Mental Health Student Clinical Placement

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Albury Wodonga Health (AWH) Orientation Package. All organisational policies and procedures relating to student placement outlined therein, including Code of Conduct, also apply to students undertaking Mental Health Placements across campus.

Overview of North East Border Mental Health Services:

North East Border Mental Health Services (NEBMHS) is a directorate of Albury Wodonga Health. It consists of a number of cross-border campuses.

Site maps for these placement’s are attached in Appendix 1 of this document. Those sites where mental health student placement occurs are as follows:

- **Wangaratta**
  - Community Adult Mental Health (03) 5722 5347
    Cnr Cusack and Dixon Street, Wangaratta, VIC
  - Older Person’s Community Mental Health (03) 5723 8970
    82a Murdoch Road Wangaratta, VIC
  - Kerferd Inpatient Unit (03) 5722 5030
    Cnr Dixon and Docker Streets, Wangaratta, VIC
  - North East Child and Adolescent mental health Service (Faithful St Wangaratta)
  - Primary Mental Health Team, Faithful St Wangaratta

- **Beechworth**
  - Willows Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit (03) 5728 3311
    Gilchrist Ave/Mayday Court, Beechworth VIC
  - Blackwood Psychogeriatric Inpatient Unit (Beechworth Health Service Sydney Road, Beechworth)

- **Wodonga**
  - Community Adult Mental Health (02) 6051 7950
    4 Watson Street, Wodonga, VIC (behind Aldi supermarket)
  - North East Child and Adolescent Service (High St Wodonga)
  - Benambra CCU Wilson St Wodonga (02) 6056 5803
  - Jarrah Retreat Prevention and Recovery Centre Jarrah St Wodonga

- **Albury**
  - Albury Community Adult Mental Health (02) 6058 1750
    475 Townsend Street, Albury, NSW
  - See link to location map below
What students do we host for placement?

AWH is keen to take students from a range of undergraduate professional disciplines including Nursing, Allied Health (Occupational Therapy and Social Work) and Medicine. Not all NEBMH sites take all disciplines.

The models of clinical mentorship similarly vary across disciplines and sites. Generally speaking, clinical supervision for Nursing Students uses a preceptorship model, where the student will be buddied with a clinician, on a shift by shift basis.

Allied Health students have a longer placement with direct supervision by a supervisor of the same discipline for the duration of the placement. Allied health placements will also involve some direct and autonomous work with clients, particularly final year placements.

Arrangements regarding Medical Students are determined directly between the Education Provider and the medical staff involved.

The Clinical Educator is available should you require assistance or support during placement, and can be contacted via your preceptor/ supervisor.

Feedback will be provided directly by your supervisor/preceptor on a shift by shift, and as needs basis.

You will be asked to complete an evaluation at the end of your placement and your feedback is always welcomed, and on the basis of it, changes are often made to placement for future students.

The Mental Health Environment:

Clinicians working within Mental Health practise within a Recovery Framework. This framework emphasises client centred recovery and focuses on the client’s strengths in their recovery journey. Client choice is a corner stone of Recovery, and clinicians are partners in, not directors of that client’s recovery journey. For more information on AWH Mental Health Services, useful clinical suggestions regarding working within the Mental Health Field, and on Recovery you may wish to access the Recovery Hub of AWH by pasting the following link into your browser:


Click on the “Recovery and our services” tab above for further site specific information.

The Mental Health Environment is multidisciplinary, where all staff contribute collectively to, and in tandem with, the client and their family. So, on your placement you will experience more of a social model of health approach, where the clinicians and support people are partners in care, not the directors of that care. So, you may need to be prepared for a substantially different type of placement from that which you would experience in an Acute Hospital Setting.
The skills that we are specifically expecting that you will increase during placement will be:

- Communication skills in relation to engaging therapeutically and creating rapport with clients;
- Clinical assessment skills particularly related to Mental Status Assessment, and how that impacts upon physical health assessment and vice versa;
- Approach to our clients across the clinical spectrum being mindful of always ensuring they are treated with respect and dignity;
- Approach to our clients as they enter your clinical setting, whether it be in the acute hospital or in the mental health service. This first contact/approach is pivotal to establishing rapport with the client and impacts upon how the client views the service, and their ability to feel comfortable accessing health services in the future.
- Understanding of the many challenges facing the client with a mental health issue, physically, socially, emotionally and environmentally (arising from within the health sector and without).

What does a “typical” Day on a Mental Health Placement look like...A snapshot...

If your placement is to occur on one of the inpatient units, nursing students will start the day at 0700 and conclude at 1530 hours. You will attend handover and then be allocated to a clinical team with your preceptor. The emphasis is on your clinical learning during placement, so to expedite this, it is recommended that you participate in as many client related activities and clinical functions as possible.

