ASCILITE 2023

People, Partnerships and Pedagogies

Adopting self-directed learning principles in clinical education with Pebblepad

Aslihan Mccarthy, Clare McNally, Denise Bailey and Matt White
The University of Melbourne

Self-directed learning (SDL), alternatively known as self-regulated learning (SRL), is an umbrella term that can be broadly defined as the learner's ability to make plans according to their individual needs and use learning resources and methods to master a knowledge or necessary skills (Van der Walt, 2016; Russell et al. 2022). It is a systematic control of motivation and tightly linked to self-awareness, agency, and the sense of being in control of the learning process (Russell et al. 2022). Despite ever increasing reference to SDL in health professions education, it is not well-studied in clinical settings (Lui & Sullivan 2021, Murad et al. 2010, Yeo and Jang 2023). In 2021-2022 we adopted some of the main principles of the SDL approach, namely goal setting, self-monitoring, self-reflection, self-evaluation, to clinical education in Bachelor of Oral Health and Doctor of Dentistry programs at the University of Melbourne by utilising a digital e-portfolio platform, Pebblepad. In this presentation, we will walk you through the iterative design process of digital clinical assessment forms. This process allowed us to refine our materials and strategies in consultation with our students, teaching and learning staff and clinical supervisors as we go. We supported our students to a) identify gaps in application of their clinical knowledge via learning analytics dashboards, b) generate goals for improvement through structured reflection and c) assess their practice through self-evaluation rubrics. We are still improving our concept to foster SDL in our programs. We take this opportunity to reflect on what went well as opposed to areas for improvement, and demonstrate the power of using different digital tools in clinical education settings. We believe "thinking outside the box" can help students become self-directed learners through collaboration, continuous improvement, and flexibility.

Keywords: Self-Directed Learning, Clinical Education, Pebblepad

References

Chen, Z., Ma, Y., Feng, X., & Lin, Y. (2023). Correlation analysis of self-directed learning ability, self-efficacy and academic burnout of junior nursing college students in closed management colleges. Nursing Open, 10(4), 2508–2518. https://doi.org/10.1002/nop2.1509

Liu, TH. & Sullivan, A.M. (2021). A story half told: a qualitative study of medical students' self-directed learning in the clinical setting. BMC Medical Education, 21(494). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-021-02913-3

Murad, M. H., Coto-Yglesias, F., Varkey, P., Prokop, L. J., & Murad, A. L. (2010). The effectiveness of self-directed learning in health professions education: a systematic review. Medical Education, 44(11), 1057–1068. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2923.2010.03750.x

Russell, J. M., Baik, C., Ryan, A. T., & Molloy, E. (2022). Fostering self-regulated learning in higher education: Making self-regulation visible. Active Learning in Higher Education, 23(2), 97–113. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787420982378

Yeo, J., & Jang, M. S. (2023). Nursing students' self-directed learning experiences in web-based virtual simulation: A qualitative study. Japan Journal of Nursing Science, 20(2), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1111/jjns.12514

Van der Walt, H. (2016). The feasibility of grafting self-directed learning theory onto capability theory. In E. Mentz & I. Oosthuizen (Eds.), Self-directed learning research AOSIS, Cape Town (pp. 1-34). https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2016.sdlr14.01

Note: All published papers are refereed, having undergone a double-blind peer-review process.