

## **A student-centred approach: the mobile Outreach Skills Clinic for Assessment**

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In the last 3 years, the authors have developed and launched the Outreach Skills Clinic for Assessment (OSCA) at the University of Chester. OSCA has been established to help pre-registrant students overcome practice learning challenges, and particularly to ease the achievement of a range of more challenging proficiencies and skills within the Nursing and Midwifery Council's (2018) Future Nurse: Standards of Proficiency for Registered Nurses. Using simulation as a learning and assessment strategy, OSCA offers learners an opportunity to experience and practice the realities of professional practice in a controlled and accessible environment. In particular, OSCA aims to embed simulation-based practice learning and assessment opportunities for pre-registration learners across Cheshire and Merseyside. Its self-booking skills clinic enhances existing opportunities for clinical skills development, and provides opportunities for pre-registration learners to be assessed as proficient across a range of skills and sites. In order to facilitate equality of access, and ensure that students have an extended opportunity to work towards attaining

these proficiencies – regardless of whether they are out on placement, or on campus at university – the OSCA clinic is fully mobile.

The Digital On Tour outreach bus, which houses the OSCA skills clinic, visits different sites and private, independent and voluntary organisations (PIVOs) weekly. It contains a range of training-based simulation equipment matched to the challenging proficiencies, including cutting-edge augmented reality and virtual reality technologies. To encompass a range of pre-registrant demographics, learners are given the autonomy to choose the nature of their assessment following OSCA workshops; whether this is summative, or formative to further enhance their confidence and skill development.

The impact of OSCA has been significant.

In the 4-month period from January to April 2023, over 830 students were assessed via the clinic in the geographical areas that best suited them, with many sessions booking out within minutes. In feedback, 100% of learners rated both their confidence and knowledge as having improved following attendance at an OSCA session. Likewise, 98.5% of preregistrants rated their satisfaction with OSCA as either 'extremely satisfied' or 'moderately satisfied', 98.9% rated the quality of teaching and learning materials as 'excellent' or 'very good', and all respondents stated that they

would ‘definitely’ attend an OSCA session again and/or recommend the session to a peer (n=466).

Qualitative data emphasises that OSCA has reduced students’ anxieties regarding the achievement and assessment of proficiencies and skills, with learners gaining a greater feeling of being prepared for practice following the clinics. There has been sustained demand for sessions to be offered more frequently, and the OSCA team is subsequently expanding. Uniquely, the OSCA model supports learners in accessing assessment opportunities in areas convenient to them, while increasing the cost-effectiveness of training. It facilitates a student-centred approach to training opportunities, which more easily fits around the educational and social commitments of learners.

## **References**

Nursing and Midwifery Council. Future Nurse: Standards of Proficiency for Registered Nurses. 2018. <https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/education-standards/future-nurse-proficiencies.pdf> (accessed 7 March 2024)