Needs assessment
IRELAND

Needs Analysis School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin

1) **Overview of Needs Assessment and partners involved:**

As part of the HEAL Erasmus + Project the School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin were tasked with carrying out a **Needs Analysis** with Focus Groups in October 2022. This was in line with the **Needs Analysis** guide that was received on the 19th of June 2022 from the partners of the Heal Erasmus + Project.

The scheduling of the needs analysis focus groups was arranged following a Data Protection Risk Assessment by staff in the school of nursing and midwifery (TCD). The focus groups were structured, and due process carried out to maintain project protocol ensuring consistency across the six European partners. A gatekeeper was appointed to distribute a recruitment email to nursing, and medicine participants outlining the objectives of the project to include the following: what was involved in participation; duration of the focus groups, confidentiality, and anonymity; place, time, date, and moderator's contact details. Participants volunteered by return email to the gatekeeper. Where possible, students were selected for participation to ensure a diversity of ages and year of study. Selected participants were contacted by email which informed them: of the time and date of the focus group; stating that focus group will be audio-recorded, that their participation is voluntary, confidential, and anonymous. All participants were required to sign an informed consent form in advance of the start of the focus group.

The Data Controller for this study is Trinity College Dublin with Prof Fintan Sheerin/ Freda Neill/ Cathy Roets as Principal Investigators. The focus group audio recordings were transcribed by Freda Neill and Cathy Roets. The IT system utilised are secure systems of Trinity College Dublin. Any electronic document containing contact details or acting as a key to identifying those who supplied data was password protected. Any paper documents such as consent forms were kept in a locked filing cabinet within a locked room in an alarmed building.

Scoil an Altranais agus an Chnáimhseachais
Dámh na nEolaíochtaí Sláinte,
Coláiste na Tríonóide,
Baile Átha Cliath,
Ollscoil Átha Cliath,
24 Sráid D'Olier.
Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire.

School of Nursing and Midwifery
Faculty of Health Sciences,
Trinity College Dublin,
The University of Dublin,
24 D'Olier Street,
Dublin 2, Ireland.

+353 1 8962692
nursing.midwifery@tcd.ie
nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie

Once the recruitment process had begun, the project team were able to source participants from the reporting University clinical skills staff; staff from one of the partner hospitals work placement area, and nursing students from two disciplines of Nursing. Unfortunately, no medical students came forward for the focus groups.

2) Methods used to Gather Information:

Once the focus group dates and times were decided upon, an appropriate venue chosen, three different focus groups took place with the three categories of participants, namely, the reporting University clinical skills staff; staff from one of the partner hospitals that work placement takes place in and Nursing students from two disciplines of Nursing. The methods used to gather the information was a secure recording device authorised by data collection protocols for TCD. Once an audio file was created, it was uploaded to the reporting university server and this file was password protected. That password protected file was sent via email to the data processor and was erased once the transcription has been completed and anonymised and checked by the PI. This involved replacement of all names with a pseudonym and retraction of any other identifying details.

3) Description of the Participants:

The participants were from three categories.

The first group was the reporting university clinical nurse tutors. This group of participants role within the university is to teach undergraduate student nurses and post graduate students as required, in classroom, skills laboratory and work placement settings and to assist in examining those subjects taught. There were 9 participants that fell into this category.

The second group was staff from one of the partner hospitals that work placement takes place in. These staff are involved in the mentoring of the students within the hospital that work placement takes place in. There were 3 participants that fell into this category.

Scoil an Altranais agus an Chnáimhseachais
Dámh na nEolaíochtaí Sláinte,
Coláiste na Tríonóide,
Baile Átha Cliath,
Ollscoil Átha Cliath,
24 Sráid D'Olier.
Baile Átha Cliath 2, Éire.

School of Nursing and Midwifery
Faculty of Health Sciences,
Trinity College Dublin,
The University of Dublin,
24 D'Olier Street,
Dublin 2, Ireland.

+353 1 8962692
nursing.midwifery@tcd.ie
nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie

2

The third group was the student category which consisted of nursing students who came from two disciplines of nursing. There were mature students as well as direct entry students who took part in the focus group. There were 10 participants in this group.

4) Strengths and Limitations of the Needs Assessment:

The participation from all three focus groups were engaging and everyone who participated in them involved themselves in the discussions. The open-ended questions on the needs analysis guide maintained a standard approach to eliciting information from the discussions in the Focus Groups.

Time was a limiting factor as we could not spend more that an hour and a half on each focus group due to additional commitments from the focus group participants. There was also a delay in starting the focus groups due to concerns raised with TCD specific GDPR regulations that required adherence to from this reporting site. If time was not a limiting factor, there may have been more uptake from the School of Medicine TCD.

5) Key Findings:

What was interesting is that all key findings were very similar between the three groups with very similar themes. These themes were as follows:

- Systems and structures in place
- Learning outcomes from the practice areas
- Role conflicts
- Student skill acquisition
- Student expectation of work placements
- Simulation activity in the work placement
- Simulation activity in the university
- Online learning activity
- Virtual Reality
- Encouraging and supportive learning environment in the work placement

- Further development of simulation in the university.

6) Recommendations

When reviewing the transcripts of the focus groups the following recommendations were surmised from a Discipline of Nursing perspective:

- Concise learning outcomes to be agreed for the work placements.
- Adherence to National and or International Standards for support roles for students in the work practice environment.
- Need to establish clear information pathways for mentor and students regarding the theory and practice gap for work placements.
- Develop more student appropriate simulation activity in the work placement.
- Replacement of some specialist work placements with simulation and online activity in the University.
- Online learning activity needs to be more bespoke for students learning.
- National and International review of professional bodies standards (Nursing and Midwifery) for current work placement.