Social Work: Intentional Practice Simulation and Field Placement Clinical Rotation Trial

Norah Hosken, Jody Laughton, Liana Green, Sophie Goldingay AASWWE, Perth, 3 October 2013.
Social Work Health Intentional Practice Simulation and Rotational Placement Project Team:

Deakin University Social Work Team Members
Norah Hosken, Jody Laughton and Sophie Goldingay

Barwon Health Social Work Team Members
Liana Green, Robyn Van Ingen and

SOCIAL WORK AT DEAKIN
> Critical social work
> Regional and rural issues
> Gender
> Race, ethnicity and culture
> Economic disadvantage
> Global issues
> Empowerment perspectives
> Anti-oppressive theories
> Social work practice skills
> Reflective practice

Social Work

Barwon Health Social Workers provide services to inpatient (Geelong Hospital and McKellar Centre), outpatient and community programs.

Experiencing problems and changes with your health can be a very difficult and stressful time for patients and their family. There are many concerns and problems which can arise for patients as they undertake treatment and plan for the future.

Social work services provide assistance to patients and their families with respect to the wide range of personal concerns and practical needs which may arise during treatment.
Why this project?

The field placement experience is a ‘core principle’ of social work education (Australian Association of Social Workers 2012).

Field placements are increasingly difficult to obtain due to:
- increase in numbers of social work courses and students (Healy and Lonne 2010)
- increases of students from other related areas competing for limited space and staff resources in the same organisations.

Example- research identifies a reduction in the number of social work placements offered by agencies in Victoria due to expanding caseloads, organisational change, increased workplace demands, lack of infrastructure and budget cuts (Cleak & Van Neuron 2001; Department of Human Services 2008).
Background

Social work field education placements in industry are increasingly difficult to secure in Australia and organisations are more often asking for ‘good’, ‘easy’ students.

The field placement model that has most commonly been used in social work is the traditional, apprenticeship one supervisor- one student dyad, where the supervisor has sole day-to-day responsibility for the student for the placement block most often comprising 500 hours over approximately 70 days for full-time student placements.
This study focuses on

(1) the use of web and non-web based intentional practice simulation to increase the preparedness of students for placement and professional practice, and to support students learning and development during placement, and

(2) the use of a rotational placement model comprising three rotations across a health service with an embedded clinical social work educator/ co-ordinator providing orientation, group supervision and training for students complemented by individual and pair supervision with the on-site rotation social work supervisors.
Method

This intentional practice simulation and rotation trial is almost complete and the research study is currently in progress.

On-line questionnaires and focus groups will be used with social work students and staff involved in the Deakin Social Work/Barwon Health Social Work Simulation and Field Placement Clinical Rotation Trial in 2013 and again in 2014.
The study enables a comparison as:

The Deakin Social Work Students (final year BSW or MSW students) involved in the ‘Deakin Social Work/Barwon Health Social Work Field Placement Clinical Rotation Trial’ in 2013 used ‘no technology on site role play intentional practice simulations’.

The Deakin Social Work Students (final year BSW and MSW students) involved in the Deakin Social Work/Barwon Health Social Work Field Placement Clinical Rotation Trial’ in 2014 will have the use of ‘Deakin Social Work Intentional Practice ‘Simulation’ Website’ and ‘no technology on site role play practice simulations’.
Aims of the research component of the project

• To investigate how current / past Deakin Bachelor (BSW) /Master (MSW) of Social Work students who participated in the ‘Deakin Social Work/Barwon Health Social Work Field Placement Clinical Rotation Trial’ in 2013 perceived or experienced the placement rotational model, including the use of simulation in that trial.

• To investigate how Deakin University Social Work Staff and Barwon Health Social Work Field Supervisors experienced the work of developing and implementing the ‘Deakin Social Work/Barwon Health Social Work Field Placement Clinical Rotation Trial’.

• To evaluate ‘no web-based simulated role play practice’ experiences and ‘Deakin social work web- based simulation’ experiences as teaching/learning methods to increase the self-efficacy and mastery of knowledge and skills of social work students in the Deakin Social Work/Barwon Health Social Work Field Placement Clinical Rotation Trial’ placement.
Rotational field education models

Experimentation with rotational field education models takes place in a context of generally cautious student, educator and industry stakeholders to modifications to the traditional social work field education model of the one-to-one student field educator dyad in a block placement in one section or team within one agency (Cleak and Smith 2012).
Rotational field education models
A significant finding of a recent Australian study by Cleak & Smith (2012, p.254) was that although

- students generally preferred the traditional one student on-site supervisor model of supervision

- there was also a high level of social work student satisfaction with an emerging supervision and field placement model where two or more social workers were involved in the professional supervision of the student comprising a range of supervision strategies, such as group supervision, shared supervision, and split placements across different teams/sections within agencies or between different agencies with shared/split supervision.
Clinical rotation model trial – also provides ‘current practice’ scenario detail for creating authentic intentional practice simulations

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Hosken, Laughton, Green & Goldingay AASWWE 2013
Clinical educator/co-ordinator in teaching room at Barwon Health – using multigenerational case study developed in situ, in workbook, role played in wards on-site and will be acted in web-based simulation.
Intentional practice or simulation?

Simulations in social work education are not new, we just don’t call them ‘simulations’ which is a more health focussed term. Social work has long used intentional practice via role play simulations in the classroom with classmates; scenarios depicted by drama students; and more recently use of trained actors as standardised clients (Logie et al. 2013).

Lonne, Daniels and King (2010) for Health Workforce Australia investigating the ‘use of simulated learning environments (SLEs) in social work training and placement …details[ing] aspects of the Social Work curriculum that can be delivered via simulated learning programs’ (2010, p.1).
Simulation and social work

...this study identified that non-technology based SLEs are currently used extensively and effectively across the social work curriculum, predominately in skills based subjects/units, but that technology based SLEs are used only occasionally.

Key recommendations from the report include that: ‘significant and broad-scale development of technology based SLEs across the social work curricula be undertaken and evaluated; interactive 3D, gaming media and transmedia approaches be included in the development of SLEs; and that specific areas of the curriculum be prioritised including skills development, interdisciplinary learning, and support for field education placements’ (Lonne, Daniels, and King 2010, p.59).
Simulation practice in authentic environment – here exploring social work and ‘power over the bed’.
Some preliminary findings

Intentional practice simulation and clinical rotation model enables students to:

• practice and feel comfortable with the ‘script’, develop confidence with the script before exposed to other stimuli
• better contextualise the social work role in a multi-disciplinary setting
• have a safe space to set their practice framework, safe place to develop behaviour strategies
• enable processing of suffering exposed to in placement as that is moved into an educational context – encourages ‘time in’ and ‘time out’ of placement
• stay in the context of the client rather than attending to the varied stimuli that encourage the student to stay in their own context, allows student to get out of personal context
• refine and nuance skills at a more personalised pace
Web-based simulation and learning

• Sociological fidelity

• being developed now using the clinical rotation model practice scenarios, social work assessments, interventions, case planning tools etc.
Thank you for listening.
All feedback most welcome
via
nhosken@deakin.edu.au
References