

Cultural and Global Perspectives in Mental Health Care: Work Placement

What is a work placement?

The Cultural and Global Perspectives in Mental Health Care pathway includes a work placement, which needs to be completed by May 2017. You will be required to spend one day a week doing a placement that is broadly related to what you are learning about on the course. Placements can be in health or mental health services or organisations that provide support to people (e.g. organizations for people from immigrant and/or refugee backgrounds, asylum seekers, global mental health and development agencies). The aim of the placement is for you to gain some practical experience of the field you are studying and to help you reflect on and apply some of what you learn on the course. You will identify a single area of practice that is worthy and appropriate for change, and you will try and instigate that change, talking to people and working with them to achieve it. Examples of placements can be identified by discussion with the course lecturers and tutors.

At the end of Module 1, you are expected to provide a written account of the process for identifying the placement and deciding what practice you wish to change. This may include a description of your placement and what you hope to do there. You then need to provide a reflective written piece of work on the processes, challenges and successes you experienced and what you would do differently in the future (Module 2).

If you are already working in a clinical setting (e.g. the NHS) or a setting where you offer help or advice to people (e.g. a social care or voluntary organisation), it is likely that you will be able to organise a supervised clinical placement with that organisation. Crucially the placement needs to be clearly defined and different from your usual work role.

Note: Because of the time taken to organise placements, we recommend that you organise this and contact relevant organisations as soon as possible.

Students will require a letter signed by their placement supervisor confirming that they have undertaken the Clinical Work Placement; this needs to be submitted with the placement report.

Suggestions for placements

Students in previous years have done a range of placements. People who were already working in an NHS or a clinical setting implemented some aspects of culturally competent practice into the work of their service. For example they:

- Provided a consultation service for colleagues on cultural issues.
- Provided training to other staff members.
- Developed the cultural policy of a service.

These are just suggestions; placements vary a lot and people do many different things. What you choose to do will vary depending on your placement.

When approaching services, try to think creatively about what you can do to help them. For example, you could approach a mentoring service that works with mental health service users from Black and Ethnic Minority groups and offer to provide training or consultation on Cultural and Global Perspectives in Mental Health Care. The placement could then be the time you spend developing this training or conducting this training with the service. Or you could join a service and observe how they deal with cultural issues within their service and then provide feedback to them.

What if you are not already working in a clinical setting?

If you are not already working in a clinical or voluntary setting, then we suggest starting to find a placement as soon as possible. The placement doesn't have to be in an NHS setting, but could also be

in the private or voluntary sector. You could contact a range of places telling them what you would like to do, about your MSc course and what you could offer them. Suggestions for contacting organisations can be found below. Here are some examples of the types of organisations you could approach:

- NHS services. Most NHS mental health services would be appropriate for a placement. Examples include:
 - A mental health outreach team
 - A community mental health adult team
 - A child and adolescent team
 - A homeless service
 - A mother and baby unit
 - An eating disorder unit

Most NHS Trusts offer volunteering or work placement services, which include work that will involve contact with service users.