



West Midlands Education Innovation and Notable Practice

**INTER-PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE LEARNING PATHWAY
PLACEMENTS IN PHYSIOTHERAPY**

2010 - 2011



INTER-PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE LEARNING PATHWAY PLACEMENTS IN PHYSIOTHERAPY

WALSALL HEALTHCARE TRUST

Overview:	Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust Practice Placement manager facilitated 1 day x 5 week inter professional learning pathways for Physiotherapy Students from Keele University. Outstanding feedback from students and the Keele team.
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We (Kim Eaton & Lisa Hamilton) were approached by Paul Firth (Joint Head of Clinical Education / Teaching Fellow Keele University) regarding the possibility of developing inter-professional placement provision for physiotherapy students at the then Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust. We (Lisa & me) had already quite an established framework and an extensive network of pathway exposures which enabled pathway placements for student nurses (adult, child branch, mental health & learning disability), midwives, overseas nursing students and radiographers. This model had used this on many occasions to facilitate inter-professional learning and to manage capacity when we have high student numbers and because of this obstacles were minimised and avoided.

Initially physiotherapy students were given a short 3 day exposure to adult nursing at the beginning of their practice education programme (CP1) evaluation was positive. On their next exposure to practice (CP2) we provided weekly 1 day placements across a variety of professions including Clinical Nurse Specialists (Tissue Viability, Respiratory Team, Upper GI, Lung cancer, Colorectal etc), Early Pregnancy Unit, Paediatric Assessment Unit, Medical Photography, Maxio facial surgery, Medical day Case, Fracture Clinic & Plaster technician and see and treat in A&E etc. We did overcome the unexpected for example when a placement couldn't be accommodated at the last minute by having back up plans of alternative pathways achieved by early and ongoing engagement.

I liaised and negotiate individual pathway exposure programmes for each of the students with colleagues across the Trust early engagement is the key and teams who we had never used before were keen to come on board. (It does involve quite a bit of leg work but we find face to face engagement far more effective than electronic or telephone communication). Our colleagues gave outstanding support in facilitating inter professional pathway placements and learning opportunities (not one member of the team refused our request). Their willingness, commitment and motivation to engage with us (me & Lisa) to help to deliver pathway placements for Physiotherapy Students (for the first time) means the model we use was seen as good practice and we were invited to share this with other partners/organisations.

The short term benefits include feedback from Keele University which was very positive and Student's feedback was equally positive. The team's commitment and motivation to inter professional learning is well established and the positive feedback to the team recognises their valuable contributions.

The long term benefits of increased inter professional practice learning leads to a greater appreciation of roles and inter professional working to deliver effective and quality patient care

alongside investment in the future workforce. Partnership working is enhanced and links to theory and practice is established.

It was an absolute pleasure to accommodate practice placements for the physiotherapy students from Keele University and we were delighted they were happy with the experiences in practice and that the inter-professional learning opportunities supported their learning and development. They were excellent ambassadors for themselves, for Keele University and potential future Physiotherapy Students.