

UBC Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund

Final Report – maximum 2 pages

Project Name: Near Peer Evaluation: Implementation of T-RES for occupational therapy fieldwork placements, Phase 2

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Year of Funding: 2014-2015

Summary of Work Accomplished

This project continued to evaluate a web-based tool that allows students to record their daily patient encounters and reflect on these learning experiences while in fieldwork. Reflective practice is often advocated as a means of bridging the gap between theory and practice. In the Master of Occupational Therapy program, students complete over 1000 hours of fieldwork as part of their training. The aim of this phase of the project was to continue to provide the tool for occupational therapy students to track placement activities with accuracy and engage in seamless reflective practice and build in to the software platform the means for receiving feedback on the submitted reflections by “near-peers” (Senior students providing feedback to junior students). To date this project has completed the following:

- 1) Multiple meetings with developers from Resilience software with Project lead (Donna Drynan, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFC)) to discuss creating additional features of the software for the Occupational therapy template for data tracking & student reflection;
- 2) Continued usage of T-Res(2014/15)
- 3) Weekly review by Academic Fieldwork Coordinator of data provided by each student. Weekly review and feedback on submitted reflections
- 4) Continuous quality improvement by Donna Drynan receiving feedback from students and then relaying this information to Software company and monitoring changes made.
- 5) Generation and review of individual student reports after every practicum.
- 6) Orientation and implementation of system with new cohort of students (2014) by Resilience staff took place in Dec 2014
- 7) Hiring of Research assistant who provided select students with opportunity to provide peer feedback to each other while on placement.

Evaluation of Project's Success

From the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator's (AFC) perspective, the implementation and utilization of T-res within the Occupational Therapy program has been a resounding success. The information and data that is collected, sorted and reviewed adds to the evidence that the OT curriculum is being reinforced in the practice setting. The students anecdotally report that weekly reflections of their experiences- successes, challenges, surprises and heartbreaks, helps to solidify their learning, give them resources to draw on for the next time they are a similar situation and having it located in one central place allows them to prepare for upcoming placements. One key element they report back is that receiving responses from the academic faculty on their reflective entries is what makes the act of journaling so much more meaningful. The academic feedback provides strategies and solutions that are helpful and sometimes just receiving affirmation that they are on the right track is just what is needed.

Review of the daily clinical encounter entries by the AFC assists in future planning for individual student placement opportunities; identifies areas certain students have yet to have experiences in; tracks individual placement sites if any “yellow flags” are raised about level of student participation and I can generate any level of report required by any one requesting information about fieldwork education. Since it is still a relatively new requirement by students when they are out on placement, being receptive to student feedback and working with the development team is still necessary.

Discussions with students resulted in the general agreement that providing feedback to their “junior” peers (MOTI students) would be a good opportunity for them to gain further experience with giving appropriate feedback.

In discussions with the developers at Resilience, a number of options were considered & reviewed over many weeks for ways in which to make this “near-peer” experience come to fruition. A number of challenges were encountered and the expenses deemed too great to implement extensive software changes to accommodate this request.

Instead, the hiring of a research assistant to review the literature on “near-peer” feedback and then placing that RA into the FW setting with a number of students where they implemented near- peer feedback outside of the T-Res system took place. The anecdotal outcomes and feedback were positive and it has led to another “near-peer” feedback activity being implemented in the course RSOT 515: Practice Skills and Therapeutic Procedures I starting in Oct 2015 via UBC Connect platform.