

BRIDGING the GAP

Inspiring the next generation of CAMHS nurses

Background

Student nurses play a key role within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) across Scotland, contributing to clinical care while developing essential knowledge and skills through practice placements. However, variation in placement structure and access to support can impact student experience and learning outcomes. There is also little taught in the pre-registration programmes in relation to CAMHS. As previous CAMHS students, with shared goals of strengthening student experiences and workforce development within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, we explored how we could support students better.

Aim

Deliver an inclusive and supportive placement experience with additional learning for all.

Draw on our own experiences as former students to ensure that students feel valued, well supported and able to fully engage with learning opportunities.

Strengthen collaboration between students, clinicians, teams, PEFs and Universities.

Promote professional development and contribute positively to the recruitment and retention of future CAMHS nurses.

The Bridge in Practice

We -

1. Developed, coordinated and facilitated weekly, PEF supported, student support sessions as part of a learning timetable, with face to face and online slots, covering a diverse range of topics from many members of the wider multidisciplinary team. Clinicians from a range of bands presented sessions including - risk management, meal time support and working with neurodivergent young people.
2. Created a comprehensive contact list for all CAMHS services which included a description of their role, contact details and learning opportunities for students.
3. Produced a 45 paged, self directed, student learning resource which outlines details of the interventions/models of care used within CAMHS, gives an overview of the each members of MDTs role and includes case studies/reflective practice exercises that are relevant to practice in CAMHS.

Student feedback: "I gained first-hand, practical experience from nurses which helped link theory to practice"
"The sessions were useful, interesting and relevant to placement"
"The delivery was engaging and helped build my confidence"
"I learned new knowledge and skills that I did not have before"

Senior Nurse Feedback: "Students are better prepared and more confident on placement which has helped to reduce pressure on practice assessors and supervisors"

Clinician Feedback: "Students show improved awareness, communication, professionalism and integrate more easily into the team"

Impact on Our Development:

Delivering the sessions strengthened our leadership, teaching and communication skills and encouraged reflection on our own practice.

Results

We have -

- Enhanced student knowledge and confidence ✓
- Improved induction into placements ✓
- Delivered training sessions covering a wide range of relevant topics ✓
- Achieved consistently positive student feedback with 83% of students who recently completed a placement with us reporting that they would now consider a career in CAMHS ✓

We will -

Offer reflective sessions, facilitated by the Practice Development Nurse, to strengthen the feedback loop. Continue to expand the work - create a stronger focus on staff retention, improve programme delivery via QMPLE and work more closely with universities.

Conclusion & Next Steps

"Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses...we must be learning all of our lives" - Florence Nightingale

