor students in their leadership roles and facilitate mentorship between second and first year students. Bridget Trivinia (Academic Fieldwork Coordinator) will be responsible for scheduling Level I fieldwork students

and training fieldwork educators. Licensed Occupational Therapists will be utilized as preceptors to supervise Level 1 fieldwork students as indicated.

Budget Narrative and Worksheet

- \$2000/ per faculty stipend- used to support time in/out clinic with students to provide supervision, education and mentoring. To support administrative duties and data collection.
- \$900 Fieldwork Educator/Preceptor Fees to supervise Level I students- this will be used to provide supervisory support for the second day/week at the clinic as indicated. Authors will continue to provide supervisory support for the one day per week and all other second days/week. Per Provost Office, this is included as a “consultant fee” under other on budget form.
- \$500 for (6) OT Supervisor/Fieldwork Educator Liability Insurance
- \$150 Equipment and Assessments - OT is new to the clinic and while some supplies are available by the facility, there are specific OT assessments and equipment that is needed to train and teach patients to become more independent in activities of daily living.
- \$144 Faculty and Student Leadership conference fees- this will be used to support student leadership and faculty to attend and present at student and professional workshops/conferences.

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