

Other Field Experience Guidance for Students and Mentors

Adult Students

It is a requirement of the NMC Standards for Pre-registration Nursing (2010) that student nurses from all fields of nursing have an opportunity to experience nursing within the other fields and within maternity care. While the adult field focuses more on adults and older people than any other client group, it is unique in that it must also fully meet all the requirements for general care nurses as set out in article 31 and Annex V.2 Directive 2005/36/EC. This is because the adult nurse (unlike the other three nursing fields) will be required on registration to have met all the requirements of a general nurse under European Law allowing freedom of movement in EU member states (NMC, 2010).

Competency 1.1 in the NMC (2010) Standards for Pre-registration Nursing identify that adult nurses must be able to recognise and respond to the needs of all people who come into their care including babies, children and young people, pregnant and postnatal women, people with mental health problems, people with physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities, older people, and people with long term problems such as cognitive impairment. There needs to be some direct contact with each of the respective groups in order to meet the intentions of the Directive.

Whilst undertaking another field experience it is important that the student takes every opportunity to identify how to use this learning within their own field of practice to support service users/carers. Undertaking another field experience is also an opportunity to understand some of the care differences within the other fields to enable nurses from all fields to work more closely together in the future for the benefit of service user care. For example, a patient who is admitted to hospital may be experiencing a high level of anxiety or may have no-one to care for their children. Experience in the mental health and child field settings will enable the adult field student to provide relevant support to the patient and family or to refer to other services where relevant. Adult field nurses may also come into contact with breastfeeding mothers who have been admitted to hospital due to a physical illness. In this situation experience of maternity care will enable the nurse to provide relevant support to the mother or to contact other services where relevant.

A record of all other field experiences must be documented in the Ongoing Achievement Record and verified by the student's personal tutor. Placement Pathway pages or Testimony Sheets (for day visits) must therefore be completed with the Practice Assessment Document, depending upon the length of placement allocated and the timesheet must indicate the dates of any experiences undertaken.

This guidance has been prepared from the NMC (2011) Advice and Supporting Information for Implementing NMC Standards for Pre-registration Nursing Education and is intended to support the student and mentor in enabling a positive other field experience that has value for the student nurse and future service users in their care. The following examples show what might now be important when assessing or delivering essential care within the adult field of practice. However, it is recognised that it may not be possible for the student to achieve everything during a short placement experience. Additional resources are therefore identified to support the development of relevant knowledge.

Mental Health Field Experience

Adult students will be allocated to a mental health placement experience in year one or year two of the course. During this placement, where possible, students should access learning opportunities that enable them to develop their knowledge and experience in relation to all or any of the following needs of people with a mental health problem:

- Use basic mental health skills to reduce the distress associated with mental health problems and help promote recovery.
- Act promptly to reduce the risk of harm in a crisis and to protect people who are vulnerable.
- Have a basic understanding of mental health promotion, the links between physical and mental health problems and the aetiology and treatment of common mental health problems.
- Appreciate the impact of mental health problems and distress on a person's cognition, communication, behaviour, lifestyle and relationships.
- Be aware of the main provisions of mental health laws, especially those relating to capacity, human rights and safeguarding.
- Recognise and address people's essential mental health needs when these exist alongside other primary health needs.
- Work and communicate with others to maintain continuity in meeting mental health needs in long term conditions.

Students can access further information/guidance related to the mental health field of nursing on the Pre-registration Nursing Placement Learning Support WOLF topic, in the Other Field Outcomes folder, Mental Health Field document. This information/guidance will support the student's development in relation to the above areas, as the placement learning experience is limited.

Maternal Health Experience

During year three adult students will be allocated to a one day maternity care placement or simulation experience. Throughout the three years students should also access opportunities to spend a day with a health visitor or in an ante-natal clinic when allocated to work at a GP surgery with the practice nurse or district nurse. During these placements students should access learning opportunities that enable them to develop their knowledge and experience in relation to maternity care in the following areas:

- Understand and meet the essential needs of pregnant or postnatal women in relation to a coexisting physical condition, mental health problem or learning disability.
- Recognise major risks and act quickly in an emergency to get expert help.
- Have a broad understanding of the physical and psychological effects of pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period.
- Have a clear understanding of the role of the midwife and midwifery care and be able to work in partnership with midwives and other professionals to achieve the best outcomes for pregnant and postnatal women and babies in their care.

It is not possible to achieve all of the above during a one day placement/simulation so the student is also advised to access the online resources available during year two of the course to help develop this knowledge. Details of how to access these resources can be found on the Pre-registration Nursing Placement Learning Support WOLF topic.

Child Field Experience

Some adult students will experience caring for children and/or young people as part of their usual placement allocations within the adult field, e.g. when allocated to emergency care departments or outpatient departments. Where this placement opportunity is not available the student should access opportunities to experience caring for children and/or young people whilst working in the community, e.g. arrange to spend a day with a health visitor, a school health advisor and/or a community children's team. Students who reach the third year of the course and have not yet had an experience of child field nursing should contact a member of the Practice Team so that support can be provided in accessing a relevant placement opportunity.

During the placement students should access learning opportunities that enable them to develop their knowledge and experience in relation to the following needs of children and young people:

- Have a broad understanding of the development of children and young people within the family context and how this affects their individual needs, health, behaviour and communication.
- Work with children, young people, their families and others to provide family centred care.
- Understand common physical and mental health problems associated with childhood and adolescence, their effects and treatment.
- Deliver the basic care required to meet essential needs
- Recognise deterioration and provide safe care to infants, children and young people in an emergency, or act to protect them where there is risk of harm, prior to referral or when accessing specialist services.

Whilst working within a child field placement the adult student would also benefit from developing their knowledge and understanding in relation to the following areas:

- ethical issues, in particular consent for children and young people and the Fraser Guidelines
- safeguarding of children and young people

The actual placement experience may not be of a sufficient length for the student to develop knowledge and understanding in relation to all of the areas identified above. Students are therefore, advised to access further information/guidance related to the child field of nursing on the Nursing Children (for MH, LD and Adult Field Students) WOLF topic (available from January 2014) and the Pre-registration Nursing Placement Learning Support WOLF topic, in the Other Field Outcomes folder, Child Field document.

Learning Disability Field Experience

Adult students will be allocated to a learning disability placement experience or simulation in year 1 or year 2 of the course. During this placement students should access learning opportunities that enable them to develop their knowledge and experience in relation to the following needs of people with a learning disability:

- Recognise and respond to the needs of people with learning disabilities who come into their care.
- Maintain continuity of care to meet pre-existing intellectual, physical and emotional needs.
- Understand the prevention, effects, and treatment of common health problems; the links between learning disabilities and physical and mental health.
- Ensure that they have access to health and social care networks and specialist services to provide support and protect people who are vulnerable.
- Actively listen, provide information, and involve people with learning disabilities in decision-making, including agreeing reasonable adjustments to minimise disruption to their usual way of life, and promote their autonomy, wellbeing and social inclusion.
- Work with families, carers, support networks and, where necessary, specialist advocates to address people's needs.
- Use effective communication and active involvement in decision making about treatment options taking into account the person's wishes, lifestyle and capacity for consent.

One of the main aims of providing an exposure to learning disability nursing is to reduce the number of premature deaths in people with learning disabilities through the provision of safe and appropriate care. Students should access the Confidential Inquiry into Premature Deaths of People with Learning Disabilities (CIPOLD) <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cipold/fullfinalreport.pdf> for further information.