

**Title of the study:**

Person-centred care, placement anxiety and clinical self-efficacy in speech-language pathology and audiology students

**Introduction:**

This study was completed by a team at The University of Queensland, University of the Sunshine Coast and Flinders University.

When considering working with real patients on a clinical placement, 76% of final-year speech-language pathology students reported moderate to severe levels of anxiety about the impending task (Shorland et al., 2018). Students experiencing anxiety have fewer cognitive resources available to attend to the material they need to learn (Eysenck, 1979; Jakobsen et al., 2019; Wolf, 2016). Moreover, if the prospect of a task evokes strong negative emotions from a student, the student is less likely to expect their own success and more likely to engage in avoidant behaviours (Bandura, 1977). When this occurs, the student can be said to have low clinical self-efficacy.

This project comprises two studies. The first will be a scoping study to determine the degree and extent of clinical self-efficacy and placement anxiety in commencing audiology and speech pathology students, thus extending work with final-year students by Shorland et al. (2018). It will be an online and paper-based questionnaire completed by any willing and eligible students enrolled in their first year of a Master of Audiology Studies, Bachelor of Speech Pathology (Honours), or Master of Speech Pathology Studies program

The second study is a mixed method study in which students who have participated in Study 1 will be invited to participate in a workshop to watch and discuss ethnographic videos about clinical communication and PCC strategies. Workshops will be audio-recorded and thematically analysed, and participants will complete questionnaires about clinical self-efficacy and placement anxiety, which will be quantitatively analysed.

Study 1 Aim:

- To determine the degree and extent of clinical self-efficacy and placement anxiety in commencing audiology and speech pathology students.

Study 2 Aim:

- To determine the effect of watching and discussing ethnographic videos addressing clinical practice and PCC on speech-language pathology and audiology students' clinical self-efficacy and anxiety regarding client interactions.

**Method:**

For both studies, participants will be commencing speech pathology and audiology students with no previous experience in clinical settings.

Study 1:

Participants will complete an online or paper-based questionnaire addressing demographic details, clinical self-efficacy and placement anxiety.

Study 2:

Participants (n = 100) will complete a questionnaire at three time points; before, during and after a workshop, measuring changes to their clinical self-efficacy and placement anxiety. The workshop will involve watching clinical education videos and discussing the content. These sessions will be audio-recorded and the

transcripts thematically analysed. Participants will have the option of completing a private, one-on-one interview to capture any experiences the participants did not wish to discuss in groups. Transcripts from these interviews will also be thematically analysed.

### **Key Findings:**

#### Study 1:

- Rates of clinical self-efficacy were slightly lower than previous studies have shown, which may be a result of our sample being recruited in the first month of their studies, where previous work may have recruited students who were more established in their programs.

#### Study 2:

- Self-efficacy increased significantly from the first questionnaire in the workshop to the final questionnaire, in all five areas of practice (emotional support, session management, insight, exploration and action).
- Confidence significantly increased and anxiety decreased over the session
- At the end of the workshop, students anticipated more positive affect and less negative affect when going into a placement, compared to their scores at the start of the workshop.

### **Conclusion:**

Participatory workshops provide a valuable setting for students to observe clinicians who are themselves learning new skills. Exposure to experienced clinicians reflecting on the process of professional development and learning new clinical ideas gives students an opportunity to bridge their current level of knowledge to that of their future selves, in which they engage in career-long learning. Placing greater emphasis on reducing anxiety in clinical education settings will ensure students are well positioned to integrate feedback and practice acquiring strong clinical capabilities. Additional research is required to determine the degree to which the changes observed in this study may last, and further whether such gains occur via standard educational practice.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **Images/figures**

Figure 1: Students reported significantly higher self-efficacy in all five subscales over the course of the workshop.

Figure 2: Students anticipated more positive affect and less negative affect when going into a placement, compared to their scores at the start of the workshop.

#### **About the author(s)**

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Dr Tulloch is an interprofessional educator and researcher. She works from a strengths-based perspective in the areas of older people's wellbeing and person-centred care.
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Dr Lind's major research interests include conversation repair and acquired hearing impairment, as well as psychosocial aspects of adult hearing impairment. He is on editorial board for the International Journal of Audiology and the International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology.