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Mentoring midwifery students in India experiences, reflections and lessons

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Educational institutions are keen to promote international placements with intent to produce culturally sensitive future health care clinicians. In September 2017, midwifery and dual degree students from the University of Queensland travelled to India on a clinically focused International Placement. The placement provides an opportunity for students to engage in community development and health promotion in both urban and rural settings. Students were also immersed in cultural activities and raised money to support a 'giving back' project. Lessons were continued following a problem based learning approach and class presentations provided using innovative methods that did not require e-based technology. Each day the group spent time reflecting on experiences had and researching topics of interest. On return to Australia and using the Gibbs' reflective cycle, there has been an opportunity to think about the planning involved and the experiences that occurred while on placement. Reflecting on events has provided a chance to evaluate what was good and what can be changed. The Gibbs cycle affords the structure in which to formulate these thoughts into a meaningful action plan for the next international placement. More information on cultural expectations, cultural norms (such as tipping), language norms, location information, supplies to take and not to take, estimated cost of local items and food expectations. This travel information and synopses of experiences is being compiled into a travel guide for future students to the area. Students placed internationally can have effects in self-awareness and potentially influence their future practice perceptions.

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