

Successfully integrating students into private practice

(Tips from those who host!)

Before the placement

1. Collaborate with the university

Work with the university to determine the best way to integrate students into your practice, and to check your expectations align with university guidelines. University coordinators can offer guidance and practical examples of how students can be hosted, including different supervision models and services students can contribute to. They can also provide other resources to help you make the most of hosting students.



At the start of the placement

2. Early orientation

Plan time to orientate students to your practice, admin operations and your staff. Allowing students to observe others for the first few days can help save time in the future and can allow them to feel like a valued member of the team. Providing students with information about your clinic prior to placement is also beneficial to ensure they are ready to hit the ground running.



3. Align expectations

Make sure you and your student are on the same page about what is expected during the placement. This should include expectations around communication, when meetings will occur, what the student completes in their down-time, and expectations for assessment. University staff can be contacted for support if there are any questions or concerns.



4. Familiarise clients with students

Discuss the role of the student, and benefits of student involvement, with clients and consumers early to shape expectations and determine who may be appropriate for student contact. Providing admin staff and other clinicians with a script outlining what to say to clients can help improve the uptake of student-delivered services and make sure that the best fit for the client is made.



Throughout the placement

5. Open communication

Encouraging open three-way communication between students, clients and clinicians helps build rapport and ensure everyone is learning and on the same page. Clients learn a lot from discussions and interactions with students, and optimising on-the-go teaching opportunities can help save time later on.



Across
placements

6. Foster teamwork

Integrating students into your team promotes a sense of belonging for the student and helps enhance benefits of hosting. It can optimise shared learning between staff and students, value-adding opportunities and recruitment. Examples include: introducing students to staff, providing them a workspace, or incorporating them into the client schedule (either on your list, or their own).



7. Utilise downtime and “value-adding” opportunities

Students can add value to your practice, such as offering clients or consumers additional time at the end of the appointment for education, hands on therapies or supervised exercise. Students can also develop case studies, lead in-services, plan client management, practice report writing and draft written correspondence, which can help add value. Your university can provide other examples.



8. Plan and re-evaluate regularly

Being organised and taking time to plan your week helps in the long run. It also ensures any issues with unmet expectations are being addressed early. This could include creating a timetable for your student (or co-designing one with them), outlining client contact and non-contact activities, and scheduling in assessment tasks for yourself during work hours.



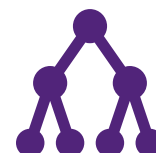
9. Support for the clinical educator

While there are numerous benefits to hosting students, it also takes time, which can be challenging in private practice. Your clinical educator should feel supported by your practice and the university, through flexible diary management (incorporating time for student-related teaching and assessment) and access to university resources and staff.



10. Develop a hosting framework

Each practice is different and finding out what hosting model works best for you and your practice is important! The more you host, the more you can refine your hosting model.



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