**Three Weeks Abroad: Lessons Learned About the Sustainable Development Goals**

Tanya Langtree

Nursing and Midwifery, James Cook University, Townsville, Australia

E: [tanya.langtree@jcu.edu.au](mailto:tanya.langtree@jcu.edu.au); T: +61 7 47815355

Theme 3: SDGs and Health Education

Type: Oral Presentation

The inclusion of an international clinical placement (ICP) experience is gaining popularity in Australian undergraduate health degrees. Three main drivers for this increase are: students’ desires to have diverse clinical experiences; an increasing need for global citizenship; and, universities competing for student enrolments (Browne, Fetherston, & Medigovich, 2015; Maginnis & Anderson, 2017). From this stance, it is understandable why ICPs in undergraduate programs remain a contentious issue. After all, the community who receive student-delivered healthcare while abroad are arguably forgotten in this motivation (Bauer, 2017). Moreover, the long-term sustainability of the healthcare program once the ICP is over is questionable (Bauer, 2017).

However, after observing the impacts of an ICP on one community in remote Indonesia, this is not necessarily the case. Instead, the program was largely community-driven and the sustainable development goals (SDGs) were visibly in action. For example, free health assessment clinics were held throughout the ICP along with several student-led preventative health education sessions to improve the health literacy levels within the community. Concurrently, the students gained meaningful insight on the impacts of the social and cultural determinants of health and what it means to be a global citizen.

This presentation will discuss the benefits on undergraduate nursing students’ learning while undertaking the three week ICP in Indonesia. Areas addressed will include: observing the SDGs in action; experiencing the social and cultural determinants of health in-situ; and, developing cultural competence. Further, the presentation will share the challenges faced and strategies used to address these when facilitating an ICP for undergraduate students. Areas addressed will include: minimising cultural shock; navigating the differences in cultural and healthcare expectations; and, overcoming the variances in clinical and procedural skills. These lessons learned will provide a unique insight to the value of offering future ICPs in other developing countries.

**Word count: 297**

References

Bauer, I. (2017). More harm than good? The questionable ethics of medical volunteering and international student placements. *Tropical Diseases, Travel Medicine and Vaccines, 3*, 1-12. doi:10.1186/s40794-017-0048-y

Browne, C. A., Fetherston, C. M., & Medigovich, K. (2015). International clinical placements for Australian undergraduate nursing students: A systematic thematic synthesis of the literature. *Nurse Education Today, 35*(10), 1028-1036. doi:10.1016/j.nedt.2015.05.012

Maginnis, C., & Anderson, J. (2017). A discussion of nursing students’ experiences of culture shock during an international clinical placement and the clinical facilitators’ role. *Contemporary Nurse, 53*(3), 348-354. doi:10.1080/10376178.2017.1353397