

Learning from a virtual placement

We were faced with the challenge of providing a final placement for second year master's students in the middle of being plunged into a teletherapy world. As always, our main priorities were for the placement to be as beneficial as possible for all parties involved. Since there were 3 therapists sharing the placement we tried to offer as varied an experience as possible by combining remote therapy sessions with producing a number of therapy videos aimed at parents.

I took on responsibility for supporting the student in producing several short videos to accompany the speech programmes that we use in the department. The end product would reflect the student's:

- Understanding of the therapy approach (what and why)
- Delivery of information in a clear and appropriate way for the audience (who)
- Organisation and planning skills (how)
- Ability to reflect and refine the information and presentation.

It was helpful for me to have experience of making similar videos myself, particularly so that I was aware of the process and potential pitfalls.

It quickly became apparent that the success of this project relied upon a significant amount of revision and research on behalf of the student. The placement consisted of regular support sessions for:

- revising the therapy area (speech sound therapy, silent sorting)
- critiquing similar videos that were freely available on You Tube
- formulating a session plan (not dissimilar to a therapy plan) where the key was to keep it short and simple.
- producing the video that the student happy with in terms of presentation and message

We estimated that this process took 8 hours of placement time per video.

As it turned out, the student was then able to use 1 of the videos (silent sorting) in a remote therapy session and to send it to the parent for future reference.

As a therapist this remote placement was an interesting and manageable way to provide a supported student experience, whilst fulfilling the placement requirements.

Feedback from the student was extremely positive. It was a challenging and memorable learning experience, which combined learning new skills with consolidating developing therapy knowledge and techniques. There was also a requirement for extensive revision and reflection.

As a practice educator with many years of experience I will now be incorporating the production of therapy videos in future placements as a useful learning experience and consolidation of skills.

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