

Placement profile

Names and roles **Lorraine Allchurch,
Assistant Therapy Practitioner/Lead AHP Support
Worker**



Organisations The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, Russell's Hall
Hospital

Placement overview

Within The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, students spend time with the whole team. This includes valuable time and learning with Support Workers,

Lorraine's most recent student placement experience was an Occupational Therapy student in her 3rd year but the information provided could easily be transferable to a Physiotherapy student. Initially, the student came to a presentation Lorraine was presenting on 'Frailty Therapy Services' via MS teams at a 'Grand Round MDT' event within the trust. They gained an understanding of the knowledge of the service and went on to strengthen their knowledge of the Rockwood Frailty Score all prior to seeing patients. This gave the student a good knowledge before clinical practice whereby they firstly observed Lorraine's practice and then supported the completion of patient assessments. This included completing a mobility and stair assessment together.

Lorraine reports that 'the feedback was so incredibly humbling for me as the student felt she had gained so much knowledge and skills in observing my practice as an Assistant Therapy Practitioner'. She details that there are many benefits to students spending time with the whole team. 'As well as learning high standards of care, support workers can also be role models for students and offer a friendly space where students feel comfortable asking questions. This leads to students developing an understanding of the support worker role so when they graduate they are able to delegate appropriately. There are also benefits to the educator to free up their time and share the work as well as, importantly, the support workers who feel valued.

Quote " You cannot be taught therapeutic use of self from a book", but this was demonstrated in practice with the Assistant therapy practitioner.

Supervision: 1:1, face to face supervision, whole team supervision

Lessons learnt:

1. The student valued the time spent and gained knowledge and skills
2. They gained a good understanding of the whole team and scope of practice
3. I gained confidence in my skills supporting the student and recognising I had a role to play in students' education too

Top tips for others:

- "Involve all members of the team"
- "Give a clear brief of boundaries and learning expectations for the student and the support worker"
- "Give the support worker an opportunity to give valuable feedback formally to demonstrate the value in the time spent together"