



## GM Synergy Peer Learning Key Principle

### **1.0 Introduction**

This report details the development of the evidence based Key Principle of Peer Learning for the relaunch of GM Synergy – Learning with and from each other . The literature presented below overwhelmingly demonstrates that Peer Learning can have a significantly positive affect upon students’ experience, particularly when they are on clinical placement but also within all learning environments. Using the findings from the literature, a SWOT analysis identifies important learning that must be integrated into the GM Synergy Peer Learning Key Principle, this includes co-design of variations of the model with key stakeholders, flexibility of the model to adapt to different environments and numbers of learners and ensuring that students, practice staff and academics are fully prepared to undertake peer learning within a coaching model. Furthermore, from the multitude of definitions included in the literature, a suggestion is made to articulate what Peer Learning means within the context of GM Synergy and drawing together the elements within this report, Table 5 forms the beginning of a GM Synergy framework for Peer Learning.

### **2.0 Literature Search**

A literature search was undertaken to discover the extent of health care student related peer learning research. Articles were critically selected for their relevance, availability and comparability to UK health programmes and clinical learning structures. Fourteen papers are presented below in a synthesis table (Table 1) and are available in full upon request.

**Table 1 Peer Learning Literature Synthesis**

Authors	Country	Methods	Sample	Model	Findings
Brannagan, K.B., Dellinger, A., Thomas, J., Mitchell, D., Lewis-Trabeaux, S. and Dupre, S., 2013. Impact of peer teaching on nursing students: perceptions of learning environment, self-efficacy, and knowledge. <i>Nurse education today</i> , 33(11), pp.1440-1447.	US	Mixed methods  quantitative intervention design and qualitative survey	230 nursing students  179 first year nursing students and 51 third year nursing students	<b>Clinical Skills Lab</b>  Two groups  1. received peer teaching plus faculty instruction (intervention group)  2. received faculty instruction only (control group).	Results indicated positive response from the peer tutors  No statistically significant differences for knowledge acquisition and self-efficacy beliefs between the intervention and control groups  Peer learning did not decrease anxiety or improve self-efficacy

<p>Christiansen, A. and Bell, A., 2010. Peer learning partnerships: exploring the experience of pre-registration nursing students. <i>Journal of Clinical Nursing</i>, 19(5-6), pp.803-810.</p>	<p>UK</p>	<p>An interpretive qualitative design.</p> <p>Focus group interviews</p>	<p>54 nursing students</p>	<p><b>Placement</b></p> <p>Peer learning partnerships facilitated by mentors in clinical practice</p>	<p>Peer learning partnerships can support first year students in their transition to nursing by helping to reduce anxiety often experienced by students in their first clinical placement reducing the factors that have an impact on attrition.</p> <p>Also, can help students gain confidence and readiness for mentorship and supervision</p>
<p>Christiansen, B., Bjørk, I.T., Havnes, A. and Hessevaagbakke, E., 2011. Developing supervision skills through peer learning</p>	<p>Norway</p>	<p>Exploratory qualitative video recording</p>	<p>Nursing Data collection was repeated in 2006 (23 students) 2007</p>	<p><b>Clinical Skills Lab</b></p> <p>peer learning partnerships: 3rd year students as tutors, and 1st</p>	<p>Enhanced practical skill learning in 1st year students</p> <p>Developed competence in supervision in third year students.</p>

partnership. <i>Nurse education in practice</i> , 11(2), pp.104-108.		focus group interviews	(26 students) and 2008 (26 students)	year students as tutees during practical skill learning.	
Goldsmith, M., Stewart, L. and Ferguson, L., 2006. Peer learning partnership: An innovative strategy to enhance skill acquisition in nursing students. <i>Nurse Education Today</i> , 26(2), pp.123-130.	Australia	Quantitative evaluation Questionnaire	Nursing 115 year 3 185 year 1	<b>Clinical Skills Lab</b>  Learning Partnerships Year 3 teaching skills to year 1 in skills lab	75% of first year students and 97% of third year students indicating a positive learning experience
Lynam, A.M., Corish, C. and Connolly, D., 2015. Development of a framework to facilitate a	Republic of Ireland	Pilot study	Dietetics	<b>Placement</b>  Collaborative peer learning 2 students	Practice educators require more practical information on the implementation of a 2:1 model, particularly the

collaborative peer learning 2: 1 model of practice placement education. <i>Nutrition &amp; Dietetics</i> , 72(2), pp.170-175.				to 1 educator (2:1 model).	facilitation of the peer feedback process.
Martin, M., Morris, J., Moore, A., Sadlo, G. and Crouch, V., 2004. Evaluating practice education models in occupational therapy: Comparing 1: 1, 2: 1 and 3: 1 placements. <i>British Journal of Occupational Therapy</i> , 67(5), pp.192-200.	UK	Qualitative Face-to-face semi-structured interviews	6 Occupational Therapy and 8 Physiotherapy students	<b>Placement</b>  Comparison of 1:1, 2:1 and 3:1 models of practice education	All three models provide valuable benefits for both the students and the educators. The 2:1 model appeared to be the most successful overall.  Peer support and peer learning a great advantage, students on the 1:1 placements missed this companionship.
McKenna, L. and French, J., 2011. A step ahead:	Australia	Mixed methods	105 year 3 and 112 year 1	<b>Clinical Skills Lab</b>	A mutually positive experience.

