

‘A step closer’: the student buddy system implemented in Central Queensland

Martin, P. & Tyack, Z. (2012). A Queensland example of the student buddy system: ‘A step closer’ – the student buddy system implemented in Central Queensland. SARRAH conference presentation, 2012.

Martin & Tyack (2012) implemented a Student Buddy System in Central Queensland. Occupational therapy students completing their placements in an inner regional area (Rockhampton) were paired with students completing their placement in outer regional or remote areas (Gladstone, Emerald, Biloela and Longreach). Students were encouraged to contact their buddy on a needs basis for support (both placement and out-of-placement issues).

Methods of contact:

- Email
- Landline
- Videoconference
- Social Media
- Mobile (outside of work time)
- Face to face meeting

Advantages:

- Decreased students’ feeling of isolation
- Increased the amount of support that students received
- Decreased the amount of support required from the Clinical Educator

Barriers:

- Difficulties with access (mobile coverage, access to internet)
- Time constraints
- Matching students

Overall:

The student buddy system was a positive experience. By increasing the amount of peer support students were able to overcome some of the issues associated with a going on a placement in a rural and remote location.