**Difficulties and suggested strategies for helping dyslexic students on placement**

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| **Difficulty** | **Strategies for supervisors** |
| Memory difficulties | * Do not give too many instructions at once particularly if they are only given verbally * Give instructions in both verbal and written where possible * Explain tasks more than once at the beginning of a supervisory session and additional time. * Give lots of opportunities for observation of self and other staff with patients in the first few days * Encourage reflection |
| Difficulty with writing and spelling | * Allow extra time for note writing * Allow students to write in rough before writing up * Help the student to summarise the main points that should be covered – using a mind map, spider diagram or flow chart may help * Provide templates for forms, letters or reports * Where possible use cream paper with a font that is easy to use ? arial & |
| Language | * Provide an audio tape of specific language, medical terms etc * Give clear oral instructions. Positive statements are important as some dyslexic people are not able to read between the lines or pick up on implied meaning * Be willing to repeat instructions or allow the student to have the confidence to ask questions * Encourage the student to repeat instructions back to you to ensure understanding |
| Documentation | * Arial font * Cream coloured paper |
| Difficulty in listening and writing at the same time | * Provision of handouts in advance |
| Difficulty with reading | * Provide opportunities to discuss reading * Allow extra time for reading. * Present the student with essential reading well in advance of meetings, highlighting important parts if appropriate * Any written information specifically produced for the students would benefit from being ‘dyslexia friendly’: write in a logical sequence; avoid small print; use bullet points in preference to sentences; use simple words, and space the information so it is not cramped; avoid overuse of jargon or uncommon words * Use colour and space on whiteboards to differentiate sections |
| Carrying out procedures | * If a task involves following a sequence, this could be set out clearly on a wall chart or instruction sheet. * Demonstrate skills more than once at the beginning of the placement * Supervise practice until the student is secure * Diagrams can help |
| Difficulty with numeracy | * Encourage use of calculator or other preferred learning aid * Supervise drug administration |
| Lack of confidence / low self-esteem | * Demonstrate understanding of difficulties experienced * Indicate what is in place to help |
| Has difficulty dealing with more than one thing at a time | * Avoid overloading with information * Encourage to make to do lists taking in to account priorities |
| Time management | * Suggest timescales * Check they have a watch |
| Other | * Provide a map of the hospital/building/unit * Provide a placement pack setting out useful information |

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| **Difficulty** | **Strategies for students** |
| Memory difficulties | * Use a diary to note daily tasks agreed with supervisor * Use colour pens, highlighters, flow charts to organise and prioritise work * Use a personal note pad or electronic diary * Create a flow chart on a small card as a memory aid * Repeat tasks back to check full understanding * Request small chunks of information at a time * Ask for practical skills to be demonstrated * Devise some prompt sheets to help with sequencing tasks * Have appropriate telephone pads available for taking messages with as much information filled out beforehand |
| Difficulty with writing and spelling | * Be familiar with the layout of forms. Take one home to familiarise yourself with the layout * Use a recording device to record ideas if possible whilst maintaining cpatient confidentiality * Keep a record of common words and those specific to the placement specialty * Devise effective checking procedures and proofreading skills. * Use laptop or PC for writing case notes (if available) |
| Language | * Build a list of words that are frequently used in the area * Ask for clarification if you are not sure of the terminology * Use specialised reference books such as ‘Mosby’s Medical Drug Reference’ which gives the pronunciation of words |
| Documentation of forms | * Spell check pens * Bullet points to minimise punctuation * Double check work * Write notes early as you go along * List of terminology commonly used |
| Difficulty in listening and writing at the same time | * Dictaphone when appropriate |
| Difficulty with reading  Difficulty with reading (cont) | * Use coloured overlays * Ask for or initiate opportunities to discuss reading * Ask for extra time for reading. * Ask for essential reading in advance of placement, meetings, etc highlighting important parts if appropriate * Work in a quiet area * Read small amounts at a time * Take regular breaks |
| Carrying out procedures | * Ask for extra time to practice skills you are unfamiliar with * Write the sequence down in the form of a spider diagram or flow chart |
| Difficulty with left /right confusion | * Mark hands left and right * Use maps of hospital/building/unit * Right is the hand you write with (IF right handed) |
| Difficulty with numeracy | * Use calculator when appropriate * Ask for drugs t be checked |
| Lack of confidence / low self-esteem | * If this is related to dyslexia discuss with CE and see if there are stratgegies that are in place to support you. |
| Has difficulty dealing with more than one thing at a time | * Make ‘to do’list in priority order |
| Time management / organisational skills | * Have a watch * Observe and question others for ideas * Plan and prioritise workload using coloured highlighters, tick boxes, flow charts, lists * Break down complex tasks into manageable chunks and tick when completed |
| Other |  |