**Case study 1– student on care home placement.**

Paul is an adult field student nurse on his final placement of 2nd year. He has been allocated to Woodlands care home, which is a private care home comprising of 4 separate houses – Oak, Beech, Maple and Holly. Oak house is where residents requiring residential care live, Beech and Maple are where residents with frailty and dementia live, and Holly is the NHS funded intermediate care house. His placement is 8 weeks long and he still has a number of platform proficiencies to be signed off for year 2, at the back of his paperwork.

Prior to placement.

3 weeks before starting, Paul, the CHEF and the care home manager all received an email from the university advising of the upcoming placement.

The CHEF called the home to double check there were enough practice supervisors and practice assessors available to support the student as someone was due to be on maternity leave. Each student needs at least one supervisor and one assessor and they cannot be the same person. There is one senior carer, Derek who is a practice supervisor in Oak, and both nurses in Beech are both practice supervisor and practice assessors.

The Manager advised the three staff members that there is a student coming and asked them to plan for his learning activities.

The Nurses in Beech – April the unit manager, and Grace the staff nurse discussed Paul’s upcoming placement. They work opposite each other except on a Wednesday. As he is in second year, they decided that April would spend less time with him as she is unit manager and has more managerial responsibilities (better suited to a 3rd year), so she will act as practice assessor and Grace will act as practice supervisor – therefore spending more time with him.

Paul called the home to introduce himself, ask who is nominated supervisor was to be and to give them his phone number.

First 48 hours on placement

Both April and Grace are very experienced supervisors and assessors, so there was no need to meet together to undertake Paul’s initial interview and plan.

Grace and Paul sit down in the afternoon of the first day and complete the health and safety, orientation and learning plan sheets in the student paperwork. Paul has a number of clinical skills to achieve still, including enhanced skills such as chest auscultation, motivational interviewing and ECGs. They write a learning plan together including Paul developing some skills in delegation, (it was noticed in the assessment for the last placement that he lacked confidence in this area) care planning and discuss using additional learning experiences at external clinical areas to help achieve skills. Paul mentioned that he is a very visual learner, so Grace will aim to demonstrate things to him, rather than verbally explaining them.

Grace is on leave next week, and so has arranged for Paul to go and work with Derek, the practice supervisor senior carer in the Oak house. Derek is likely to be able to sign off some skills and contribute to the paperwork, as evidence for the practice assessor.

As April also needs to work alongside Paul in order to make her own observations of him for her assessment and grading, (practice assessor) they plan for Paul to follow her off duty on week 5, and for a couple shifts at the end of week 8 (for the assessment to be completed).

Grace has asked Paul to arrange to speak with the house manager in the intermediate care house, so that he might work with the physiotherapist, doctor and occupational therapists, to practice his motivation interviewing and chest auscultation skills. These AHPs can feedback his competence at the skills to the supervisors and assessors, for them to sign off in the paperwork. Grace also speaks with the GP who visits the home mostly, and asked if Paul can go work with their treatment room nurse, in order to get his ECG skills signed off.

Weeks 1-4

Paul follows Grace and Dereck’s off duty working alongside both of these supervisors, gaining daily feedback, working towards achieving his learning outcomes, platform proficiencies and skills; and manages really well. An interim review is carried out at the beginning of week 3 giving Paul written feedback too. Some of the proficiencies at the back are discussed and signed off at this interim review. The care home liaison nurse visits each week and has asked if Paul would like to come work with her for a few shifts while her own student is with the district nurses. Paul amends his learning plan to include this, and confirms with the care home liaison nurse that he is likely to get more practice with syringe drivers and suprapubic catheters whilst with her. As she is also a practice supervisor, she can sign off these skills in his paperwork and add commentary too, for the practice assessor to use in her final assessment.

Week 5

Paul works alongside April (practice assessor) for a week. This means she can see first-hand how he has built up relationships with her residents and care staff, and have opportunity to review what the other supervisors have written in his paperwork. Luckily he is well on his way to achieving perhaps a B for this placement. She completes another interim assessment with him and advises that he needs to work on delegation more. She plans for the last shift of the week, for him to take charge rather than her for the day, so he can plan and organise all the care activity for the day. This means he is given opportunity to improve in the area he is lacking. April leaves a note for Grace asking her to do the same next week, to see if he can continue.

Week 6-8

Paul continues to work alongside Grace (practice supervisor) and she manages to sign off many of his outstanding skills. She agrees with April that he is not quite “outstanding” (terminology used in the grading matrix) in his ability to run the shift, and in her interim review advises him of this, but encourages him that he will become more confident in time. Paul works a couple of days with the treatment room nurse at the GP practice, and helps the doctor assess a couple of residents on admission to the intermediate care unit.

2 days before the end of the placement, April takes time to read through all the commentary, interim assessments and external feedback in Paul’s paperwork, and feels that he has done very well and will grade him a B. As this is the final placement of a year, Paul’s academic assessor from the university calls to speak with her regarding signing off progression into 3rd year, to which she is very happy to do. She meets with Paul in the afternoon, makes an assessment for each platform, grades him and he is happy with the outcome. He completes a reflective account on this feedback and plans to build his confidence in his next placement.

After the placement

Grace and April feel that students would have a better experience if there were more supervisors and assessors in the home, and this would make completing the assessment easier. They ask the home manager to nominate nurses from the other houses to work with the CHEF to undertake the necessary learning. The CHEF reminds them that if students work alongside any other nurses or care staff, then verbal confirmation from them of achievement of a skill or proficiency is perfectly acceptable, and the practice supervisor can sign this off in the paperwork.