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community role-emerging practice placements, mostly by using quantitative methods [19, 23, 28]. Few studies have been conducted during the placements [28], prior to, and/or upon completion of placements [8]. Students' experiences in role-emerging practice placements need to be continually evaluated in order to facilitate their learning process [28], and to ensure that those experiences enable them to develop the necessary professional and personal knowledge and skills, as well as to understand their potential contribution to the community.

Data analysis

Overall data collection involved both qualitative and quantitative data, a combination which is effectively used in health science [\[34\]](#)

as from additional participants. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods can also strengthen the findings [34].

With reference to students' *personal and professional skills*, the quantitative data indicated an overall significant increase in total scores, showing that students reported improvement in both their professional and personal skills following their experience in these placements. Increases in scores were also noted in all items (although not all were significant), except for a nonsignificant decrease in two professional-skills items: *collaborative relationship* and *receiving feedback from the supervisor*. This may be explained by the fact that both items are related to the individual student's relationship with the supervisor. This corresponds with the findings that students were less satisfied by the supervision, compared to their prior expectations. The improvement in students' perceptions regarding their skills was also noted during the focus groups, where students reported that the experience enabled them to be more creative, flexible, independent learners, and to solve problems with independent initiative, as well as to communicate and collaborate with others. These results support previous studies indicating that role-emerging practice placements contribute to the student's personal and professional abilities [13, 17, 24, 28, 41], and support the belief that the role-emerging model can also be used as an appropriate model of practice placement [28]. An additional and interesting finding was the close-to-significant higher score in personal skills after completion among stu-

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A
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Consent for publication

N A

Competing interests

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