VIRTUAL STUDENT PLACEMENTS

HEALTH Academy

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ABOUT HEALTH ACADEMY

OUR ORGANISATION

Euan and Neil found a common passion in their love of travel to remote parts of the world. They took this one step further by combining their passion with their careers. As experienced nurses working in travel health and public health, Euan & Neil became frustrated with the poor quality of training available for health professionals.

After leading the clinical education department at one of the UK's largest nurse and pharmacist clinic networks, they channelled their experience to create Health Academy. They wanted to create a new, fun place for learning with a variety of learning options to suit the goals of the individual practitioner.

Health Academy now works with hundreds of organisations across the UK including NHS bodies, third sector and private organisations.

As Health Academy has evolved and established partnerships with a number of Higher Education Institutions we found we were in a prime position to provide virtual student placements led by our experienced clinical team.

WELCOMING LEARNING ENVIROMENT

PRACTICAL SKILLS TRAINING

REMOTE LEARNING OPTIONS

WORLD CLASS EDUCATORS

OUR TEAM

TANYA RODRIGUES

Clinical Excellence Lead and Placement Manager

As project lead and a registered nurse with quality assurance and management experience, Tanya co-ordinates, develops and continually reviews the placements.

NEIL RAMDHUN

Head of Clinical Governance

Neil brings a wealth of experience from his clinical nursing career as a children's nurse and from his management experience of leading nationwide clinical teams across the UK.

EUAN NAISMITH

Head of Learning & Development

As a registered nurse with experience in a wide range of clinical areas including Emergency Departments, Cardiac Care, OH and Tropical Diseases, Euan is able to support the student placements.

LAUREN CORDERY

Student Placement Lead

Lauren brings a wealth of expertise drawn from her background in physiotherapy, mental health, and higher education, complemented by her experience managing teams in both placement and clinical settings.

SAM PENA

Student Supervisor

Sam brings a wealth of experience from his nursing background in Emergency Departments, Cardiac Care, Pre-Operative Care and Higher Education .

WHAT IS A VIRTUAL STUDENT PLACMENT?

BACKGROUND

The UK healthcare workforce has significant shortages across all professions. With an ageing nursing population being a significant factor in the requirement to recruit and train student healthcare professionals.

The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated a challenge that Higher Education Institutions (HEI) across the UK are faced with, which is a lack of clinical placements for healthcare students.

THE PLACEMENT

In order to provide a sustainable model, Health Academy have worked with a number of HEIs to deliver a range of 'Virtual Student Placements'.

These placements are designed to reflect the real world adoption of technology, electronic solutions and remote healthcare provision.

The placements are facilitated and supported remotely by clinical professionals working in the relevant clinical area. Alongside the educators/assessors the placement supervisors provide continual support and guidance to the students.

The placements are always linked to the learning outcomes, domains and clinical practice documentation such as PAD and CPAF.

Placements may include elements such as virtual or face-to-face consultations, development of patient education tools, development of clinical training tools, research of current systems, evidence based practice, use of electronic medical records, AI patient simulation, clinical assessments and consultations- all of which are linked to the curriculum point and level of the student cohort.

All students are allocated a named clinical practice educator/assessor from within the clinical team at Health Academy who will support the student through the placement along with the placement supervisors.

"We believe that due to the added element of 'peer enhanced learning' these virtual placements can actually improve the learning experience for students over that of traditional placements"

Euan Naismith - Health Academy

HOW A PLACEMENT WORKS

STEP 1

Design & Planning

Our team meet with the HEI placement team to understand the placement requirements.

Initial information that we will be gathering will include length of placement, dates of placement, year of cohort, curriculum structure of course, competency assessment requirements such as PAD or CPAF documentation and an understanding of any specific requirements unique to HEI.

STEP 2

Development & Sign off

Health Academy will develop a detailed plan of the placement structure including a proposed daily schedule of work for the whole placement.

At this stage our preferred approach is to meet with the academic leads at the HEI to discuss our initial proposal and allow for collaborative working to ensure that all organisational and regulatory expectations will be met.

STEP 3

Delivery of Placement

Our team will communicate with allocated students providing a virtual group induction and explain the structure of the whole placement.

Each placement will be different based on the needs of the cohort. The placements will focus on peer working and clinical supervision and mentorship throughout. The aim of all placements is to reflect the real world advancements and adoption of technology in the provision of healthcare.

CASE STUDIES & TESTIMONIALS

Case Study 1: Nursing Year 1 Students

Organisation(s): The Open University, University of the West of England & Middlesex University

This placement was developed in collaboration with the OU, UWE Bristol & Middlesex University. The virtual placement focused on the functions and structures of the practice nurse role. This included research and interviewing of clinicians in practice. Having engaged with health services across the UK each group of students reviewed national training models and developed a universal training programme for practice nurses based on best practice guidelines.

This collaborative projected enabled all the students to broaden their understanding of one of the key areas of primary care.

"The students who were part of this approach, enhanced their knowledge and skills, but essentially, improved their notetaking, documentation and handover skills to future practice. All students enjoyed being part of the Health Academy programme as it improved their writing and research skills in their assignments, but importantly gave all the students confidence, new knowledge and the essentials of communication and documentation for future practice.

