



The Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative (QOTFC)

Engaging the Clinicians: Occupational Therapists promoting fieldwork.

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Final Report - 30 June 2007.

Introduction

Project Vision:

This state-wide project aimed to increase collaboration between and commitment to student fieldwork education by occupational therapists in Queensland. The project brought together occupational therapists interested in fieldwork who could potentially help to influence local regions to sustain, provide and increase fieldwork opportunities for occupational therapy students. The project was conducted from July 2006 - June 2007.

Project Aims:

1. Promote engagement with a shared vision for the future of occupational therapy (OT) fieldwork.
2. Promote awareness of proactive occupational therapy responses to support fieldwork.
3. Continue to develop ownership in collaborative problem solving of fieldwork issues.
4. Engage early adopters (Hub Champions) in project planning for positive change
5. Develop and implement plans for increasing involvement and action of occupational therapists across the state.
6. Generate additional fieldwork placements across government and non-government employers.
7. Actively progress alternative models of fieldwork

This final report summarises the *Engaging the Clinicians Project*. Section 1 reports outcomes against stated project milestones and Section 2 provides a summary of the evaluation of the project as a whole.

Section 1

Reporting against Project Milestones

1 A. Plan and organise OT Symposium attended by representatives from six regional and two metropolitan “Hubs” (specific areas based around various geographical locations or special interest areas of occupational therapists in Queensland).

Milestone completed 6 October 2006.

Hubs were developed across the state based around geographic localities across Queensland where occupational therapists were employed and based on special interest groups in the south-east Queensland region. Each Hub region was invited to nominate two Hub Champions with whom the Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative QOTFC would communicate. These Hub locations were summarised in the interim report provided in January.

The Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork (QOTFC) Symposium was held on Friday 6th October 2006 and attended by 50 occupational therapists (including QOTFC members, invited guests, Hub Champions and fieldwork teams from UQ and JCU). Attendees from regional and special interest group Hubs had the opportunity to network and collaborate with a broad range of occupational therapy representatives from government and non-government health and disability sectors. Fifteen Hubs were represented including regional groups in the southeast Queensland region (10) and Brisbane metropolitan-based special interest groups (5) such as neurology and paediatrics. In the main, two Hub Champions were recruited from each regional area and only one for each of the special interest groups.

The Symposium provided an opportunity for attendees to engage in discussions regarding: (1) their vision of occupational therapy fieldwork education, (2) the key enablers and barriers to fieldwork identified in their Hubs, and (3) to hear and share information on potential solutions to issues identified. Members of the QOTFC also presented several stimulus papers on the findings of the QOTFC 2006 online survey, an overview of the QOTFC Supervisor’s Toolkit and a review of the literature on current models and approaches to clinical education. These stimulus papers were presented with the aim of providing ideas to support the solution focus of the group discussions later in the day.

One of the key outcomes of the Symposium was the development of localised action plans to address the identified barriers to the provision of fieldwork education. Hub Champions were able to take these action plans back to their region with the aim of addressing their own local issues and enhancing fieldwork opportunities. The Symposium also provided an opportunity for Hub Champions to identify and network with key stakeholders to assist them with their Hub plans. An evaluation of the Symposium is provided in Section 2.

1 B. Provide sufficiently appropriately trained representatives to attend the Symposium.

Milestone achieved by 30 September 2006.

Hub Champions were supported prior to Symposium attendance through the provision of information about the QOTFC and this project, and through individual consultation with the Project Officer. Other invited representatives were provided with a detailed letter outlining the key aims of the Symposium and their anticipated role in networking with Hub Champions, in addition to the information provided to Hub Champions.

Hubs were engaged in a consultation process prior to the Symposium. This consultation task aimed to engage interested occupational therapists as well as providing an opportunity for all Hub members to provide input to the Symposium. Hub Champions were asked to consult with the occupational therapists in their Hubs regarding their perspectives on the local barriers and enablers for enhancing fieldwork opportunities and supporting supervisors in their Hub/region. Hub Champions presented this information at the Symposium and attendees developed key themes emerging from these consultations. These emerging themes then formed the basis of solution focussed discussion groups and action planning at the Symposium.

All attendees at the Symposium received the proceedings of the day, a formal letter of invitation including the Symposium aims, and the information flyers. They were provided with a resource pack at the Symposium containing key information about the fieldwork programs of the universities, research articles of interest and copies of the day's presentations.

2 A. Distribute Symposium aims and outcomes to the regional and metropolitan Hubs across Queensland.

Milestone achieved 30 December 2006.

