

AHP PrBL Recovery



Orthoptics 2023

AHP Practice-based Learning (PrBL) Recovery: Orthoptics 2023

Situation/background

Orthoptic placements are allocated using a national equitable allocation system which is designed to ensure fair allocation of all student placements throughout the UK. There are fewer large, specialist centres in Scotland, which makes it challenging to offer the range of experiences and sufficient exposure to the complex ocular motility conditions required to support students learning. By attending placements in both Scotland and England, students access a wide range of placement experiences and clinical caseloads.

During the pandemic, PrBL placements in England for Scottish orthoptist students were funded by the Scottish government to support PrBL recovery, resulting in the continuation of placements in Scotland and England with no deficit to recover in 2021.

In the academic year 2021-2022, 112 out of 176 Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) placement weeks were in England.

The loss of Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) funding for placements in England was anticipated and the need to increase placement capacity in Scotland was expected. New graduates explained the impact of the loss of funding:

“Without funding my clinical experience would have been limited; this could have affected my chances of graduating. Furthermore, I may have had to leave my course if there was no funding as we have to travel far for a period of time e.g. 6 weeks in London city centre.”

“I did not have funding, I had to borrow money from family & take unpaid leave from my part-time job.”

At present [guidance](#) from the Student Awards Agency Scotland advises that expenses may only be claimed for placements within Scotland.

Purpose of the project: The purpose of the project was to increase future placement provision in Scotland whilst maintaining a similarly wide range of placement experiences and clinical caseloads.

To keep within the project remit and timescales, the scope of the project was defined.

Table 1: Orthoptics scope of project

In Scope	Out of Scope
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase capacity and quality of PrBL experiences in Scotland• Identify requirements of good quality placements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cross / third sector• Increased extended role opportunities• Increasing numbers of practice educators

Identification of stakeholders

- Higher Educational Institution (HEI)
- Lead Clinical Tutors (practice educators/PEs)
- Management representation (Heads of orthoptic services)
- British and Irish Orthoptic Society (BIOS) representation (orthoptic professional body)
- Representative from PrBL teaching site in Birmingham
- Orthoptic students

Scoping methods

- Conversations with stakeholders
- Survey to all stakeholders

Task

Key findings

- Barriers to designing a modern, sustainable quality student placement suited to a future orthoptic workforce: short clinic times; lack of control over appointments; lacking full range of equipment
- Workforce pressures impacting practice-educator time for PrBL
- Reduced number of extended roles within Scotland offering placements
- Lack of diverse placement models.

Aim

For the orthoptic workforce in Scotland to increase PrBL capacity by growing the diversity and quality of PrBL experiences available to students. This would be achieved by:

- Increasing the diversity of placement models
- Designing and testing a modern, sustainable quality student placement suited to a future orthoptic workforce

Actions

- To establish a new orthoptic practice educator stakeholder group by February 2022.
- To develop the proposed solutions into tests of change (ToC).

Stakeholder group: An orthoptic practice educator stakeholder group was established in February 2022, with a wide range of stakeholders. The group met every 6 weeks over the course of the project.

ToC 1: Using the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) model on placement, to potentially provide access to a wider range and greater number of clinical cases appropriate to student stages of learning.

- Orthoptists were trained in the PAL model by participating in the NHS Education for Scotland (NES) PAL training sessions.
- NHS boards designed and delivered PAL placements for 3rd and 4th year students.
- Training and placements were evaluated

ToC 2: Implementing an online Peer Enhanced e-Placement (PEEP), designed by GCU to increase placement capacity in Scotland.

- Led by lecturers at GCU and supported by orthoptic practice educators from 3 NHS boards, a PEEP for 3rd year students took place over 2 weeks in August 2022.
- Student, orthoptic lecturer and practice educator experiences were evaluated.

ToC 3: Designing and testing a 4-week block placement for 4th year students to ensure high quality PrBL experiences, aligned with the NES Quality Standards for Practice Learning.

- 4 volunteer NHS Boards designed and delivered an additional 4-week block placement for 9, 4th year orthoptic students testing 9 key requirements for a high-quality placement identified by the stakeholder group.
- Feedback was collected from students, orthoptic service leads, lead orthoptic practice educators and orthoptic lecturers.

Impact

Placement capacity in Scotland increased by growing the diversity and quality of PrBL experiences.

Peer Assisted Learning

Engagement impact

- 21 orthoptists attended PAL training by September 2022

Performance impact

- 6 PEs had taken a PAL placement by December 2022

Service impact

- Using the PAL model in placement sites with a limited adult caseload, gave students access to a wider range of adult cases than using a 1:1 model.
- All orthoptists evaluated, who had taken a PAL placement, reported they would take one again.

Peer enhanced e-placement
<p>Performance impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 hours of time was provided by 3 practice educators during the PEEP <p>Service impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 placement weeks provided using the PEEP
Placement design
<p>Service impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An extra 36 placement weeks provided by the additional 4th year block placement developed as the ToC. • Following withdrawal of funding, an additional 32 placement weeks already scheduled in England for January and February 2023 were moved to Scotland and adopted this placement model

Recommendations

- Continue to develop the use of PAL as a model by sharing learning through stakeholder group; development of orthoptic specific resources for TURAS site; further preparation of students for PAL by HEI
- Continue to develop the use of PEEP as a model through further development of resources to support practice educators, further development of resources by clinicians for PEEP placements
- Prioritisation of next steps for design test of change based on learning
- Scoping and development of additional diverse models e.g., simulation, project-based placements, long arm supervision
- Promote further development of extended roles within placement experience
- Awareness of PE training opportunities through linking with PEL network, promotion through stakeholder group and use of NES PE framework in PDP discussions

<https://api.ltb.io/show/ABSXX>

This resource may be made available, in full or summary form, in alternative formats and community languages. Please contact us on **0131 656 3200** or email **altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk** to discuss how we can best meet your requirements.



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