

Otago Medical School Education and Staff Development Unit

# Managing Learning in Clinical Environments

Online Professional Development Series

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# Karakia Timatanga

He inoi tatou

Tēnei te wānanga

O te iti, o te rahi

Kia mōhio, kia mārama

Ti hei mauri ora

We are here to learn

All of us

To know and understand

We're in it together

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# Objectives

**By the end of the session, you will be able to:**

- Identify opportunities and possibilities in the workplace for learning.
- Explore how to maximize learning in the workplace.

## **Plan for the session**

- Large group discussion - Small large group activity - Large group discussion (sharing of each groups' discussion) - Wrap up
- Please raise hand or pop questions/ comments in the chat (thanks Jon who is monitoring this for us)

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# The clinical learning environment

Sheehan and Wilkinson, 2021

“any clinical workplace where learning occurs”

We view ‘work’ and ‘learning’ as integrated.



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**What do you believe influences learning in the workplace?**

# Influences on learning in the workplace

1. Affordances (opportunities) in the workplace
2. Relationships and structures in the workplace
3. Student characteristics and prior experiences
4. Supervisor/ clinical educator behaviours and strategies for managing workplace learning.

# Small group task

## 1. Four breakout room groups

## 2. Briefly introduce yourselves to each other

- Name and role in teaching and learning

## 3. Task

- The first part of this task asks you to reflect on your workplace learning affordances and your experiences as a supervisor.
- The second part of the tasks asks you to prepare key points/ principles to report back.
- Divide time between the two aspects of the tasks.
- Nominate a scribe/ person to report back (they can be the same person or different but ideally not an EA).

# Small group task

## Group 1 – Affordances in the workplace

- Reflect on your own workplace environment and share with others unique opportunities you believe it holds.
- Did other peoples' ideas allow you to identify opportunities in your workplace that you hadn't noticed.
- Report back on how we can notice affordances in our workplace that we might have missed because they are so familiar to us.

## Group 2 – Relationships and structures in the workplace

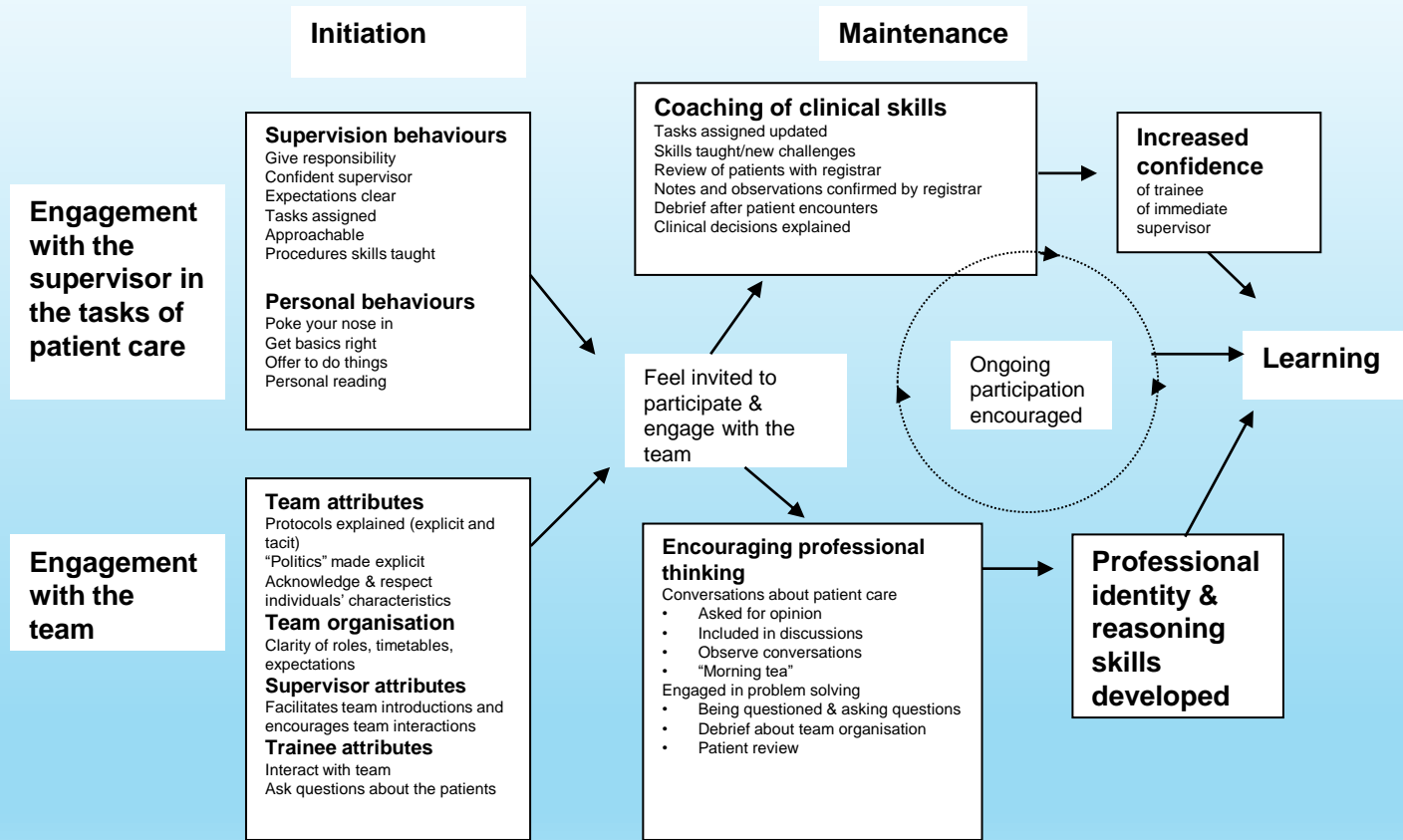
- Discuss workplace relationships and structures that inhibit and support learning.
- Report back on one common inhibitor and how you would manage this as a supervisor.