Allied Health Students will be directed by their supervisor as to shift times and duties. Generally all placement shifts will be during business hours. For example, Mon-Friday 8.30-5pm.

Students are often anxious regarding their first day of placement and we know that this is often heightened if your first day is on an Inpatient Unit. Part of the role of the preceptor is to ensure the student operates within their scope of practice at all times, thus it is the responsibility of the student to speak up if their scope of practice is being extended beyond their academic preparation. For example giving IMI medications if you have not received formal education on this. For this reason, there are clinical areas that students are not to be involved with, such as clients in seclusion. Similarly, there is no requirement for the student to be involved with clients in High Dependency. Therefore, it is also the responsibility of the student not to place themselves in a vulnerable situation.

If your placement is to be with one of the community teams, you will be buddied with a clinician for the day and will work alongside them. Generally speaking, if you are invited in to client consults, your role is to sit quietly and to ask questions of your preceptor/supervisor once the session has concluded, unless specifically encouraged/invited to do otherwise. During the assessment, your role is to observe and conduct a mental state examination on each client and to consult with your preceptor re this, after the consult has concluded.

Students often see clinical situations with “fresh eyes” so don’t hesitate to contribute, if you feel you have something to say, but be mindful of how and when you do this. Consult with your preceptor/supervisor re this. Clinical reviews occur both in the community teams and on the inpatient units. This is generally a time for open discussion regarding the client, either in their presence, or not. Again ask your preceptor for direction re how to contribute to this and when.

Just remember, be tactful, respectful, confidential and professional at all times. Access your preceptor/supervisor for all things clinical in the first instance, and report clinical issues/concerns to them expediently and always operate within your scope of Practice.
Clothing:

Inpatient Units: Staff generally wear uniform, and students are welcome to wear uniform or neat clean professional casual. Uniform on the first day is recommended, and then you can ask about local practices thereafter. Footwear should always be sturdy, no ballets, sandals or thongs.

Community Settings: Neat, clean, professional casual. Clothing is not to be revealing or too tight. Plunging necklines and leggings (other than with long tops), ripped jeans, short skirts etc are not appropriate. Again, no sandals or thongs.

If your attire is deemed to be unsuitable, you will be asked to go home and change. There will be no discussion on this matter.

Orientation:

Orientation will occur within your specific placement location. Your Education Provider will be notified of this prior and they will pass this on to you with your roster.

What do you need to bring with you on day 1 to placement orientation:

- Current (within the last 12 months) Police Check
- Current working with Children Check

If you do not bring these, or they are not in order, you will be so advised and placement will not commence until the paperwork is in order.

Leave on Placement:

If you are unable to attend placement on a particular day please advise your preceptor/supervisor or unit asap. Generally speaking, we ask that you contact your placement venue, and leave a phone message, as soon as you know you will be unable to attend placement.

Telephone numbers are provided with the location addresses. We are always concerned for students’ safety and need to know if you haven’t arrived for placement on a particular day, that you are OK.

We will endeavour to make up the time you have missed on placement, but this may be sometime after your placement at a mutually convenient time. Having said that, we will always try to make it up as consecutively with placement as possible.
Appendix 1 Site Maps

Nolan House – Albury NSW (PH 02 6058 4450)

The Albury Base Hospital

Cnr Keene Street & Borella Road, Albury NSW 2640 (Turn right from Borella Road, up Keene Street )

Indicated on the below map as – “Psychiatric Visitiors Outpatients and Admission Entrance”.

Benambra CCU Wilson St Wodonga (02) 6056 5803
The Willows - Beechworth (PH 03 5728 3311)

10 Mayday Court, Beechworth VIC 3747. (2nd House from the corner of Gilchrist Ave / MayDay Court)

Blackwood Unit – Beechworth Hospital Campus (PH 03 57 280 330)

Beechworth Health Service, Sydney Road, Beechworth VIC 3747

Indicated on the below map as – “Psychogeriatric”
Wodonga Adult Community Mental Health Service (PH 02 6051 7950)
4 Watson Street Wodonga, VIC 3690 (Behind Aldi supermarket)

Wangaratta Adult Community Mental Health Service (PH 03 5722 5030)
Cnr Cusack & Dixon street Wangaratta VIC 3677 (Behind Northeast Health Wangaratta)
Older Persons Mental Health Services - Wangaratta (PH 03 5723 8970)
82A Murdoch Road Wangaratta VIC 3677

Kerferd Unit – Wangaratta (PH 03 5722 5030)
Cnr Dixon & Docker street Wangaratta, VIC 3677
(Behind Northeast Health Hospital, Wangaratta)

We trust you enjoy your placement and have an excellent learning experience.