After the Symposium attendees received copies of the outcomes of all group discussions, the consultation data provided by the Hubs as well as information on possible activities to promote action planning in their Hubs. These were sent to attendees by email. This was reported in detail in the interim report in January 2007.

2 B. Visit Hubs to conduct focus/action planning groups and discuss outcomes and action plans.

Milestone achieved 30 January 2007.

The Project Officer continued to liaise with Hubs and arranged to visit the majority of the Hubs in November and December 2006. The schedule of visits was completed in January 2007 and reported in the interim report. The Project Officer has also liaised with the fieldwork staff of James Cook University and The University of Queensland regarding these visits and communicated key outcomes and activities to these teams.

A key focus of the Project Officer visits has been to encourage ongoing involvement of Hub members and to maintain the momentum and enthusiasm of Hub Champions after the Symposium. The Project Officer has also shared the ideas generated during the visits so that all groups can benefit from the discussions and ideas of other Hubs. It is evident that whilst there are similarities in the key actions decided upon by the Hubs there are also unique tasks and supports needed to suit the membership and environment of each Hub.

Hub members have reported the following benefits from Project Officer visits and ongoing liaison with them:

- Discussion about alternative models and approaches to placement provision.
- Discussion about their concerns regarding the impact workload issues have in terms of accommodating student placements.
- Receipt of updated information on university supports and resources to student placements, including The QOTFC Supervisors' Tool Kit (http://www.otqld.org.au/ot_links/clinical_supervisors_tool_kit/index.asp)
- Discussion about ways to facilitate student learning and clinical reasoning.

In January 2007, the Project Officer disseminated to Hubs information and ideas generated through the visits as resources to assist their ongoing action planning.

2 C. Following visits highlight local implications and commence local action planning.

Milestone met 30 January 2007.

Hub members reported several intentions and/or actions with regard to ongoing engagement of the Hub with this project. These included the need to:

- explore how Hub members can be supported to offer placements. This includes exploring alternative approaches to placement provision including role emerging/project placements, the collaborative approach, and shared placements across various facilities within the region and/or area of special interest.
- identify all placement options in the region and to link and support therapists during placements.
- establish student tutorial networks across regional facilities and to provide and co-ordinate other shared student learning opportunities.
- create a promotional video of the region to generate student interest in placements.
- support members who are supervising students for the first time, this includes encouraging them to link them with university supports for placement development and resources.
- connect with Fieldwork staff of the University to arrange in-service education sessions for Hub members.
- appoint regional clinical co-ordinators. These people will be responsible for reviewing placement opportunities for occupational therapy students. They will maintain connection with the occupational therapists in their network and be a support for resources and support for clinical education. The clinical co-ordinator will also be a link between the network and the QOTFC Project Officer and Fieldwork staff of the universities.
- set up regional occupational therapy networks.
- prepare a shared student orientation resource for use by all facilities. This will be completed as an adjunct to? the Supervisors' Took Kit. This resource will include an orientation to the region to assist students.
- review all possible opportunities to arrange financial assistance to support students to take up placements in the region.
- explore accommodation options for students to support their ability to accept placements in the region.

3 A. Revisit six regional and two metropolitan Hubs across Queensland to review action plans.

Milestone met June 30 2007.

Phone contact with Hub Champions was maintained as requested by Hubs and as needs arose in relation to project activities and planned actions of the Hubs. Due to the diversity of Hub needs and the ability to manage and

support several of the Hub's activities via phone and email consultation, actual visits were only made to Townsville, Cairns, Hervey Bay, Gold Coast, and Sunshine Coast Hubs. During these visits and consultations, the Project Officer worked with the Hubs on their specific actions and revisited their sustainability plans for continuing with fieldwork placements post the project.

Meetings with representatives of the Paediatric Northside and Mental Health special interest group Hubs were also held, and email contact was maintained with other special interest groups in south east Queensland.

Two of the regional Hubs were not visited. The original Hub group at Mt Isa disbanded late in 2006 as the Hub Champions both left their occupational therapy positions in this area and the Project Officer has been liaising with occupational therapists in this region to re-establish the Hub with new membership. Teleconference contact was made with the Toowoomba regional Hub instead of a face-to-face visit, as issues with recruitment and workload of Hub members impacted on their ability to implement their proposed initiatives. The Toowoomba Hub intends to resume the implementation of its proposed actions in July 2007.

3 B. Continue discussion and reinvigorate local action plans.

Milestone met 31 April 2007.

The Project Officer continued to maintain regular email and telephone contact with Hubs as required responding to local queries and sending project plans, and questionnaires regarding sustainability and evaluation of the project.

3 C. Summarise and distribute progress through state wide email network.

Milestone met 31 April 2007.

