A GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICE IN THE DELIVERY OF CLINICAL/FIELDWORK BASED TEACHING

OFFICE OF DEPUTY DEAN EDUCATION FACULTY OF MEDICINE NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

MONASH MEDICINE, NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

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FACULTY OF MEDICINE NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES
THIS SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING PACKAGE HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO ASSIST PRACTITIONERS WHO SUPERVISE STUDENTS IN THE WORKPLACE.

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INTRODUCTION

This learning package is concerned with 3 components of clinical/fieldwork teaching:

1. Introducing the student to the clinical/fieldwork teaching environment
2. Teaching and learning in the clinic
3. Providing effective feedback

SECTION CONTENTS:

1. Learning outcomes or what may be achieved by working through the section
2. Brief theoretical information relating to the issue.
3. Activities to complete to reinforce the information provided.
4. Scenarios for you to reflect upon given your particular clinical/fieldwork situation or practice.

There are many demands associated with running a clinical/fieldwork practice or hospital based department. The additional responsibility of supervising a student can be both challenging and rewarding. This learning package has been developed to assist you with ways to provide a positive learning environment in which to share knowledge and skills with your student. Using this information will help you meet the demands of your practice and the needs of your student in an efficient and professional manner.

Communication skills are included as reminders of the necessity for clear communication when working with people. This includes other staff, students and Patients/clients.

Throughout the materials questions are raised for consideration and as a focus for discussion. These questions are in the form of activities and stimulus scenarios. Take time to complete the activities to help consolidate your knowledge about the practice of supervision. These scenarios are purposely broad and brief; the intention is for you to translate the issue described to your particular clinical/fieldwork setting.

The self-directed learning package is provided to guide your thinking, however it is important to remember that with such concepts such as communication, teaching and providing feedback there is often no single correct way to manage a particular situation. There are however a range of different ways that may be utilised depending on the situation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This on line package has been designed to help supervising practitioners to achieve the following outcomes:

1. organise a student program
2. orient students to the department and clinical/fieldwork setting
3. ensure students are appropriately supervised
4. facilitate student learning
5. provide effective feedback
6. complete ongoing professional demands

SUGGESTED PRELIMINARY READINGS:


SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLINICAL/FIELDWORK TEACHING ENVIRONMENT

OVERVIEW

Learning does not happen automatically - the student needs guidance and information and feedback from the experienced practitioner. To provide these and manage clinical/fieldwork demands the practitioner must be well prepared, organised, have a clear set of guidelines and be an effective communicator.

In undertaking these tasks you will not only be modelling the skills of a practitioner you will also be assisting your student to learn these skills.

This is a challenging but rewarding responsibility.

This section will focus on preparing and introducing the student to your department. This includes the physical environment, the patients/clients and clinical/fieldwork work, the people in the department and their roles and a mutual understanding of learning expectations and work responsibilities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This section is designed to help the supervisor to achieve the following outcomes:

1. organise a student program
2. orient students to the department and clinical/fieldwork setting
3. ensure students are appropriately supervised
4. clarify student and supervisor expectations
5. explain the clinical/fieldwork work undertaken by the department

PREPARATION

Prior to the student arriving you need to complete several tasks to ensure you are adequately prepared. The nature of these tasks will vary depending on your experience in supervising students and your work situation, however it is important to:

• read the information provided by the university about the student placement
• know what the university expects of you
• ensure that your work organisation knows you will be supervising a student
• inform all staff about the student
• organise and document a student program
• prepare information for orientation to the workplace

ACTIVITY

EACH WORK PLACE IS DIFFERENT SO INFORMATION INCLUDED IN THESE AREAS WILL VARY. MAKE A LIST OF PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES UNDER THE ABOVE HEADINGS THAT RELATE TO YOUR PARTICULAR WORKPLACE.
You arrive at work on Monday morning and find a student waiting outside the department. You have been busy and have not had time to prepare as fully as you had wanted to. What are the critical activities you need to do to ensure the student has a positive beginning to the placement?

ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION

To help the student to feel welcomed and part of the work team it is important to:

• introduce the student to all members of the work team, including names, roles and responsibilities
• show the student the layout of the department and explain the use of each room
• provide an organisational structure chart for the student’s reference
• provide information about the physical locations of relevant sections of the workplace facility
• inform the student of specific organisational regulations (e.g., name badges, etc.)
• assist the student to complete orientation documents
• ensure the student knows the various safety protocols

ACTIVITY

PREPARE A LIST OF ALL STAFF IN THE DEPARTMENT/WORKPLACE AREA AND THEIR ROLES.

PROVIDE A MAP OF THE HOSPITAL OR FIELDWORK SITE FOR STUDENT USE.

