

Resources for Fieldwork Education

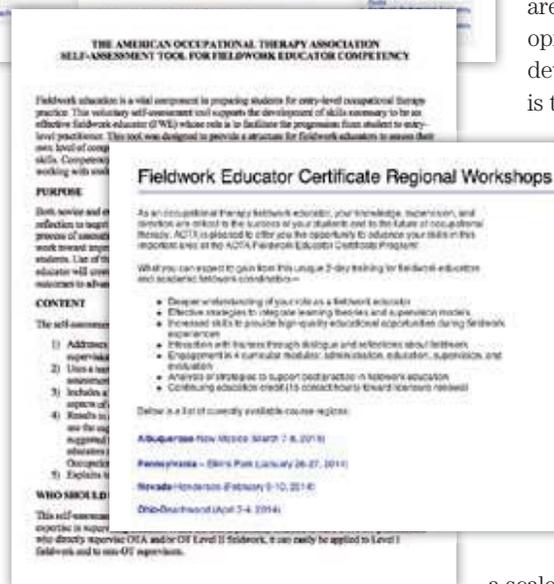
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Have you ever struggled as a fieldwork educator, student, or academic fieldwork coordinator to locate resources to fulfill your fieldwork education responsibilities? In this article, we will highlight some national and international resources that will help you get off to a fresh start in the new year. Rather than reinventing the wheel when it comes to fieldwork education, check out the following resources.

COE GUIDELINES FOR AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE—LEVEL II

Are you looking for a document that provides overall guidelines for Level II fieldwork for the occupational therapy (OT) and occupational therapy assistant (OTA) student? Specific guidelines developed by the American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA's) Commission on Education (COE) provide a comprehensive picture to help you establish or evaluate an existing Level II fieldwork program. Initiated in 1985, this document has undergone several revisions, most recently in 2012. The first section provides broad guidelines pertinent to the ideal characteristics of a Level II fieldwork site, expectations of students, fieldwork educator preparation, and fieldwork models. Section II addresses the development of fieldwork sites and includes recommended steps to follow for both the academic fieldwork coordinator and the fieldwork educator. Ideas to support collaboration between the OT or OTA program and the fieldwork site are provided, as are specific guidelines for various situations regarding student



SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR FIELDWORK EDUCATOR COMPETENCY

Whether you are presently a fieldwork educator or contemplating the role, you may find the Self-Assessment for Fieldwork Educator Competency (SAFEcom) to be a helpful tool. It was designed to help OT and OTA fieldwork educators evaluate their degree of competency in supervising students, while also identifying areas for enhancement and development of necessary skills. It was developed in 2009 by the COE. It is targeted for Level II supervisors

but can be adapted for Level I. Five main areas of competency are identified: professional practice, education, supervision, evaluation (as it relates to student performance), and administration (as it relates to the fieldwork experience). Each of these five areas contains various behavioral descriptors, and the educator is asked to rate him- or herself on

a scale of 1 to 5 (from low to high proficiency). The form concludes with a fieldwork educator professional development plan, in which the fieldwork educator can identify goals to enhance supervisory skills. As with any intervention plan, goals must be measurable, and for each goal there are methods identified to achieve them, along with target completion dates. This form is available at <http://tinyurl.com/kgx4vtw>.

AOTA FIELDWORK EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE WORKSHOPS

A 2-day AOTA Fieldwork Educator Certificate Workshop will give you the opportunity to systematically self-evaluate and build your skills for fieldwork

supervision. Section III discusses student involvement in the fieldwork experience. Strategies are identified to enhance student engagement and learning while addressing possible challenges. The final section addresses evaluating the effectiveness of the fieldwork experience and resources to support fieldwork site evaluation and refinement. There are embedded links to various other helpful fieldwork resources located throughout the COE Guidelines statement. This document and other helpful AOTA fieldwork education resources may be found at www.aota.org/education-careers/educators/fieldwork.

education. The workshop has four areas of focus: administration, education, supervision, and evaluation. Participants have opportunities to reflect, collaborate, and dialogue with one another and the trainers regarding best practices in fieldwork education. These workshops are offered throughout the country at discounted rates to AOTA members. Fifteen contact hours of continuing education credit and certificates are awarded to participants.

