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Clinical Educator Expectations on Student Preparedness in Level II Fieldwork.

Clinical educators provide essential feedback and support to aid occupational therapy students in developing technical and professional skills. The Level II Fieldwork experience is a crucial part of advancement from occupational therapy student to an active licensed therapist amongst other health care professionals. It allows students the opportunity to develop competency by demonstrating appropriate clinical and professional skills under the direction of a qualified occupational therapy practitioner (ACOTE, 2013). The purpose of this research is to explore the expectations of Level II Fieldwork educators on occupational therapy students' professional and technical skills. This study utilized a mixed-method survey design which was disseminated to approximately 150 SUNY Downstate affiliated clinical educators via email. The top 5 technical skills that educators deemed very important in the physical disability setting claimed that students were only moderately prepared. The top 5 professional skills that educators in the pediatrics settings deemed to be important claimed students were well prepared. The major themes gathered through the qualitative data between physical disabilities and pediatric settings expressed the following professional and technical skills that needed improvement; time management, taking initiative, professional behavior, applying theoretical and textbook knowledge to realistic clinical practice, administering of assessments and treatment planning. The survey results and analysis can potentially help close the gap between academic programs and fieldwork educators' expectations to create more effective curriculums and further prepare Level II Fieldwork students to be competent professionals in the field. Further studies should look into comparing the level of importance and preparedness in technical and professional skills in both settings to establish a more specific area of focus that the curriculum is lacking.

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