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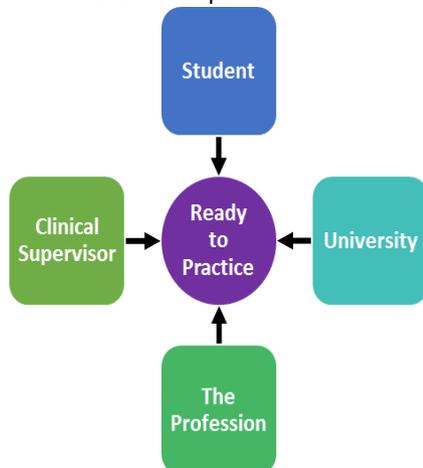
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The Assessment Partnership – Assessing Student Readiness to Practice

Rebecca Sealey¹, Fiona Naumann², Melainie Cameron³, Deborah Pascoe⁴

¹James Cook University, Townsville, QLD, Australia; ²Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, QLD, Australia; ³University of Sunshine Coast, Sippy Downs, QLD, Australia; ⁴Federation University, Ballarat, VIC, Australia

Assessment is a critical component of the educational paradigm. Teaching, learning and assessment need to be aligned to optimise learning outcomes (Boud, 1995), and ensure graduates are safe and competent to practice in their professions (Eva, 2007; Holmboe et al. 2010; Van der Vleuten, 1996). In this session we will present and critically evaluate the roles of the student, the University, clinical supervisor/s, and the professional body in ensuring graduates' readiness to practice.



In order to maximise their learning, students need to take active roles in the learning process. We will report on research on the use of ePortfolios in which students collected and presented evidence that demonstrated their competency. Embedded in this research were students' reflections around their learning.

Assessment of clinical competency in the university environment has been criticised for lacking fidelity (ie: not being real, believable, or reflecting the work environment). Clinical employers want to be assured that graduates are "work ready". We will explore several creative, innovative, evidence-based strategies to increase the fidelity of university assessments so that assessors can be more assured of students' preparedness to enter the workplace.

Clinical placements offer excellent opportunities to assess students' performance in the environments in which they will eventually work. Although having greater fidelity than the university setting, significant threats to the validity of assessment remain in these environments. Particularly concerning are: variability between supervisors' judgments, and the unpredictability of clinical workplaces such that we cannot ensure that all students experience placements of the same difficulty of challenge. In this section we will present and critically evaluate a range of workplace assessments, allowing participants to consider what might work in different environments. We will further discuss ways in which assessments might be changed to manage threats to validity.

References

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