

Practice setting: A&E , Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust

Completed by: Alice Lennox, Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioner



In August our advanced practice physiotherapy team in the Emergency Department at Salford Royal Foundation Trust took on two second year Master's students for a five week placement.

We are based in a busy minor injury unit within a major trauma centre assessing and treating a wide range of injuries such as wounds, burns and localised infections alongside injuries such as fractures, dislocations and back pain.

The majority of the supervision started as one to one learning the basics such as specific joint assessments, red flags and x-ray interpretation. This went alongside observing qualified staff members assessing patients. Early into their placement, they began to take subjective assessments and simple objective assessments.

A typical week for the students was predominantly spending time within A+E. They were also given leadership projects to do if there was little they could do on the "shop floor". These included putting together a database of common injury presentations and an audit to review out of area attendances for people with back pain. They also spent time within fracture clinics, virtual fracture clinics and spinal clinics.

There were many positives to come out of having the students. We were able to give them exposure to areas of physiotherapy they perhaps did not even know about and possibly options for their future careers. I hope I can say they have received some really high-level teaching and supervision from consultant physiotherapists and advanced practitioner physiotherapists. During

the strange times of Covid 19, there were several staff members at home. However, they were able to deliver several virtual teaching sessions over video calls.

My top tips for future students are:

- Learn your red flags! This is so important in all environments but especially in an acute setting
- Be enthusiastic. Seek any learning opportunity you can, as placements are only short.
- Integrate into the team. Do what you can to try to join in discussions, help around the department, and build good relationships within the multi-disciplinary team.
- Show us how good you are. Send us any work you have done, show us your reflections, tell us what you have assessed/found- otherwise we can't know how well you are doing.

Tips for other APs taking students:

- My biggest issue was guilt. I was not able to give him the time I would have done in an outpatient physiotherapy setting where I used to work. Yet, having spoken to the university this was completely accepted and they were grateful we were able to offer anything in the current climate. I received good feedback from the student who was glad he was able to complete his necessary clinical hours. Therefore, I would advise others that even if you feel you are too busy for students; there will always be something you can do to help.
- Remember you were a student once. It's tough being new and not really knowing what is going on. I don't think we can expect our students to be perfect from day one.