Contact with Hubs was maintained throughout the project by the Project Officers so that they were aware of the development of start up kits. The Project Officers continued to respond to local queries and to send bulk emails to Hub Champions regarding project plans, sustainability and evaluation of the project. Hubs were involved with the development of the start up kits, as were the fieldwork teams at the University of Queensland and James Cook University.

Sustainability of the project

As a secondary outcome of the project, several resources were developed in collaboration with the Hubs, The University of Queensland and James Cook University. Resources considered to be useful to all Hubs and both universities in supporting the development of future clinical placements included:

- the development of a Clinical Educator's Resource Kit for new placement development

- the development of a Placement Grant Scheme to support Hub members to engage with Local Business/Service groups to support students undertaking rural/ regional placements. See Appendix 1 and 2 for examples of some content from these kits
- Enhancement of the Supervisors' Tool Kit website as a resource for all occupational therapists. This was developed as the Clinical Educator Resource Kit in web format (<http://www.qotfc.edu.au>).

4 A Revisit Hubs and organise mini Symposiums to highlight actions achieved and problems solved in addition to encouraging continuing creative innovation.

Milestone met June 30 2007.

It was decided in consultation with the Hub Champions that three visits to the Hubs in a twelve month period as had been originally proposed was not going to be feasible. Hence the Project Officer conducted visits in November to December 2006 and follow up visits May – June 2007 to Townsville, Cairns, Hervey Bay, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. Contact was also made with special interest groups in south east Queensland in May- June. Formal meetings were held in regions visited with Hub Champions and key stakeholders as requested. In service training on clinical education and student supervision issues was conducted at RBWH, PAH, West Moreton, PCH regions (these need to be clearly identified at the beginning to avoid any confusion) to meet the information needs of Hub members / special interest group members.

The QOTFC have had one abstract for a paper titled *Supervisors' Perspectives on Occupational Therapy Student Supervision* and one workshop *Engaging the Profession: Innovation and Sustainability in Occupational Therapy Fieldwork* accepted at the OT Australia Qld State Conference in Rockhampton, 21-22 September 2007. This conference was regarded as an excellent forum for providing feedback to Hub Champions, other stakeholders and members of the profession about the activities and achievements of the *Engaging the Clinicians Project* and present major outcomes.

The paper will present the results of a Queensland wide survey undertaken by the QOTFC in 2006 that aimed to: investigate fieldwork supervisors' perspectives regarding the benefits and challenges of providing fieldwork placements; explore the potential link between student placements and later workforce recruitment; and document models of fieldwork supervision utilised.

The workshop, facilitated by all QOTFC members, provides an alternate, large and more focussed venue than "mini Symposiums" across the state as initially planned in the project milestones. The workshop focuses on maintaining and sustaining the progress achieved by providing an opportunity for the

Queensland occupational therapy community to hear the outcomes of the project. Conference workshop abstract is appended (Appendix 3)

5 A. Provide written summary and article for publication.

Written report for Queensland Health completed by 30 June 2007.

Financial statement report to be completed by 31 July 2007. Manuscript for publication to be completed by end of August 2007. (Extension negotiated and granted by Andrea Hurwood 25 May 2006).

An independent Project Officer conducted one hour phone interviews with Hub Champions as a component of the project evaluation strategy using a purpose designed telephone interview schedule. These interviews were conducted in late May and June 2007. The project evaluation will be presented in Section 2.

Section 2 Evaluation of Project

A project evaluation framework was developed and is outlined below:

Evaluation Framework:

Evaluation Hierarchy	Processes and outcome indicators	Instruments Designed
1. What did we do? <i>Project Delivery</i>	Project progress reports against stated aims and milestones to Queensland Health (December 2006 and June 2007) Summary of Hub consultation data Symposium evaluation data Hub Action plans - Hub participation data and key actions/activities	Symposium Survey and open ended comments
2. How did it go? <i>Project Impact</i>	Project progress reports against stated aims and milestones to Queensland Health (December 2006 and June 2007) Symposium evaluation data Hub evaluation and outcomes data	Symposium Survey and open ended comments Telephone Interviews Schedule and Sustainability Survey
3. Can the outcomes keep going? <i>Project Sustainability</i>	Goals, objectives and strategies for sustainability Sustainability survey data	Telephone Interviews Schedule and Sustainability Survey

Stage 1

Symposium Evaluation – Bringing the Clinicians and Hub Champions Together.

Hub Consultation Findings

The key findings from consultations by Hub Champions within their Hubs prior to the Symposium revealed issues limiting clinicians ability to offer fieldwork placements that were: intrinsic to the facility, extrinsic to the facility and related to university issues.