## Group 3 – Student characteristics and prior experiences

- Discuss what student characteristics and prior experience influence student engagement in the workplace.
- Report back on what a supervisor can do to encourage and support engagement and participation.

## Group 4 – Supervisor/ clinical educator behaviours and strategies for managing workplace learning

- Discuss what a supervisor/ clinical educator can do to maximise the opportunities the clinical workplace offers.
- Report back on what supervisors can do to promote opportunities in their area.



# What's next in health professions clinical learning environments research...



**The impact of organisational culture on learning environments**

Recognising that the culture of a service or ward affects learning

We exist in a culture that impacts what how we work

We are also part of that culture emersed in it and comfortable



**Supervisors/ teachers need to reflect on the culture they are in and how it affects their practice and their expectations**



**Learning environments can change so regular monitoring and action is required**



## Do you know...

How to enhance the clinical setting as a learning environment?

DYK 11

I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn – Albert Einstein (attrib)

The Advanced Learning in Medicine years (4-6) are embedded in the clinical workplace, a busy environment whose primary focus is the patient.

Such settings may not always seem to be effective for learning, but the workplace provides authentic conditions for students to apply their training.

### ASK YOURSELF:

If you were a student, what would make the area you work in an effective learning environment for you?

Attempts have been made to measure the learning environment, each with varying degrees of success. For example, the *Undergraduate Clinical Education Environment Measure (UCEEM)* is specifically aimed at the clinical learning environment and its underpinning assumptions can be used to guide your development of a positive learning environment (Box 1).

#### BOX 1

##### The UCEEM underpinning assumptions

###### Invitational quality

- Opportunities to participate and learn from work experiences
- Interaction patterns and student inclusion
- Student agency and engagement

###### Organisational quality

- Preparedness of all parties for student entry
- Space and resources

###### Pedagogical quality

- Autonomy-supportive environment
- Enhancing student reflective capabilities

### RESEARCH AND THE CLINICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Part of a questionnaire in one international study<sup>2</sup> posed the question: If you could change **three** things about medical school, what would they be?

The resulting responses (Box 2) resonate with the feedback from our own medical students and some have implications for clinical teachers.

#### BOX 2

1. Be aware of the sharp learning curve for learners.
2. It is important to bear in mind that students during their clinical training need more constructive, empowering and empathetic feedback.
3. Many students may be unsure of their role and what to do in the clinical environment, and hence an induction phase of access to mentors may be helpful.
4. Establishing uniformity across curricula through internal consistency and external benchmarking is essential.
5. Be aware that students are under personal, academic and financial stress, and are likely to have multiple goals, such as social, intimacy, financial and career aspirations.
6. Learning is promoted by engaging constructive feedback, promoting empowerment and trust, establishing rapport building and encouraging positive role modelling.
7. Students appreciate access to study materials, such as reading, written documentation and the computer interface.
8. Establish independent student and teacher support systems to support and ensure functional learning.

A project<sup>3</sup> conducted by and among medical students identified the features students valued most in the clinical learning environment (Box 3).

#### BOX 3

- **Structural factors:** The organisation of the clinical placement
- **Interpersonal factors:** The 'Spectrum of Support' referring to support received on various levels from staff to peers
- **Intrapersonal factors:** The proactivity, preparedness and personality of each student
- **Vocational development opportunities:** Including practical experience or clinical exposure and teaching opportunities

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# Further reading

- DYK 11. How to enhance the clinical setting as a learning environment? (2015). <http://www.otago.ac.nz/medical-school/otago614733.pdf>
- Sheehan, D. & Wilkinson, T. J. (2022). Widening how we see the impact of culture on learning, practice and identity development in clinical environments. *Medical Education*, 56(1), 110-116.
- Sheehan, D., Wilkinson T., Billett, S. (2005). Interns' Participation and Learning in Clinical Environments in a New Zealand Hospital. *Academic Medicine* 80(3):p 302-308.

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# Evaluation

**We value your feedback.**

We value your thoughts on this session so will give you 3 minutes to complete a short feedback form that has just been dropped into the chat.

[https://otago.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eePdo501YFRfJmm](https://otago.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eePdo501YFRfJmm)

You can also email us any time with feedback at [edssu@otago.ac.nz](mailto:edssu@otago.ac.nz)



# **Ngā mihi nui**

**Wed 20 March 2024 12-1pm**

**Creating a positive learning  
environment in the classroom**