

The background is a low-poly, geometric representation of a landscape. It features dark, jagged mountain peaks in the upper half and a body of water in the lower half, with a thin strip of land or vegetation in between. The colors are muted, consisting of various shades of blue, grey, and brown. The overall style is abstract and modern.

The professional development
needs of hospital teachers in
Ireland:

an exploratory case study

Context

There are two categories of hospital school operating in Ireland

1. Hospital schools attached to paediatric hospitals and/or wards
2. Child and Adolescent Mental Health residential services

The Case

Case study focus: Irish hospital schools attached to paediatric hospitals and/or wards in 2022

The case is bounded Geographically and Temporally

These hospital schools share very similar contexts and are grouped together by the Irish Department of Education

Methodology

1. Scoping Review of Literature
2. Questionnaire
3. Focus Groups

Literature Review

- The challenges experienced and skills required by Hospital Teachers
- Possibilities for the professional development of Hospital Teachers
- Current professional development provided to similar non-clinical professionals in paediatric settings

Literature Review

- 7 Academic Databases
- Articles published between 2011 and 2021
- 423 Articles found
- 36 identified after title and abstract screening
- 16 included in the study

Literature Review

The findings identified a number of themes or topics that should be considered when formulating any professional development opportunities for hospital teachers.

- Communication Skills
- Contextual Knowledge
- Emotional Intelligence and Self-care
- Digital Literacy and IT Skills

Research

- Invited all 21 teachers working across the 7 sites
- Questionnaire - 90% Response rate
- Consisted of a mix of open-ended free-response questions & closed quantifiable question styles
- Results were verified and enriched by a set of focus group sessions

Participants

- All participants had over 3 years teaching experience
- 74% teaching over 10 years
- 63% Hospital Teaching over 3 years
- 21% Hospital Teaching over 10 years

Questionnaire

Focus on two areas

- What professional development is needed when starting as a hospital teacher? And what is needed for experienced hospital teachers?
- Assign a priority and relevancy rank to a set of potential professional development topics

Findings

The following seven themes emerged from the Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis of the questionnaire

- Working in the Hospital Context
- Educational Needs of Specific Medical Conditions
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Training
- Teacher Self-Care and Staff Wellbeing
- Bereavement and Loss
- Communities of Practice
- Mental Health Needs

Priorities

Participants were asked to prioritise their professional development needs

1. Communication & Interpersonal skills
2. Teaching Additional Educational Needs
3. Emotional Intelligence
4. Knowledge of Specific Medical Conditions
5. Dealing with Bereavement and Loss

Practical Implications

Hospital teachers have a unique set of professional development needs

There is a clear need for

- targeted induction training
- continuous professional development



Thank you for listening

Any questions?

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