The recurring themes intrinsic to the facility were:

- The need for physical/placement resources to support fieldwork,
- Reduced supervisor skill and confidence, and
- The need for workload management to support placements.

Those themes extrinsic to the facility that were prominent were:

- The lack of incentives and rewards for student supervision, and
- The lack of accommodation for students and travel

Themes emerging as university specific issues were:

- Lack of support for supervisors,
- The need for information and resources (such as insurance issues, what to do with struggling students, incentives e.g. academic titles,) and
- The method of allocation of placements/placement development.

These key themes became the basis for small group discussion and brainstorming solutions.

Symposium Feedback

Feedback about the Symposium held in October 2006 was very positive. Attendees were asked to complete an evaluation of their experiences (refer to Appendix 4). 100% of respondents agreed that the Symposium presentations and activities increased their understanding of the QOTFC project; 97% agreed that the Symposium increased their confidence in their role as Hub Champion or project resource person; 100% agreed that attendance assisted them to communicate with others about the project; 83% agreed that attendance would assist them support others to undertake actions related to the project; 97% agreed that the Symposium format provided sufficient opportunities for audience participation, 94% agreed that they were encouraged to reflect and plan on their own participation in the project, and 91% agreed that they felt more prepared for their role within the project as a result of the Symposium.

Qualitative Symposium Evaluation

Participants were asked to identify what they found most helpful about the QOTFC Symposium. Responses could be grouped into five major categories.

Firstly, participants valued the ability to network and collaborate with colleagues, who were from a broad range of backgrounds and geographical areas. This included the ability to share experiences with those from other fieldwork 'Hubs' and the opportunity to work in smaller groups. Participants also reported that they valued the opportunity to problem solve in a group setting (including finding out what had worked for other Hubs) and to subsequently create concrete fieldwork strategies. Another strong theme was that many participants found the preparation of the presenters and the subsequent quality of their presentations and sessions to be of a high standard, which therefore enabled a greater understanding of the project and upcoming new initiatives. Participants also highlighted the quality of specific sessions, including the sessions on models and approaches, feedback from Hubs, theme discussions, the QOTFC survey findings and information on resources for student supervision.

Participants were asked to identify what they found least helpful about the QOTFC Symposium. Responses could be grouped into two broad categories. Many responses indicated that the repetition and excess length of many of the Hub presentations was the least helpful Symposium session/feature, with one participant adding that these presentations had a tendency to be negative rather than solution-focussed. Three respondents stated that they felt that the goals were not clear at the end of day, including one respondent not having a clear sense of their role as a Hub member (and the expectations of this role from the QOTFC). Two respondents commented that the change management session had a few useful ideas, but more practical application would have been welcome, and one respondent indicated that issues such as course content (e.g., what are the basic skills clinicians require students to have before student placement) were not discussed.

In response to the question "What do you perceive to be your greatest challenge in relation to this project?" respondents indicated three key challenges. Firstly, respondents indicated that translating the project into increased fieldwork placements (e.g., "selling to the masses", "changing the culture of groups to recommence regular student supervision" and "inspiring others with the same enthusiasm") would be very challenging. Several respondents indicated that keeping up the momentum as Hub champions would also be challenging, including their ability to coordinate meetings and disseminate information to Hub members due to time, staffing and distance constraints.

Participants cited a wide range of project strengths. Many participants commented on the shared commitment, enthusiasm and diversity of people involved and committed to the project and the feeling of ownership inherent. Others commented regarding the positive nature of the long term plan for funding, the fact that goals and strategies were in place, the feeling of being supported, the improvement of Hub networks and the fact that it is a dedicated project with capable people behind it.

Stage 2

Evaluation of Hub Activities and the Project as a Whole.

Key project activities arose from the Hubs and the Symposium discussions. Two specific resources have been developed by Project Officers, namely the Clinical Educators' Resource Kit and the Placement Grant Scheme for Local Business/Service groups to support students undertaking rural/ regional placements. Components of these are appended. (See Appendix 1 and 2)

Other Hubs undertook particular activities which were exemplary such as:

