

Confident Clinicians: Empowering Educators in Occupational Therapy Student Supervision

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Aim

The primary aim of this project is to evaluate change in clinician confidence in supervising Occupational Therapy students on clinical placement at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital after capacity building initiatives. The secondary aim of this project is to evaluate changes to service capacity, educator experience and student experience after capacity building initiatives in Occupational Therapy at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital.

Background

Occupational Therapy clinicians at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital are expected to participate in the supervision of university students completing their clinical placements. Across our department, clinicians have varied levels of experience and enthusiasm regarding student supervision, which lead to high levels of variation regarding student expectations and management of students on placement.

Method

Targeted capacity building activities were undertaken with clinicians (N=16), including regular staff inservices, regular debriefs with student educators, standardised formal student orientation, department lunches and farewells with clinicians and students, educator led practical inservices with students, dissemination of university educational courses and the provision of reaffirming and constructive feedback on student experiences to educators.

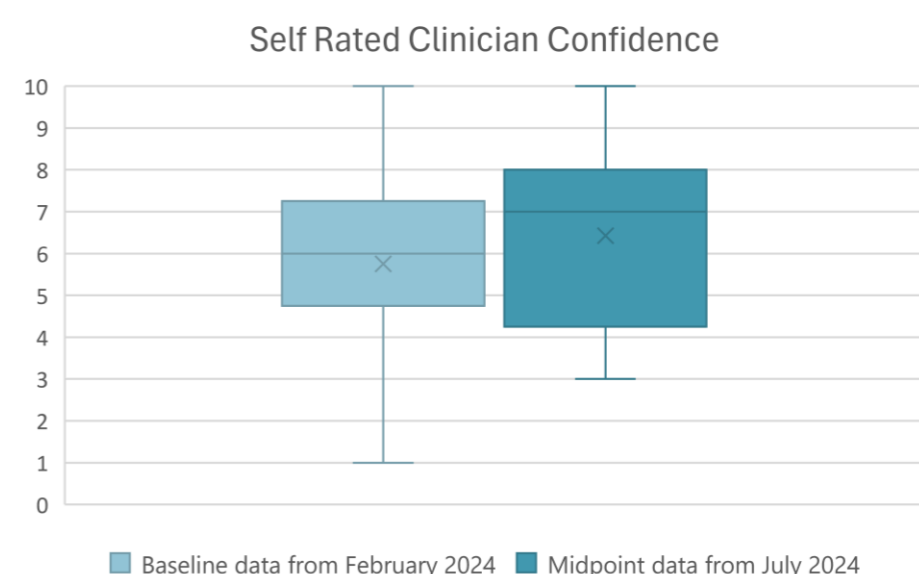


Quantitative survey data was collected at three time points (pre, mid and post evaluation). Content analysis of qualitative data was used to capture the experience of educators and students.



Results: We present interim data analysis (n=16).

Data at 6 months after implementation demonstrates an increase in educator confidence.



Key qualitative themes included:

- 1) Increase in supervisor confidence, as student placements provide clinicians with opportunity to consolidate their own learning and skill development.
- 2) Clinicians appreciated capacity building initiatives, such as the student in-service program and opportunities for students to shadow alternate clinicians into different clinical areas.

A gradual increase in occasions of service (OOS) per student was demonstrated during the project, highlighting the increased service capacity for the Occupational Therapy department commensurate with student supervision.

No. of Students	Time Period	OOS	OOS per student
4	Jan – June 2023	117	29
26	July – Dec 2023	370	14
6	Jan – July 2024	398	66

One limitation is that multiple emerging educators commenced employment after baseline data was obtained. At this stage, data trends indicate that educator confidence in supervising Occupational Therapy students at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital will continue to improve, leading to improved student experience on clinical placement while maintaining quality and capacity in service delivery.

Conclusion:

A combination of formal and informal strategies have been effective in supporting student clinical educators, and final analysis will explore the sustainability of these strategies.