<p>Teaching undergraduate students to be peer teachers. <i>Nurse Education in Practice, 11(2)</i>, pp.141-145.</p>		<p>evaluation. Validated questionnaires and focus groups</p>	<p>nursing students  (8 year 3 in focus groups)</p>	<p>As part of the summative assessment, third (final) year students taught vital signs in first year skills laboratories.</p>	<p>Some first year students did report discrepancies between peer teachers had presented though this may be due to differing learning styles</p>
<p>Morris, J. and Stew, G., 2007. Collaborative reflection: how far do 2:1 models of learning in the practice setting promote peer reflection?. <i>Reflective Practice, 8(3)</i>, pp.419-432.</p>	<p>UK</p>	<p>qualitative approach.  Face to face semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews</p>	<p>13 educators and 18 third year physiotherapy students</p>	<p><b>Placement</b>  2:1 collaborative models of physiotherapy practice education</p>	<p>Practice educators required sufficient preparation and training to facilitate the model. Opportunities for reflection with their peer were increased</p>

<p>Pålsson, Y., Mårtensson, G., Swenne, C.L., Ädel, E. and Engström, M., 2017. A peer learning intervention for nursing students in clinical practice education: A quasi-experimental study. <i>Nurse Education Today</i>, 51, pp.81-87.</p>	<p>Sweden China</p>	<p>Quasi-experimental</p>	<p>70 nursing students</p>	<p><b>Placement</b></p> <p>Two groups</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Half traditional supervision &amp; half peer learning</li> <li>2. Traditional supervision only</li> </ol>	<p>Peer learning improves self-efficacy to a greater degree than traditional supervision methods</p>
<p>Ramm, D., Thomson, A. and Jackson, A., 2015. Learning clinical skills in the simulation suite: the lived experiences of student nurses involved in peer teaching and peer assessment. <i>Nurse</i></p>	<p>UK</p>	<p>Qualitative questionnaire</p>	<p>19 nursing students</p>	<p><b>Clinical Skills Lab</b></p> <p>Skills lab year 3 teaching year 1</p>	<p>Peer teaching is a valuable strategy for developing clinical skills and preparation for real-life scenarios</p>

<i>education today, 35(6), pp.823-827.</i>					
Roberts, D., 2008. Learning in clinical practice: the importance of peers. <i>Nursing Standard (through 2013), 23(12)</i> , p.35.	UK	Interpretive ethnographic qualitative research study	15 nursing	<b>Placement</b>  Participant observation in clinical practice	Friendships, peer support students stick together Create own community (of practice) Survival skills, demonstrate clinical skills to each other
Sevenhuysen, S.L., Nickson, W., Farlie, M.K., Raitman, L., Keating, J.L., Molloy, E., Skinner, E., Maloney, S. and Haines, T.P., 2013. The development of a peer assisted learning model for the clinical education of	Australia	Development of a peer assisted learning model	15 Physiotherapy clinical educators	<b>Placement</b>  Development of a peer assisted learning model by clinical educators for use in placements	Inclusion of the Clinical Educators in developing the model from the outset increased their buy in and confidence to facilitate the model in practice



physiotherapy students. <i>Journal of Peer Learning, 6(1), p.4.</i>					
Sevenhuysen, S., Farlie, M.K., Keating, J.L., Haines, T.P. and Molloy, E., 2015. Physiotherapy students and clinical educators perceive several ways in which incorporating peer-assisted learning could improve clinical placements: a qualitative study. <i>Journal of Physiotherapy, 61(2), pp.87-92.</i>	Australia	Qualitative study utilising focus groups.	24 physiotherapy students and 12 clinical educators	<b>Placement</b> Facilitated peer-assisted learning (PAL) activities compared to a traditional paired teaching approach	Benefits of Peer-assisted learning include; Reduction in the students' anxiety Enhances feelings of safety reduces educator burden  Builds professional skills including collaboration and feedback.  It is not a substitute for observation of the clinical educator, expert feedback and

					guidance, or hands-on learning activities.
Stenberg, M. and Carlson, E., 2015. Swedish student nurses' perception of peer learning as an educational model during clinical practice in a hospital setting—an evaluation study. <i>BMC nursing</i> , 14(1), p.48.	Sweden	Mixed methods questionnaire	62 (year one) and 73 (year three) student nurses.	<b>Placement</b> 2:1 model same educational level	Mainly beneficial to students but identifies some key negative aspects;  Students not feeling properly prepared to teach a fellow student  Students competing for the preceptor's attention and opportunities to perform nursing interventions  Students with different learning styles



### 3.0 SWOT Analysis of peer learning literature findings

Key findings from each of the papers above are included in a SWOT analysis (Table 2). This clearly identifies learning from each of the models studied which must in turn be included in the development of the GM Synergy Key Principle of Peer Learning.