- the Mackay Hub established a student tutorial network and supported members to enable an increase in offers of placements to occupational therapy students from JCU and UQ to meet placement demand;
- the Mt Isa Hub members approached business managers within their service (funded by Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing) to request funding for students to perform clinical visits with therapists to remote locations;
- The Cairns Hub developed a student orientation resource for their region with the assistance of a JCU student.
- the Sunshine Coast Hub liaised closely with the QOTFC Project Officer to develop the regional placement funding kit as well as increasing placement offers to JCU and UQ students to meet placement demands;
- The Fraser Coast /Bundaberg Hub Champion successfully gained funding from Queensland Health to work on a project to develop an orientation package for the district; to develop pre-learning packages for students on what is expected on placement; to determine local barriers to student placements and identify solutions; to liaise between local service providers and identify/establish fieldwork supervision models not traditionally used in the district and to determine the need for a local regional co-ordinator for students; and.
- The Mental Health Interest Group Hub developed resources for QOTFC Clinical Educators' Resource Kit to support placements in mental health facilities throughout Queensland. The needs of this group and mental health fieldwork in general became pressing and led QOTFC members to write a submission to Queensland Health to enable a second project to be funded entitled: *Invigorating Mental Health Fieldwork* which has been funded by Queensland Health from 2007-2008.

A telephone survey was developed by members of the QOTFC to gain detailed feedback from Hub Champions about the activities/actions engaged in within their Hubs and their views about the success and outcomes of the project as a whole. Fifteen Hubs were identified at the beginning of the project (10 regional Hubs and 5 special interest groups). Various issues arose during the project, however, which impacted on the membership, actions and engagement of the Hub Champions and members over the time frame of the project. For example, the Gold Coast and Townsville Hubs were unable to successfully develop a Hub identity. Consequently the Project Officer altered the focus of these Hub from action planning to consultation on project

outcomes; The Mt Isa and Toowoomba Hubs ceased to operate for a period of time as the occupational therapy Hub Champions either left the region or were dealing with workload issues that impacted on their ability to engage with the project (both of these Hubs have a commitment to engaging with project outcomes post June 2007). The Soft Tissue, Aged Care and Neurology Special Interest Group Hubs received Project Officer communications but did not actively participate in project action planning due to other member commitments and priorities during the timeframe of the project

Ten Hub Champions were interviewed by an independent Project Officer who did not engage with the Hubs or participate in the Symposium in order to collect objective and independent information about the project. The telephone survey (see Appendix 5 and 6) elicited comments about the main issues impacting on the Hub membership and activities over the last 12 months, the type of support received from the QOTFC Project Officer, the experience of being involved in this project as a Hub Champion, whether the QOTFC project achieved its aims, any changes in enablers and barriers to the provision of occupational therapy student fieldwork placements in their Hub, and project sustainability. A specific project sustainability survey requiring responses on a five point Likert scale (strongly disagree =1 to strongly agree = 5) was also completed on the phone (See Appendix 5 and 6 for copies of these purpose designed surveys).

The key outcomes of the phone interview demonstrated that the majority of Hub champions interviewed felt that the project had been worthwhile and that it had engaged local therapists and increased fieldwork work interest in their area. Participants perceived that the *'Engaging the Clinicians'* Project achieved six out of the seven goals in the Hubs and five of the seven for the project overall (see Table below). The two goals that were not perceived to be met were generating additional fieldwork placements and actively progressing alternative models of supervision. In the responses provided respondents identified that they considered it too soon for changes to occur but that they would transpire in time. Other Hubs stated they were already providing many placements and using a range of models of supervision prior to the project.

Telephone Survey Question Aims of Project	Hub/Project N=10	Agree	Unsure or No
Promote engagement with a shared vision for the future of OT fieldwork	For Hub	90%	10%
	For Project overall	90%	10%
Promote awareness of proactive OT responses to support fieldwork	For Hub	90%	10%
	For Project overall	70%	30%
Continue to develop ownership in collaborative problem solving of fieldwork issues	For Hub	90%	10%
	For Project overall	60%	40%

Telephone Survey Question Aims of Project	Hub/Project N=10	Agree	Unsure or No
Engage early adopters in project planning for positive change	For Hub	90%	10%
	For Project overall	60%	40%
Develop and implement plans for increasing involvement and action of OT across the state	For Hub	70%	30%
	For Project overall	70%	30%
Generate additional fieldwork placements across government and non-government agencies	For Hub	40%	60%
	For Project overall	0%	100%
Actively progress alternative models of fieldwork placements	For Hub	60%	40%
	For Project overall	30%	70%

The ten respondents represented the range of success achieved in the Hubs, from Hubs that had been unable to meet and develop an identity to those that had met regularly and made significant commitment to the project. Three main issues that limited the success of the Hubs were; excessive workload issues, reduced staffing, and difficulties getting together. Time constraints, resulting from heavy workloads for occupational therapists, meant that it was difficult to prioritise project goals or to find time to meet and implement the action plans. In some areas, however, this issue was negated by including the project in existing occupational therapy meetings as a regular agenda item.

