

ECONOMIC EVIDENCE CLEARINGHOUSE

WEIGHING THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY FIELDWORK PLACEMENTS



FIELDWORK PLACEMENTS¹:

- Clinical sites derive a mean weekly benefit of nearly \$400 (US)
- To recover costs, placements should be at least of 3 weeks duration; 6 weeks for first placements
- Having several experiences is important as it influences the net value of the investment
- Preparation for complex practice helps students take on more responsibilities quickly and thus ↑ cost benefits more quickly
- From a broader value-for-money perspective, OT program heads favoured fieldwork placements (FP) over simulated placements (SP):
 - mean \$/student = AUD\$144-\$1112 (FP) - AUD\$460-\$1511 (SP)

SIMULATED PLACEMENTS²:

- Short simulated fieldwork placements are as effective for student learning outcomes as traditional fieldwork placements but tend to cost more for the universities.
- Mean value of AUD\$472 saved in 3/9 rounds of simulated placements from university + public health sector perspectives.
- Can be an alternative when facing availability and opportunity challenges.



1. Gospodarevskaya, E., Carter, R., Imms, C., Yee Chu, E. M., Nicola-Richmond, K. M., Gribble, N., Froude, E., Guinea, S., Sheppard, L., Iezzi, A., & Chen, G. (2019). Economic evaluation of simulated and traditional clinical placements in occupational therapy education. *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, 66(3), 369-379. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1440-1630.12563>

2. Shalik, L. D. (1987). Cost-benefit analysis of level II fieldwork in occupational therapy. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 41(10), 638-645. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.41.10.638>