

**Practice Guideline**

**March 1, 2007**

All Receiving Agency staff and affiliates play an active role in contributing to the education of students in the practice setting while maintaining primary responsibility for the delivery of safe, ethical, high quality care and services.

**Guideline Details**

The needs of the patient/client are paramount and must be considered in all decisions made relating to the responsibilities assigned to students.

Whether working directly or indirectly\* with students, Receiving Agency staff should:

- understand the purpose and type of practice education experience the Placing Agency is seeking and work to support those efforts.
- understand the level of the student within their particular program.
- provide an environment that facilitates learning and growth while encouraging lifelong learning.
- be a positive role model, sharing knowledge and experiences.
- provide positive reinforcement and constructive feedback.
- correct inappropriate, unsafe or marginal performance in a timely manner and/or bring such behaviour to the attention of the faculty liaison to develop a plan of action.
- be available and receptive to students.
- maintain a professional relationship with students at all times.

The supervising staff needs to assess the knowledge, skills and abilities of the students under his or her supervision before assigning care or service responsibilities.

When any staff member assigns or delegates an activity to a student, that staff member retains primary responsibility for the delivery of care and the supervision of the student.

Supervising staff participates with Placing Agency faculty and student in the student's ongoing and final evaluation for the practice education experience.

**Roles & Responsibilities**

Placing and/or Receiving Agencies:

- Offer continuing education opportunities that develop staff to assume the role of student preceptor/supervisor.

Faculty liaison:

- Ensure the practice education experience is arranged (refer to [Practice Education Guideline – Practice Education Relationship](#)).
- Communicate with or meeting with supervising staff prior to the experience to review the goals and objectives of the placement, describe student's strengths, areas needing improvement, educational objectives, and plan for the experience.
- **Is** available to student and supervisor for regular communication and feedback.

Receiving Agency:

---

\* indicates term is defined under 'Definitions' section

- Ensure that staff are recognized for their contribution to student learning.

## Supervising staff:

- Use judgment to determine the amount of supervision and direction provided to the student. Direct supervision\* is required until a judgment about the student's competency level is determined. The student may progress to indirect supervision\* if circumstances permit. The amount and type of supervision of a student depends upon many factors, including: type of task assigned, activity level of the site, and competency level of the student.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the student's learning objectives.
- Orient the student to the facility, department, or program; the policies and procedures; the caseload/workload; and to the specific conditions, needs and/or goals of individual clients.
- Identify with the student, learning opportunities that are appropriate to the student's level of knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Ensure that activities assigned are consistent with the student's level of education, experience, comfort, and the complexity of the environment/ practice setting.
- Notify faculty liaison as soon as any difficulty is encountered or anticipated. The faculty liaison should be informed at least by the midpoint of the practice education experience so that there is time for the student to work on areas of concern and meet the objectives of the experience (refer to [Practice Education Guideline – Student Performance Issues](#)).
- Obtain consent from the patient (or substitute), if possible, for student involvement in care (refer to [Practice Education Guideline – Consent for Student Involvement In Care](#)).
- Provide direct supervision\* to the student who is completing a **reserved action\* in accordance with policy, professional scope of practice, and applicable legislation**.
- Ensure the student follows safe work practices.
- Review (and countersign if necessary) documentation (refer to [Practice Education Guideline – Documentation by Students](#))
- Provide feedback to the student regarding performance on a consistent basis throughout the practice education experience based on the criteria established by the Placing Agency.
- Provide feedback to the faculty liaison regarding the student's progress.
- Ensure the written record of feedback (evaluation) is kept confidential and used only for the purpose for which it was intended.

## Consequences of Non-compliance

When students are not adequately prepared or appropriately supervised, unsafe or inadequate care or service could result. In addition, the student may not be able to meet the learning objectives of the course or program.

When the practice environment is not conducive to learning, the student can be left with a negative impression of the Receiving Agency.

## Rationale

Receiving Agency staff are actively involved in the supervision of students in a variety of settings. Not all students require the same degree of supervision depending on knowledge, skill, competency level, experience, and complexity of patients. Based on this, supervising staff need to know the knowledge and skill level of the student in order to determine the degree of supervision required. Staff are accountable to their patients, their employer, and the student in their role as student supervisors. Many Receiving Agency staff are members of a professional body and governed by their respective Code of Ethics and Practice Standards. Part of the professional role is to share their knowledge with others. Involvement in teaching fulfills this duty while enhancing their personal and professional growth.