There was strong recognition of the usefulness of the support provided by the Project Officer, attendance at the Symposium, regular emails and updates and the project officers and university fieldwork coordinators visits to the Hubs. These aspects of the project helped to inform, encourage and solve issues for the Hubs. The approachable and positive attitude of the Project Officer was a strength of the project. Other strengths of the project identified by participating occupational therapists were; increased understanding and awareness of fieldwork provision, ability to see the bigger picture across the state and a realisation that *'we were all in the same boat'*, the opportunity to network and share ideas, and an increased sense of ownership of student education.

A range of individual strategies were also developed. One respondent had written a successful business plan to go off-line and work specifically on a student project that aims to establish a fieldwork coordinator for their district. In one area a Clinical Education Support Network has been established, and in another a local list of available supervisors has been developed which has increased the number of clinicians offering to provide future placements.

Sharing of existing resources between occupational therapists within some Hubs had increased as had the provision of support for supervisors who had not previously felt confident to take on students. One Hub has developed a pre-learning/pre-reading package and a quiz to determine the core skills

students bring with them, and one group is on track to develop in-services to share the load of students in the region.

Several respondents identified that different models of supervision were being planned or implemented including dual placements, shared placements and project placement. This was associated with being informed about the models, realising the potential of some models to reduce the pressure on supervisors and recognising the role of part-time occupational therapists in fieldwork. It was acknowledged that this was a transitional phase and that these new placements were currently being planned for the future.

In terms of the project sustainability survey, 90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project was effective and that the outcomes were visible and acknowledged; 80% that the project aims were integrated with other activities of their Hub/organisation; 70% agreed/strongly agreed that there was a favourable Hub environment for outcomes to be achieved and supported beyond the project end date; 80% agreed/strongly agreed that they had support to continue to advocate for sustainable opportunities for fieldwork placements; 90% agreed/strongly agreed that they were well supported by the Project Officers; 80% that useful resources were being developed/provided to support fieldwork supervision; and 60% had accessed the Supervisors' Toolkit and found it a useful resource. Fifty percent agreed/strongly agreed that the range of fieldwork placements options had increased in their Hub over the duration of the project. Only 30% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the numbers of placements in their Hub had increased during the project, and 30% agreed/strongly agreed that the outcomes of the project were well integrated within their Hub. Thirty percent agreed/strongly agreed that alternative models of supervision had been trialled in their Hubs to date.

The participants suggested a range of supports they considered were required for Hubs to provide sustainable fieldwork opportunities. Some recognised that the financial incentives offered by Queensland Health were helpful, and one Hub champion suggested that this should be made available to private practitioners also. Face-to-face support was suggested by half of the respondents, with suggestion that this should be in the form of someone visiting from Brisbane, or from the universities or from a local coordinator. The face-to-face support was perceived to be required to continue with the development of the Hubs, assist in organising and developing new placements as well as to support therapists who lack the confidence to engage in fieldwork supervision or are having difficulties with students. Other suggestions for support included increased sharing of success stories, regular visits from the universities, provision of organisational support, such as need for office space and equipment (laptops) and decreased workload for therapists. It was felt by some participants that some of the problems were a result of a lack of management support for fieldwork in government agencies.

As the project comes to its end, some respondents feared that some of the benefits gained (support and regular updates) would be lost and sustainability

in some Hubs could be threatened by staff changes and low attendance at local meetings.

SUMMARY

In summary, the *Engaging the Clinicians Project* has met its aims to a greater or lesser degree:

1. Promote engagement with a shared vision for the future of occupational therapy (OT) fieldwork.
2. Promote awareness of proactive occupational therapy responses to support fieldwork.
3. Continue to develop ownership in collaborative problem solving of fieldwork issues.
4. Engage early adopters (Hub Champions) in project planning for positive change
5. Develop and implement plans for increasing involvement and action of Occupational Therapists across the state.
6. Generate additional fieldwork placements across government and non-government employers.
7. Actively progress alternative models of fieldwork

The final two are still being addressed, namely to:

1. Generate additional fieldwork placements across government and non-government employers.
2. Actively progress alternative models of fieldwork

It is too early to tell whether the project has generated more fieldwork placements during this twelve months, although we know that for the first time in many years, both UQ and JCU have had offers in excess of their needs for placements in semesters 1 and 2 2007. Some areas of practice such as mental health continue to be problematic in terms of finding sufficient placements. Both Universities will keep data on the numbers of placement offers received over the next 12 to 24 months. This will likely provide a clearer idea of the project outcomes in terms of specific placement numbers, as it takes time for the generation of ownership, engagement and activity to translate directly into placement offers. The final aim regarding progressing alternative fieldwork models will be further addressed by both Universities and for mental health in particular by QOTFC in the project *Invigorating Mental Health Placements 2007-2008* funded by Queensland Health.

