

"What did we learn from students reflective learning journals?"

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Early Community Contact Week (ECCW) is an experiential week in the Otago medical degree course. Second year medical students have a week of short attachments to a variety of health provider services and health professional and patients in the community. ECCW is very different to their usual, more didactic, early learning experiences. Our aim was to understand the medical student perspective on their learning in ECCW. Students were asked to keep reflective learning journals, rather than the more directive worksheets used in the past, to capture their learning. Ethical approval was obtained to analyse anonymous reflective journals, with individual student permission.

An unexpectedly large proportion of the class gave informed consent, resulting in a sizeable data set to analyse on student learning in this course . We were initially at a loss to know where to start to classify and interpret it all. The aspects of learning extended well beyond what we expected students to have gained.

We wish to discuss what we have learned from these student reflections, things that puzzled us, some of the unexpected insights, and ways we could extend and build upon this venture into student reflective learning.