Placing students in clinical settings provides an opportunity for students to build their theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Students are exposed to the realistic requirements and expectations of the profession in a busy work environment.

Planning, cooperation, and communication around the practice education experience are key in the provision of high quality patient care and attainment of student educational objectives.

While feedback and evaluation are important and valuable parts of the learning experience, it is important that the information only be used for that placement's evaluation. This information is not to be held or copied by the Receiving Agency staff for future use as this violates the confidentiality of the student. Evaluation results may only be used by the Receiving Agency beyond their intended purpose when the student has expressly and willingly consented to such use.

## Definitions

**Direct Supervision:** Supervising Staff are present to observe and correct, as needed, the performance of the student. Direct supervision requires that the supervisor be in the room. The goal of direct supervision is to provide reasonable assurance that concerns related to the performance of activities are identified and corrected before patients are harmed.<sup>1</sup>

**Indirect Supervision:** Supervising Staff are not physically present but have assigned or delegated an activity to the student and are readily available to the student if required. The degree of supervision is dependant on the judgement of the supervisor, the activity, and the level of competence of the student. May be also call 'remote supervision'.

Reserved actions: Clinical activities that present a significant risk of harm and are therefore assigned by government to specified health professions only.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from College of Physiotherapists of Ontario. (February 2006). B. Standards for Professional Practice: Clinical Education. Toronto, ON. Retrieved June 23, 2006 from <http://www.collegept.org/college/content/pdf/en/guide/B.Clinical%20Education.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> College of Registered Nurses of BC. (2007) Legislation Overview: Reserved Actions. Vancouver, BC. Retrieved on February 17, 2007 from <http://www.crnbc.ca/ActRegBylaws/LegislationOverview.aspx>

**References**

Andersen, S. & Leclerc, S. (April 2005). Guidelines for Student Utilization – wearing of CHEO ID. Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario & University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario.

Learning & Career Development. (February 2006) Student Practice Education Policy and Procedure DRAFT. Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Vancouver, BC.

Ibid. (September 2006) Student Practice Education: Orientation for Students and Faculty. Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, Vancouver, BC. Retrieved on September 8, 2006 from <http://www.vch.ca/placements>.

Interior Health Authority. (February 2006). Administrative Policy Manual - AU1000 Student Placements (Clinical & Practice Education). Kelowna, BC.

College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario. (May 1996). Practice Guideline: Supervision of Student Occupational Therapists. Toronto, Ontario. Retrieved on September 1, 2006 from <http://www.coto.org/media/documents/Supervision.pdf>

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. (Nov/Dec 2003). Professional Responsibilities in Undergraduate Medical Education. Toronto, Ontario. Retrieved on September 1, 2006 from [http://www.cpso.on.ca/Policies/resp\\_ug.htm](http://www.cpso.on.ca/Policies/resp_ug.htm).

College of Physiotherapists of Ontario. (September 1998). Guideline: Supervision of Physiotherapy Students. Toronto, Ontario. Retrieved on September 1, 2006 from [http://www.collegept.org/college/content/pdf/en/Supervision\\_of\\_Physiotherapy\\_Students.pdf](http://www.collegept.org/college/content/pdf/en/Supervision_of_Physiotherapy_Students.pdf)

College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario. (November 2005). Guidelines for the Supervision of Students in the Medical Laboratory Science Programs. Toronto, ON. Retrieved June 23, 2006 from [http://www.cmlto.com/quality\\_assurance/MLT\\_practice\\_guidelines/pdf/supervision\\_of\\_students.pdf](http://www.cmlto.com/quality_assurance/MLT_practice_guidelines/pdf/supervision_of_students.pdf)

Nursing Professional Practice. (Draft September 2005). TOH Guidelines for Students and Faculty members. The Ottawa Hospital. Ottawa, Ontario.

College of Registered Nurses of BC. (2007) Legislation Overview: Reserved Actions. Vancouver, BC. Retrieved on February 17, 2007 from [\[http://www.crnbc.ca/ActRegBylaws/LegislationOverview.aspx\]](http://www.crnbc.ca/ActRegBylaws/LegislationOverview.aspx)