Final Report

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Project Title: *The impact of pet therapy on anxiety reduction among undergraduate and graduate nursing students*

1.1 Project Summary

This project involved a pet therapy intervention prior to a simulation-based learning experience among our undergraduate nursing students in year 2 and 3. We measured the impact of pet therapy on depression, anxiety and stress. The intervention had statistically significant results in lowering depression, stress and anxiety post intervention.

1.2 Student involvement

95

1.3 Dissemination and Knowledge Mobilization

We have submitted an abstract to the international nursing education conference (NETNEP conference) in Edinburgh November 1-4th 2026. We will find out the results in July 2026. In addition, we are in the process of preparing the manuscript with a planned August 2026 submission date.

1.4 Project Outcomes and Impacts

The intervention with pet therapy dogs prior to the simulation-based learning experience showed statistically significant decreases in depression, stress and anxiety post intervention among undergraduate nursing students (N=95). This low-cost intervention made possible through volunteers and certified pet therapy dogs may have potential to be included in high stakes experiential learning experiences such as in simulation.