What is very clear from this project is that local areas need local solutions. While the QOTFC has developed resources through this Project (such as the Clinical Educators' Resource Kit and Placement Grant Scheme, and website www.qotfc.edu.au) at a state wide level, there is a strongly identified need for localised action at an individual organisation and geographical/regional/local level. By acknowledging the needs at the "grass roots level", appropriate solutions to fieldwork challenges can be identified and strategically supported by state wide alliances such as QOTFC, as well as the individual Universities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The QOTFC members would like to thank Queensland Health for the funding which made the *Engaging the Clinicians Project* and further development and refinement of fieldwork resources possible.

We would also like to express our thanks to the Project Officers who have worked with such commitment and diligence on this project, in particular Cate Fitzgerald without whose project management skills and knowledge of fieldwork this project would not have been possible, Christina Robb for her attention to detail and synthesis of materials for the Clinical Educators' Resource Kit, Linda Cartmill and Anne Marie Hunter for their work on the Placement Grant Scheme, Linda Cartmill for conducting the phone interviews and David Dickson for general project work and assistance with the manuscript and reports. In addition we would like to thank Information Technology Services at the University of Queensland (Craig Oddy, Trevor Burke, Gayle Partridge and Alana Stokes) for their assistance with design, production and website development.

Appendix 1

Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative QOTFC

Clinical Educator's Resource Kit

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Appendix 2

Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative QOTFC

Placement Grant Scheme Kit

Appendix 3

Title: Engaging the Profession: Innovation and Sustainability in Occupational Therapy Fieldwork

Accepted OT Australia State Conference Rockhampton as a workshop September 2007.

Authors: QOTFC: Yvonne Thomas, Sylvia Rodger, Cathy McBryde , Jacqui Broadbridge, Rachel Hawkins, Cate Fitzgerald, and Ann Edwards

The Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative (QOTFC) formed in 2004 with a primary goal of enhancing fieldwork opportunities for occupational therapy (OT) students across Queensland. In 2006 a project funded by Queensland Health, entitled 'Engaging the Profession', was undertaken to identify and support a network of 'fieldwork Champions' across the OT community in Queensland to promote innovative fieldwork developments across professional practice areas.

This workshop will focus on maintaining and sustaining the progress achieved by providing an opportunity for the Queensland OT community to hear the outcomes of the project. Participants will also be able to contribute to the future development of the occupational therapy profession by enabling the provision of creative, innovative and contemporary fieldwork placements that reflect current practice.

The workshop will include: a brief overview of the 'engaging the profession' project; examples of fieldwork developments across the state;

- practical skills for developing fieldwork innovations and ideas;
- current evidence outlining the benefits and challenges of fieldwork supervision; and
- opportunities for discussion and sharing of fieldwork supervisory experiences.

Workshop participants will develop strategies for increasing fieldwork benefits and opportunities in their practice area. Issues of managing student supervision and workload will be discussed, with practical tips for gaining support from colleagues and managers highlighted. It is further anticipated that participants in this workshop will act as a reference group for the further developments of the QOTFC.

Appendix 4

Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative (QOTFC) Symposium Evaluation Questionnaire

Name:

Date Completed:

Please read each statement carefully, then circle one of the numbers on the right, where:
1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The presentations and/or activities within the Symposium increased my understanding of the QOTFC project.	1 2 3 4 5
2. The presentations and/or activities increased my confidence in taking on the role of a Hub representative or resource person to this project.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Attendance at this Symposium will assist me to communicate to others the actions to be undertaken in relation to this project.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Attendance at this Symposium will assist me to support others to undertake the actions decided upon in relation to this project.	1 2 3 4 5
5. During the Symposium there were sufficient opportunities for audience participation.	1 2 3 4 5
6. During the Symposium I was encouraged to reflect on &/or plan for my own participation in this project.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Following the Symposium I feel more prepared for my role within this project.	1 2 3 4 5
8. Overall, how would you rate the venue and catering for this Symposium?	1= very poor 1 2 3 4 5 5 = outstanding
9. In this Symposium, what did you find <u>most</u> helpful?	
10. In this Symposium, what did you find <u>least</u> helpful?	
11. Reflecting on the discussions at the Symposium today, what do you perceive to be your greatest challenge in relation to this project?	
12. Reflecting on the discussions at the Symposium today what do you perceive to be the strengths of this project?	

13. What further information or resources do you think would be useful to provide to Symposium attendees?

14. What suggestions do you have for improving this style of Symposium in the future?

Thank you for your feedback

Appendix 5

QOTFC Project: Engaging the Clinicians: Occupational Therapists Promoting Fieldwork.

