

Editorial

I did not expect to find myself in the position of once again writing an editorial and sub-editing the Journal. However, I have temporarily stepped into the shoes of Graham Ixer: the incumbent Editor. Due to both personal and work commitments Graham is unable to finish the process for this issue.

We are now into the second year of the social work degree for some institutions and others are delivering for the first time. Recently Mark Doel, Catherine Sawdon and I were awarded the research contract to look into practice learning in the degree. I was particularly pleased that this research, funded by NOPT and the PLTF, was named in memory of Dave Evans. Dave was instrumental in helping me set up the Journal and was the first Deputy Editor. His death was a sad loss to the world of practice teaching. One of the main outcomes of the research was that in the first year 'it is more patchwork quilt than a collection of models' (Doel, Deacon and Sawdon 2004). What did come across was the dedication of the majority of practice teachers and the shortage of those holding the award. There were huge differences in the way practice teachers were paid and supported. Hopefully this may change as agencies begin to understand that the provision of good quality placements and practice teaching is a powerful tool in the recruitment of qualified social workers in an era where many agencies are running vacancy rates up to 50% ... Practice teachers are a valuable commodity and agencies need to wake up to this.

I have found this an interesting issue to edit. The first article by Lemmer, Arnold, Pringle and Barber looks at the teaching and assessing of nursing students taking the mental health pathway. It looks at the difficulties created by the move into universities of nursing, and the criticisms resulting from Project 2000. I was interested in this work on various levels. Firstly I trained as a psychiatric nurse in the late 1960s (RMN), and experienced group learning later when undertaking my MSW. The paper looks at a method of interpersonal teaching in order to amalgamate the relationship between knowledge and practice. This looks like a dynamic and satisfying way forward for students, practice educators and academics. It would be interesting to look at this in future years to look at the effect on the capability of nurses trained in his way.

Barron poses the question: do we need a second opinion in looking

at the effectiveness of practice teachers. Level of ability as a practice teacher is seen as reflecting the quality of social work practice of the teacher. Ways of assessing practice are looked at. Barron also touches on the part to play of the Care Councils as they use their powers to look at complaints in the conduct committee system. I have a personal interest in this, as I sit on the GSCC Registration and Conduct committees and it may be that complaints will be raised by students against the quality of the teaching of individual practice teachers.

Bolin and Glenmayer tell us about an innovative programme for MSW students in computer skills, in particular developing web based skills so that they can disseminate information to the communities that they work in. This is more than the requirement to be computer literate to European Computer Driving Licence standards. The net is a valuable tool for learning and dissemination of research based practice.

Finally Cartney presents a case study of learning styles and how practice teachers and students can use them as a useful tool to discuss and work with different styles. Information is provided for the practical ways that practice teachers can adjust their style in order to facilitate learning. I have always found it useful to have four types of induction and materials packs to reflect the style of the student. Later on I try to get them to broaden their view, for activists to reflect and so on.

I think that Graham has put together an interesting issue which I have enjoyed bringing to the point of publication.

Finally a reminder about the conference this year. I think that we have put together an exciting programme. We have also taken on board feedback and have incorporated a little more free-time and there will be a disco after the dinner in response to several requests for this. We are now looking for papers from those of you who would like to present a workshop. Details follow this editorial. I look forward to seeing you all again this year. For those interested, the Group Work Symposium will run immediately after the practice teaching conference. Details for both can be requested at Surgamus@aol.com.

Lynda Deacon
Managing Editor

4th International Conference for the Journal of Practice
Teaching in Health and Social Work

College of St. John's, York
4th and 5th July 2005

'Making practice learning work in a globalised world'

CALL FOR PAPERS

This year's conference addresses the impact changing global culture has on practice learning – as social work and health professionals recruit more internationally, the way practice learning is delivered needs to reflect the impact culture has on learning outcomes.

Conference aims

- To exchange ideas, debate, argue, understand and innovate the global potential for practice learning;
- To understand how practice learning is changing as a result of globalisation;
- To learn from other cultures how different practice learning approaches can be more easily imported and integrated;
- To value the diverse nature of practice learning in a global market so we can achieve greater collaborative benefit;
- To share together so we can learn together; *and*
- To relax and enjoy learning together.

We invite you to submit plans for a workshop generally fitting the conference. Workshops should be active and engaging encounters for participants that will stimulate interest and learning. We need a summary of your workshop (up to 300 words) stating how it meets the conference aims and your approach to an active workshop experience for adult learners. It is from these proposals that successful workshops will be judged. All chosen workshops whose presenters submit a completed paper meeting the journal's criteria for publication will be included in a future edition. We also welcome proposals for paper presentations.

Proposals must be returned by **Friday 25th March 2005** to Lynda Deacon, Surgamus Ltd, Holly House, Little Skipwith, YO8 5SL. Surgamus@aol.com.

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'Making practice learning work in a globalised world'

Programme

Monday, 4th July

- 09.30 Registration and refreshments
- 10.30 Welcome from the Editor
- 10.40 A critical debate on practice learning: Globalised core values
Dugald McCullough, Head of the Northern Ireland
Diploma in Social work Belfast
- 12.00 Lunch
- 13.00 Workshops session 1
- 15.00 Workshops session 2
- 16.30 Eyewitnesses Theatre Company (a dramatic presentation
on key issues in social work)
- 17.30 Free time
- 19.30 Conference dinner followed by a disco.
After dinner speaker – Jennifer Bernard: 'From social
work practice to travelling to the North Pole: A personal
experience?'

Tuesday 5th July

- 09.30 Workshops session 3
- 11.30 International perspectives on practice learning -
Practice Learning in Australia – Brenda Clare
Practice learning perspective from India - tbc
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14:00 'A global perspective on health and social work training'
Prof. Fred Besthorn, University of Northern Iowa, USA
- 15:00 Closing remarks Lynda Deacon
- 15:30 Close