See more at <http://tinyurl.com/m5wlpyq>.

PRECEPTOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

If you are unable to attend a fieldwork educator certificate workshop, the online Preceptor Education Program will provide you with generic training for the fieldwork educator role. Developed based on a survey of 600 clinicians, students, and academic faculty in Ontario, Canada, the website contains seven learning modules that can be used by any health care discipline. Each module takes about 30 minutes to complete and is printer friendly. The module topics include (1) welcoming the student, plus rules and expectations; (2) developing useful learning objectives; (3) giving and receiving informal feedback; (4) understanding and fostering clinical reasoning; (5) fostering reflective practice; (6) dealing with conflict; and (7) understanding the formal evaluation process. Additional tips, websites, and articles are provided on each topic to further learning. A certificate of completion is available for downloading after completion of each module. Access this resource at www.preceptor.ca.

QUEENSLAND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FIELDWORK COLLABORATIVE WEBSITE

The Queensland Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Collaborative (QOTFC) was formed in 2004, when three universities promoting occupational therapy training formed a cooperative with occupational therapy professional bodies and major employers to promote fieldwork education in Queensland, Australia. Members of the cooperative collected data from fieldwork educators throughout Queensland regarding their perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks to working with students and desired resources for doing so, and they created the QOTFC website to address their stated needs. The website contains



four modules, two of which are particularly appropriate for universal application by fieldwork educators, academic fieldwork coordinators, and students. The first module, "QOTFC and Occupational Therapy Clinical Education," contains fact sheets and resources to support occupational therapists contemplating fieldwork placement. These include printable documents listing the broad benefits of fieldwork supervision based on research, specific benefits of fieldwork for the individual fieldwork educator, a placement framework grid providing examples of a pre-placement orientation process, and suggestions for writing learning objectives and weekly activity schedules. The overall goal of this module is to help fieldwork educators get past mental road blocks to working with students.

The second module of interest, the "Clinical Educator Resource Kit," is designed to be used by a practitioner who is actively pursuing setting up a fieldwork placement. It contains detailed and comprehensive information on topics such as pre-placement considerations, set up and maintenance of a fieldwork site, approaches to clinical education, the feedback and evaluation process, and active strategies for working with students exper-

riencing difficulty. It also contains a range of helpful documents, worksheets, and resource templates. This is a "must see" website for the active fieldwork educator, due to the many resources available to address common fieldwork needs. It can be accessed at www.qotfc.edu.au.

THE FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE ASSESSMENT TOOL

The Fieldwork Experience Assessment Tool (FEAT) is a tool you can use to enhance the learning experiences of students you are actively supervising during Level II fieldwork. It was designed to help fieldwork educators and students explore factors that support or take away from the learning experience. It was initially designed in 1998 by a special fieldwork research team funded by the American Occupational Therapy Foundation and AOTA Education Special Interest Section and was revised in 2001. The FEAT can be completed by both the student and the educator at any point throughout the experience, but it is commonly used at midterm or when a problem has been identified. The form evaluates three key components of the fieldwork experience: environment (variety of experiences and resources), fieldwork educator (attitude, teaching strategies, and professional attributes), and student (attitude and learning behaviors). The educator and student are asked to provide ratings ("limited," "just right," "challenging," or "excessive") for each item within the key component areas. When the ratings are done, there is an opportunity to discuss the common and different perspectives of the educator and the student. At this point, a list of strategies or changes can be brainstormed that will hopefully promote a successful fieldwork experience. This tool can be obtained at <http://tinyurl.com/m8an65a>. ■

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