Sustainability Survey

Name:

Date Completed:

The QOTFC Project aimed to achieve the following:

1. Promote engagement with a shared vision for the future of occupational therapy (OT) fieldwork.
2. Promote awareness of proactive OT responses to support fieldwork.
3. Continue to develop ownership in collaborative problem solving of fieldwork issues.
4. Engage early adopters in project planning for positive change
5. Develop and implement plans for increasing involvement and action of OT's across the state.
6. Generate additional fieldwork placements across government and non-government employers.
7. Actively progress alternative models of fieldwork placements for OT students.

This survey aims to gather your opinion on the sustainability of this projects outcomes.

Please read **each statement** carefully, then circle one of the numbers on the right, where:
1 = Strongly Disagree, **2** = Disagree, **3** = Undecided, **4** = Agree, **5** = Strongly Agree

1. The project has shown itself to be effective. The outcomes are visible and acknowledged.	1 2 3 4 5
2. The aims of the project have been integrated with other activities of your Hub/organisation.	1 2 3 4 5
3. The outcomes of the project have been integrated with other activities of your Hub/organisation.	1 2 3 4 5
4. There a favourable Hub environment for the aims and outcomes of this project to be achieved and supported beyond the project end date.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Should the aims or outcomes of this project be at risk there is a base of support in the OT community to continue to advocate for sustainable fieldwork opportunities for occupational therapy students.	1 2 3 4 5
6. My Hub members were well supported by the Project Officer.	1 2 3 4 5
7. The number of fieldwork placements being offered in my Hub area/organisation/speciality area has increased since the project commenced.	1 2 3 4 5
8. The range of options for placement/clinical experiences being offered has increased in my Hub area/organisation/speciality area since the project commenced.	1 2 3 4 5
9. The OT community in my Hub area/speciality area have increased ownership of fieldwork as a shared professional responsibility.	1 2 3 4 5
10. Alternative models of fieldwork have been trialled in my Hub area.	1 2 3 4 5

11. Useful resources have been developed/provided to my organisation/Hub area to assist with fieldwork supervision since the project commenced.	1	2	3	4	5
12. The QOTFC Supervisors Toolkit has been a useful resource for my Hub area members.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 6

QOTFC Project: Engaging the Clinicians: Occupational Therapists Promoting Fieldwork.

Structured Interview Questions for Hub Champions **Telephone Survey**

Initial questions will gather some more general information regarding Hub and Hub Champion.

1. Where is your Hub located?
 Major metropolitan area
 A regional area or
 A remote area.
2. Can you very briefly describe your Hub and its members?
3. In your opinion what have been the main issues impacting on the Hub membership and activities in the last 12 months?
4. Can you tell me about the type of support you have had from the QOTFC Project Officer over the last 12 months.
Do you any comments you would like to make in relation to this support

Comments

5. Can you now make a general comment about how you have found the experience of being involved in this project as a Hub Champion?

Strengths:

Issues/Concerns:

6. Now let's look at the aims of the project.

The QOTFC Project aimed to achieve the following:

- Promote engagement with a shared vision for the future of occupational therapy (OT) fieldwork.

Do you think this was achieved in your Hub area?

By the project overall?

Promote awareness of proactive OT responses to support fieldwork.

Do you think this was achieved in your Hub area?

By the project overall?

Continue to develop ownership in collaborative problem solving of fieldwork issues.

Do you think this was achieved in your Hub area?

By the project overall?

Engage early adopters in project planning for positive change

Do you think this was achieved in your Hub area?

By the project overall?

Develop and implement plans for increasing involvement and action of OT's across the state.

Do you think this was achieved in your Hub area?

By the project overall?

Generate additional fieldwork placements across government and non-government employers.

Do you think this was achieved in your Hub area?

By the project overall?

Actively progress alternative models of fieldwork placements for OT students.

Do you think this was achieved in your Hub area?

By the project overall?

7. In preparation for the Symposium in October 2006 your Hub prepared a report on the enablers and barriers to the provision of OT student FW placements. Have any of these changed in the last 12 months.

Barriers

Enablers

8. At the Symposium in October 2006 or just after you developed a range of goals and objectives as well as a proposed action plan for your Hub.

Can you comment on what goals or actions your Hub has achieved since the Symposium?

9. What further support do you believe your Hub requires to provide sustainable FW opportunities for occupational therapy students?

10. Do you have any specific concerns for the ongoing sustainability of your Hub?

Details of concerns:

11. What other feedback on this project would you like to give to the QOTFC?

Further Comments:

Thank you- time and effort very much appreciated