**Case study 2 – student on care home placement.**

Monita is a mental health field student nurse on their first ever placement. They are straight out of school. They have been allocated to Highview care home, which is a small, private care home over two floors. All of the residents are living with dementia and / or a learning disability. Their placement is 4 weeks long and they have never worked at all.

Prior to placement.

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

The Manager advised the two suitably prepared nurses that there is a student coming and asked them to plan for their learning activities.

The two suitably prepared nurses – Heather works in the upstairs unit, and Isabella on the bottom floor. Heather is a very experienced practice supervisor and practice assessor, and has been a nurse for many years. Isabella qualified only last year, and so far has only completed the first section of the student learning modules (1-4) so can only act as a practice supervisor. They therefore decide that they will work together in the initial and first interim feedback reviews, and although only Heather can complete the final assessment, they will do it together with Monita, so that everyone can learn from the experience.

Monita called the home to introduce themselves, ask who their nominated supervisor was to be and to give them their details for Covid PCR testing. The manager has asked them to come back on the Tuesday in the week prior to starting placement, so they can be included in their PCR swabbing.

First 48 hours on placement

Heather (practice assessor), Isabella (practice supervisor) and Monita all sit down in the afternoon of the second day and complete the health and safety, orientation and learning plan sheets in the student paperwork. Monita was given a tour and introduced to everyone on their first day by Isabella as Heather was not on shift. Monita expresses that they are very keen to give some injections and hand out the medications, but through careful discussion, the learning plan mostly consists of building relationships with a few residents, learning about complex communication, personal care, food fluid and nutrition, and other essential nurse and care skills. It seems like Monita is a very practical learner – wanting to have a go at providing the care and learning this way. Isabella will be mindful of this and not spend too much time trying to explain things, so Monita can learn as effectively as possible. They have agreed that Monita can come and witness whenever anything more complex is undertaken.

Monita is asked to go through all the skills annexes and mark in pencil which ones they think they might achieve in this placement, bearing in mind they have 3 years to have them all signed off. Isabella will review this with them in the coming days.

Weeks 1-3

Monita follows Isabella’s off duty exactly for the next 3 weeks, so that she can very closely supervise them. As this is first year, Monita is working at the dependant level – meaning they are dependent on another for all instruction and guidance.

Isabella asks Monita to work alongside the care assistants for the majority of their time. This way Monita can learn all the essentials of care, communication skills and team working – all things they have never experienced before, having not worked in care. Isabella is always present in the unit so Monita can come and ask questions, reflect and discuss. All the care assistants are asked to give feedback to Monita, and to Isabella, and this is documented in the PAD, so that the practice assessor has lots of evidence in order to make an assessment at the end of the placement.

Week 4

In week 4 Monita swaps to work alongside Heather, so that Heather has “sufficient opportunity to observe” them working as a student. Heather takes Monita along to observe all the wound management, injections, medications rounds and GP visits, and discusses with Monita each situation afterwards.

Heather takes time to speak with all the care assistants who have been working with Monita, and she is delighted that they appear to have fitted in well with the team, and have a rapport with the residents. Heather sees that similar evidence is document in the PAD, and that Isabella has been able to sign off some of the communication skills already.

On the morning of the final day, Monita, Heather and Isabella sit down together, reflect on the placement together, and Heather completes the final assessment sheets and grading. Isabella is appreciative of the opportunity to participate in this practice assessor role, so that she can develop her own skills in this area.

After the placement

Heather asks Isabella to complete the final two modules in order to become a practice assessor, and The CHEF is asked to go over the grading rubric with her as it is quite complicated and requires a grade for every platform. They agree that the next student will be assessed by Isabella, and supervised by Heather, so Isabella can practice these new skills.

The CHEF and the home manager note that the next educational audit is due soon, so they plan to meet and go through the content of the profile on QMPLE, so future students have access to the most up to date and robust information about their upcoming placements.