**Table 2 SWOT Analysis**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<p>Results indicated positive response from the peer tutors</p> <p>Peer learning partnerships can support first year students in their transition to nursing by helping to reduce anxiety often experienced by students in their first clinical placement reducing the factors that have an impact on attrition.</p>	<p>No statistically significant differences for knowledge acquisition and self-efficacy beliefs between the intervention and control groups</p> <p>Peer learning did not decrease anxiety or improve self-efficacy</p>

<p>Also, can help students gain confidence and readiness for mentorship and supervision</p> <p>Enhanced practical skill learning in 1st year students</p> <p>Developed competence in supervision in third year students</p> <p>75% of first year students and 97% of third year students indicating a positive learning experience</p> <p>Peer support and peer learning a great advantage, students on the 1:1 placements missed this companionship.</p> <p>A mutually positive experience.</p> <p>Opportunities for reflection with their peer were increased</p> <p>Peer teaching is a valuable strategy for developing clinical skills and preparation for real-life scenarios</p>	<p>Practice educators require more practical information on the implementation of a 2:1 model, particularly the facilitation of the peer feedback process.</p> <p>Some first year students did report discrepancies between peer teachers had presented though this may be due to differing learning styles</p> <p>Practice educators required sufficient preparation and training to facilitate the model.</p> <p>Students not feeling properly prepared to teach a fellow student</p> <p>Students competing for the preceptor's attention and opportunities to perform nursing interventions</p> <p>Students with different learning styles</p>
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<p>Friendships, peer support students stick together Survival skills, demonstrate clinical skills to each other</p> <p>Reduction in the students' anxiety</p> <p>Enhances feelings of safety</p> <p>Reduces educator burden</p> <p>Builds professional skills including collaboration and feedback.</p>	
<p><b>Threats</b></p>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>
<p>It is not a substitute for observation of the clinical educator, expert feedback and guidance, or hands-on learning activities.</p>	<p>Inclusion of the Clinical Educators in developing the model from the outset increased their buy in and confidence to facilitate the model in practice</p>

	<p>All three models provide valuable benefits for both the students and the educators. The 2:1 model appeared to be the most successful overall.</p> <p>Peer learning improves self-efficacy to a greater degree than traditional supervision methods</p> <p>Create own community (of practice)</p>
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#### **4.0 Definitions of Peer Learning**

A range of differing concepts relating to “peers” appear in the literature surrounding health care students. Researchers have investigated the impact of “peer learning”, “peer teaching”, “peer support” and “peer mentoring” on students in clinical practice, and often the terms overlap. The term utilised in the literature search and therefore examined above however, is “Peer Learning.” The decision to specify this term was made due to the definitions found in the literature which demonstrate the comprehensive nature of peer learning.

**4.1** From the definitions in Table 3, a suggestion is made that GM Synergy Coaching Model Key Principle is “**Learning with and from each other,**” this phrase encapsulates the inclusivity of all stakeholders as learners.

**Table 3 Definitions of peer learning**

'Peer learning', construed as a 'two-way reciprocal learning activity' and should "involve the sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience" (Boud *et al.*, 2001),

Peer assisted learning is described as an umbrella term for a group of strategies that include cooperative learning, collaborative learning and peer coaching (Ladyshevsky 2000).

Peer learning in higher education involves students learning from and with each other in both a formal and informal way (Boud, 2001). Slavin (1990) emphasizes the life-long aspects of peer learning, particularly fostering skills or attributes such as: collaboration and teamwork, critical enquiry and reflection, communication skills and learning to learn.

'two or more students working collaboratively under the supervision and guidance of one primary instructor' (Rindfleisch et al 2009)

Peer learning is defined by Topping (1996) as "People from similar social groupings, who are not professional teachers, helping each other to learn and learning themselves by teaching" (p. 322).



Defined by Boud (2001, p. 4) as 'Students learning from and with each other in both formal and informal ways' and by Topping (2005, p. 631) as 'The acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched companions.'

**5.0 Peer Learning Framework**

Taking key learning from the SWOT analysis that **preparation, flexibility and shared ownership** are the bedrock upon which the framework needs to be founded in order to succeed.

**Table 4 Peer Learning Framework**

<b>Peer Learning Framework</b>	
<b>"GM Synergy, learning with and from each other"</b>	
Inclusive	Designed and owned by Students, Practice staff and Academics





Prepared	Students Practice staff Academics
Flexible	One size doesn't fit all. Practice Learning Environment, Skills Lab or Classroom 2:1, 3:1, group learning
Facilitated	Practice staff and / or Academics
Reflection	Group, individual, directed, self-directed