Let’s speak about spokes
(Information for those supporting University of York Pre-registration nursing students)

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Why do students have ‘spoke’ experiences?
The Base and Spoke model of practice experience is in use in the University of York where a student is allocated to a base practice placement which could be in hospital, community, private or independent healthcare or in a voluntary organisation. Through negotiation with their mentor, the student will request to access ‘spoke’ experiences related to patient/client care, within the base practice area, that will expand their learning across fields in order to promote flexible high-quality and compassionate working practice. The spoke experience ‘adds value’ to the existing learning opportunities in the base practice area to enable a student to achieve generic and field specific learning outcomes in order to gain a wider understanding of health and social care needs.

Important changes to ‘spoke’ experiences
1st April 2013 brought the nationwide introduction of a placement payment called Non-Medical Education and Training Tariff (Tariff for short) to organisations providing practice placements for nursing and other pre-registration students commissioned by the NHS.

This required a change in legal agreements already held by individual NHS Trusts and the introduction of new agreements between any independent placement organisations and the University of York. These agreements outline insurance, financial and quality arrangements. In some circumstances this new system has reduced flexibility of student movement between placement provider organisations across the region.

From April 2015 this payment system is fully operational across the whole region and whilst this is not an issue in an allocated base placement it has implications for the payment of tariff fees if spokes ‘cross’ organisations.

For this reason the following rules apply with immediate effect.

- **Students should not access spokes out with the North Yorkshire practice experience circuit used by the University of York.**
- If a spoke is **within** the same organisation/Trust as the base practice experience the student can access this experience for a **2 weeks maximum**. Spoke supervisors should only agree to a spoke if it has no impact on their ongoing student capacity.
- If a spoke is **within** the North Yorkshire audited practice experience circuit used by the University of York but is in a different organisation/Trust than the base practice experience the student can only access this experience for **2 days maximum**. The organisation hosting the spoke experience should be made aware that tariff payment will continue to be paid to the base practice experience only. Spoke supervisors should only agree to a spoke if it has no impact on their ongoing student capacity.

However, it is recognised that a number of base placements are either in organisations or in geographical locations which would severely restrict the student’s ability to undertake relevant spoke activities if they could only visit an outside organisation for 2 days within a 12-16 week placement.

See over for examples.
Examples of this include:

- **Base placement:** Health Visitor Team in Scarborough (managed by Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust)

- **2 day spoke in week 5:** Woodlands Ward at Scarborough Hospital (managed by York Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)

- **1 day spoke in week 10:** Theatres at Scarborough Hospital (managed by York Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)

- **2 day spoke in Week 12:** District Nursing Team at Filey Surgery (managed by York Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)

The above spoke activities take place in different settings with different teams and therefore have no on-going requirement for supervision (the mentor in the base placement retains full responsibility for mentorship of the student which is why tariff is due solely to the base organisation). There is also the understanding that across the organisations in the North Yorkshire area, there are highly likely to be students attending spoke experiences in the opposite direction (in this example students with the D/N team at Filey may well visit the H/V team in Scarborough for a spoke experience).

**So what’s the Role of the Spoke Supervisor?**

It is a very valuable one!

The students who come to a spoke experience must be consistently and appropriately supervised while they are in the spoke area. Prior to attending a ‘spoke’ the student and their mentor must contact the Spoke Supervisor and through negotiation identify the type of experience, learning outcomes and length of time the student will spend in the spoke.

In the students electronic ongoing achievement record (PebblePad) there is a spoke workbook where the student documents their learning outcomes and experiences as well as complete a reflection on their learning while in the spoke area.

The student sends the Spoke Supervisor a link to a copy of their spoke handbook to the Spoke Supervisor’s work e-mail address. Clicking on this link opens a page with Spoke Supervisor Instruction on how to make a comment.

While within the spoke there is no summative assessment of the student’s performance, it is the Spoke Supervisor’s responsibility to give feedback and provide evidence of:

- attendance
- learning outcomes achieved
- level of performance related to the negotiated learning outcomes.

To add a comment click on the speech bubbles tab on the right side of the page then click on ![Add comment](image)

A box will open up for the Spoke Supervisor to write in. Once comment is made click on ![Save](image).

This will save comments in the workbook which the student, their mentor at the base placement and their personal supervisor at the University can view.

If the Spoke Supervisor has any concerns about the student’s performance, conduct or behaviour during their spoke experience, they should contact the student’s primary mentor directly in addition to documenting this in the record of spoke experience.

For more information:


Contact the e-portfolio learning and support team on: 01904 321650 or visit http://www.york.ac.uk/healthsciences/practice-ed-support/pebblepad/.