Practice Education aims to integrate academic knowledge gained in college into practical skills to develop students into competent practitioners. Placement allows the opportunity for students to focus on the application of their knowledge, skills and attitudes in ‘real-life’ practice settings.

The Practice Education Team at Trinity College Dublin are responsible for the organization and facilitation of practice education placements for all undergraduate students. The team have developed a variety of pre-placement workshops with students which are compulsory for students prior to going out on placement, workshops include professional behavior, engaging in supervision, reflective practice and realities of practice.

The team has also developed a study day aimed at both novice and experienced clinicians to prepare them for the role of educator for students. These study days are facilitated twice a year and are held at the Trinity Centre for Health Sciences, St. James’s Hospital. If you or any of your colleagues are interested in attending this course please contact Cathy McCormack or Teresa Foley.

There are between 160 – 170 undergraduate students that require placements every academic year, this number can fluctuate depending on the numbers of students in each year.

There is currently a significant shortage of offers for psychosocial placement settings for students in Ireland. In order to ensure our students receive a wealth of clinical experience in placement and to meet WFOT and AOTI minimum hours of practice in Psychosocial settings it is essential that all services offer placement for students.

We would like to acknowledge all clinical settings that offered valuable learning experiences for our students over the past year. We are currently looking at potential placements for our students for the next academic year.

The official call for placement offers was distributed to all sites in May 2013 however please feel free to contact Cathy McCormack prior to this if you feel you are in a position to offer a placement to a student in the coming year.

We are aware of the clinical pressures in all healthcare settings at this time, if you have any concerns regarding your ability to provide a placement for our students please contact Cathy McCormack via e-mail or Teresa Foley who can advise you of the supports available to practice educators and students during placement.
Return Day for students during placement

Since October 2011 the return day for students at the mid-point of placement have been completed within individual specialities i.e. Mental Health, Paediatrics, Physical - acute and rehabilitation. These have been held on placement sites in small groups and allows students to explore specific topics in relation to placement and plan for the remainder of the placement via peer learning and practice tutors. Students have provided positive feedback on this method of return day. The current group of Senior Freshman students had two return days to consolidate their learning on placement.

Placement allocation

Each year semester we require additional placement offers to ensure our students gain a wealth of experience in a variety of different clinical settings. We are currently very short on psychosocial placements and if you are able to facilitate a placement in this area or are aware of other services which could accommodate our students please contact Cathy McCormack or Teresa Foley.

Practice Educator Study Day

The study day aims to equip novice and more experienced clinicians with the skills and knowledge of the practice education programme for Trinity Students. It is an interactive session involving group work and role play activities to gain an insight into teaching skills for educators, the supervision process, assessment of student performance and signposts future educators to the resources available to them from the practice education team during placement.

The next practice educator study day will take place on 18th September 2013 If you are interested in attending the course please contact Cathy Mc Cormack cmmcorm@tcd.ie

AOTI Annual Conference, Mullingar, April 19-20th 2013

Catriona Moran (Practice Tutor, St. James’s Hospital) and Meadhbh NiGhiollain (Practice Tutor, Royal Hospital Donnybrook) facilitated a workshop “Occupational Therapist to Educator” at the AOTI Annual Conference in Mullingar on Friday 19th April. This workshop aimed to equip attendees with the skills to develop their teaching skills with students on placement and facilitated very interesting discussion around current issues facing practice education in both the clinical and academic settings.
Posture and Pressure Care

A key development within the curriculum for Students in Trinity College this year was the considerable expansion of the posture and pressure care element of the Assistive Technology module for 2nd year students. Mary Hurley, Meadhbh NíGhiollain and Catriona Moran (Practice Tutors) collaborated with Michelle Spiritos (Lecturer, TCD) in developing module content. The module involved theory and practical based workshops off site at the Daughters of Charity, Central Remedial Clinic and Royal Hospital Donnybrook. This aimed to increase the knowledge of students in the area of posture and pressure care which can be put into practice during placement and in their future careers. It is anticipated that this module will continue to run for students next year.

2:1 Supervision Models for placement

Internationally, Occupational Therapy is experiencing increasing difficulty in establishing sufficient placements for students. In order to meet current placement requirements, the 2:1 model (two students with one practice placement educator) During this academic year placement sites have been involved in a 2:1 supervision model - NRH, Daughter’s of Charity, Our Lady’s Hospice and Care Services and HSE Dublin North City Mental Health Services. Although this may seem to “double the workload” for educators, research and feedback from current 2:1 students and educators in clinical practice highlights the benefits of having a 2:1 placement - peer support, development of clinical reasoning, students have increased confidence in their abilities especially earlier in their training. If you have any queries regarding 2:1 model of supervision or would be interested in engaging in this exciting development please contact any member of the practice education team.

Role emerging placement

Role-emerging placements are growing in popularity due to a lack of placement opportunities as well as constantly evolving and dynamic areas of practice. This sees Occupational Therapy students planning and implementing services in areas where the need for Occupational Therapy services remains unmet. Two Junior Sophister Occupational Therapy students completed a role-emerging placement at the Deaf Schools, Cabra from January-April 2013. The placement saw the students work in partnership with school staff to develop an on-site Occupational Therapy service. The Occupational Therapy students provided assessment and therapeutic services to students at both schools, all of whom were deaf. All services provided by the Occupational Therapy students were delivered through the medium of Irish Sign Language (ISL). The project was a resounding success and plans are already underway for further development of Occupational Therapy services at the deaf schools. The project heralds a new era for school-based Occupational Therapy in Ireland, as well as Occupational Therapy services for the deaf community.

The project was implemented and supervised by Teresa Foley, Regional Placement Facilitator, TCD.
Two Erasmus exchange students from the Katholieke Hogeschool Brugge-Oostende in Belgium completed an 11 week placement in Our Lady’s Hospice and Care services Harold’s Cross and The Daughter’s of Charity service alongside the 3rd year students. It is anticipated that Junior Sophister Students may have an opportunity to complete an Erasmus placement next year.

Realities of Practice Information Sheets

This suite of useful information pages are being complied to assist students to prepare for what can be stressful and demanding tasks when on clinical placement. The information pages are designed to be a guide for the student and the Practice Educator to prepare for scenarios such as working with clients who are the same age as the student, lone working, leading a home visit assessment, working with clients who are the end of life, working in intensive care etc.

These information sheets will be available in the future in the Practice Education Resource Kit on the Trinity College Dublin, Discipline of Occupational Therapy website.

Timelines and Expectations for Practice Education:

Supporting students on practice education placement is a rewarding and often also a challenging experience for the Practice Educator. At times it can be difficult to identify clearly the level a student is at or to know what to expect from them.

In order to further support Practice Educators within this process a resource is being developed which will help guide the Practice Educator in the level of knowledge, skill and attitude to be expected at different stages of each level of practice education. It will also provide some practical ideas on how to elicit further information, or promote greater discussion and reflection, with students.

This resource package will be available online this summer prior to the next Practice Education placements.

Practice Education Placement dates 2013/14

Sept 30th - December 13th Senior Sophister (4th Year)

January 6th 2014 - January 17th Junior Freshman (1st Year)

January 20th – April 4th Junior Sophister (3rd Year)

April 28th – June 27th Senior Freshman (2nd Year)

Practice Education Resource Kit

www.medicine.tcd.ie/occupational-therapy/practice-education

Acknowledgement of placement providers for 2012/2013

The Practice Education Team at Trinity College Dublin would like to thank all of the placement providers for facilitating students this year. ………….

Navan Hospital, St. Vincent’s Hospital, Stewarts Care, PCCC Dublin North West, Tullamore Hospital, Harold’s Cross Hospice and Care Service, Lucena Clinic, Dublin South West Mental Health Services, Dublin North Mental Health Services, PCCC Dun Laoghaire, Dublin North Central Mental Health Services, HSE Dublin North City Mental Health Services, National Rehabilitation Hospital, St. James’s Hospital, Daughters of Charity, Central Remedial Clinic, Glenmalaire Day Hospital, Adolescent Mental Health Drogheda, HSE Dublin West, UNILINK Trinity College Dublin, St Patrick’s Hospital, St. Francis’ Hospice Raheny, PCCC Dundalk, Beechpark Autism Services, St. Joseph’s Raheny, Beaumont Hospital, Bloomfield Care Centre, Irish Wheelchair Association, HSE Dublin North West, Deaf Schools Cabra, St Mary’s Phoenix Park, Royal Hospital Donnybrook, Connolly Hospital Blanchardstown, Children’s University Hospital Temple Street, St. Michael’s House, Laura Lynn Foundation, Carmona Services, Cappagh Hospital, St. John of God’s, Enable Ireland, Mater Hospital, Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital Crumlin, Beaumont Hospital, Sensational Kids.

We apologise if we have left your service off the list, we really appreciate all the fantastic learning opportunities provided to our students throughout the academic year.