I felt that Health Academy and myself worked well together to help support the students in their placement, but gained new knowledge and skill to help the students going forward with their online learning. All the staff involved were approachable, proactive and very supportive to the students." ***Cat Andrews - Open University/UWE Link Lecturer***

Case Study 2: Physiotherapy Year 1 Students

Organisation(s): University of the West of England

A really interactive placement based on minor injury assessment and management. The focus of the placement was for each group of students to develop an e-learning tool for professionals that could also be used as a method to educate patients. This involved real world clinical assessments and development of visual aids including video consultations.

"I have had the pleasure of working closely with Health Academy in the last year to develop a suitable Musculoskeletal (MSK) project placement for a number of our BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy students.

Health Academy were responsive and adaptable to our particular needs around length of placement and profession-specific support needed. They ensured that the students had sufficient opportunities to meet their required learning outcomes as specified on the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) Common Placement Assessment Form (CPAF) and tailored the learning to achieve these outcomes. The students were supported throughout the five-week placement.

We are looking forward to working with Health Academy to deliver future placements and would recommend this opportunity to other HEIs as a unique learning experience that sits well alongside the more traditional clinical placements currently available for healthcare students."

Kate Stancombe - Physiotherapy Placement Co-ordinator & Senior Lecturer UWE

Case Study 3: Nursing Year 2 Students

Organisation(s): University of the West of England

This placement has been developed for two cohorts of second year nursing students at UWE Bristol. The placement focuses on the NHS Health Check service. Student groups develop their knowledge and understanding of the Health Check programme, including the use of Electronic Medical Record systems to record patient information. Best practice video demonstrations of each element of the NHS Health Check are be developed in line with current guidance.

The culmination of the placement allows for each group of student nurses to apply the knowledge and skills gained by completing a real world face-to-face consultation followed by a video consultation explaining the clinical results and referral pathways.

Professional Testimonial

Health Academy have worked with our School of Health & Social Wellbeing, to tailor placements that are of a high quality and meet our professional standards across a range of health professions. Health Academy have been able to offer a degree of flexibility within their placement model, which has been welcomed. Their placements are designed to equip learners for practice of the future and achieve this through a variety of methods that meet professional regulatory body standards such as the SSSA under the Nursing & Midwifery Standards.

We look to work with the health academy on a range of placement offerings to enhance our overall placement portfolio for the School.

Ben Whistance - School Portfolio Lead - University of the West of England

PROFESSIONAL POSITION

The professional bodies in the UK recognise the challenges faced by HEIs in facilitating an increasing number of clinical placements, and as such have published a significant body of position statements as well as strategy. Below are some links to each organisations position:

Enhancing education, clinical practice and staff wellbeing. A national vision for the role of simulation and immersive learning technologies in health and care (2020)

Expanding Placement Capacity (2022)

Recovery and Emergency Standards (2022)

Different Learning Opportunities (2019)

Supporting Innovation in Practice Based Learning (2020)

Report: Simulation in Nursing Education: An Evidence Base for the Future

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will there be any costs for using Health Academy to deliver these placements?
No, there are no costs for the HEI. A Health Academy Virtual Placement is treated as any other placement would be. The HEI report the clinical placement hours to Health Education England as would be done for any other placement and Health Academy are reimbursed via the Clinical Placement Tariff. In some cases we may look to work with the HEI by utilising facilities at the HEI, but any plan for this will be agreed during the planning phase.

Are there restrictions on how many clinical placement hours can be attributed to a virtual placement?
Each regulatory body has different guidance on this. For example the current NMC guidance limits this to 8 weeks over the course of undergraduate course. The NMC is currently undertaking a consultation and it is widely expected that alternative placement provisions will be extended. HCPC approach is more flexible on the use dependent on need.

Do the students have the opportunity to meet all their practice requirements during a virtual placement?
We work closely with the HEI at the outset to ensure that the placement structure is able to link directly to the learning outcomes and domains that the healthcare student is required to meet.

Is Health Academy compliant with the 'Standards for student supervision and assessment' NMC?
Yes, Health Academy strongly believes in the delivery of high quality learning, support and supervision throughout our placements. We embed the principles in the NMC guidance throughout our placements and are fully compliant with all standards.

What measures are in place to monitor progress, attendance and those students that may be struggling?
Although the placements are virtual, we have mechanisms to monitor students progress, including regular group and individual meetings with the named clinical practice assessor. We also have a digital student diary for every placement which each student is required to complete daily to log their hours and briefly summarise their placement activity that day.

If we needed a 'Virtual Placement' for this academic year, would Health Academy be able to facilitate this?
We have permanent team members that work on the 'Virtual Student Placements' throughout the year, therefore we are able to facilitate placements this academic year if required.

NEXT STEPS

If the Health Academy Virtual Placement sounds like it could be a suitable solution to the challenges faced by your HEI then we would be more than happy to arrange an initial meeting to discuss your needs and develop a plan for your HEI. Please contact us via Clinical.Team@HealthAcademyOnline.co.uk to arrange an initial discussion or if you have any other questions, we would be happy to answer any queries.

SOME OF THE ORGANISATIONS THAT WE WORK WITH:

BIRMINGHAM CITY University