**Linking cultural safety and clinical governance during an international clinical placement.**

International clinical placements to developing countries provide students with opportunities to gain insight into health care systems where the patient safety agenda is often less apparent than in Australia, where it is integral to clinical governance. In domestic practice placements, students often struggle to see the bigger picture relating to health policies and can be overwhelmed by the complex bureaucracy of clinical governance. Subsequently, students may not gain sufficient understanding of overarching quality and safety issues or an adequate grasp of cultural safety. Griffith University offers undergraduate nursing students a unique Primary Health Care placement to a community development project in Laos, where students observe basic clinical governance in a setting where cultural safety is pivotal.

The provision of health care to remote Lao villages places students out of their comfort zone, but they quickly adapt as they learn more about local culture and beliefs. As students gain insight into community health issues and observe the low levels of health literacy, they understand the importance of providing culturally safe health care. Students are given significant responsibility in planning and resourcing mobile clinics and use a family based approach to undertake health assessments and provide basic nursing care. They develop an appreciation of the significant planning with community leaders and health workers to ensure sustainability of the project, by continuing to build relationships and increase local capacity. In this context, both planning and implementation are less mired in bureaucratic structures than in the Australian context. In addition, the primacy of cultural safety and client focused care are visible throughout all stages of clinical governance. Experiential student learning from observing basic clinical governance in a less complex system consolidates their knowledge of important community concepts, which are then applicable to providing quality patient care within the Australian health system.