The student tells you that he is very nervous and feels anxious about this placement. He says he is unsure how he will manage in the hospital environment.
EXPECTATIONS
When supervising a student it is important that students know what you want and you know what they expect of you. The following are broad goals or expectations of clinical/fieldwork studies. Others may be added according to the clinical/fieldwork facility and student needs.

WHILE STUDENTS ARE ON CLINICAL/FIELDWORK PLACEMENT IT IS EXPECTED THEY WILL:
• undertake a wide range of clinical/fieldwork examinations/activities
• understand the role of the practitioner in the specific hospital/community based context
• practice effective communication skills
• work effectively with patients/clients
• develop professional problem solving strategies
• develop clinical/fieldwork reasoning skills

WHILE STUDENTS ARE ON CLINICAL/FIELDWORK PLACEMENT IT IS EXPECTED SUPERVISORS WILL:
• orient students to the department and clinical/fieldwork setting
• facilitate student learning
• recognise and respond to student's learning needs
• ensure appropriate supervision of students
• model a variety of techniques
• provide students with feedback on their performance

ACTIVITY
MAKE A LIST OF THE EXPECTATIONS YOU HAVE FOR YOUR STUDENT.
ASK YOUR STUDENT TO CREATE A LIST OF WHAT S/HE WANTS TO ACHIEVE DURING THE CLINICAL/FIELDWORK STUDIES PLACEMENT.
COMPARE AND DISCUSS THESE LISTS.

During your introductory discussions the student asks you if it is OK to leave an hour early each Tuesday and Thursday to get to his part time job.

What would you do?

Your third year student is concerned about the expectation that she has to work in emergency which has a high level of young accident victims. She says she had a bad experience in second year and does not want to risk it again.

What would you do?
CLINICAL/FIELDWORK CASELOAD

Ensure both you and the student are clear about what departmental tasks and clinical/fieldwork responsibilities s/he is able to undertake according to experience, knowledge base and university guidelines.

Some considerations are:

• appropriate level of supervision
• what the student knows
• what the student can do if you are busy
• the demands to complete ongoing tasks
• maintain ethical and safety standards

ACTIVITY

IDENTIFY TASKS THAT STUDENTS HAVE DEVELOPED IN THE SAFETY OF THE UNIVERSITY SIMULATION/SKILLS LABORATORY AND WHICH THEY CAN COMPLETE INDEPENDENTLY IN THE WORKPLACE FOLLOWING AN INITIAL ORIENTATION.

FOR WHAT TASKS DO STUDENTS ALWAYS NEED SUPERVISION?

HOW DO THE ETHICAL GUIDELINES OF THE REGISTRATION BOARD/PROFESSION INFLUENCE THE WAY YOU SUPERVISE STUDENTS?

HOW DO THE ISSUES OF PATIENT SAFETY, PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT INFLUENCE THE WAY YOU WORK WITH STUDENTS?

WHAT HOSPITAL/ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES INFLUENCE YOUR SUPERVISORY PRACTICES?

You and a student are working with a patient and you are urgently called away.

How do you ensure that safety and ethical responsibilities /standards are maintained?

ENSURING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

When working in a supervisory role effective communication and interpersonal skills are necessary. In the complex supervisory role it is important to consider the changing communication patterns between the supervisor, the student, the patient/client and other staff.

Successful interactions are determined by accurate understanding of what is communicated. Effective communication will facilitate quality supervision and maintain patient/client care.

Communication is enhanced by appropriate use of listening and looking and thoughtful use of questions. The most powerful form of communication occurs non-verbally.

Listening is considered to be the most important skill when communicating effectively. When supervising a student in a busy unit there will be barriers to listening. Make time to talk with the student in a place where you can hear each other; see the visual cues and ask a few questions of each other.
The **ways of looking**, for example eye contact, body language, facial expressions, touch and movement all help to get the message across. The way we receive messages will also depend on our non-verbal and verbal responses, awareness of this will avoid misunderstandings as well as making room for the growing professional relationship you will develop with the student.

**Verbal** communication is influenced by the tone of voice, the verbal cues and language style and use of questions.

**Questioning** techniques are one of the most useful educational strategies to check student understanding, assist with further discussion and clarification of issues and tasks. There are types of questions that help in different situations.

To gain fundamental information use closed questions when yes/no is the usual answer.
For example, “Do you know where the booking sheets are kept?”

To deepen learning and extend information use open questions which require elaboration or reflection.
For example, “think about what we just did and tell me why it was successful?”
“Tell me more about your reasons for positioning/treating the patient/client in that way?”

**ACTIVITY**

**THINK ABOUT THE WAY YOU COMMUNICATE. DO YOU RELY ON WORDS OR VISUAL CUES? DO YOU ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS? IS YOUR EYE CONTACT APPROPRIATE? DO YOU USUALLY WAIT FOR OTHERS TO SPEAK?**

**ARE YOU A ‘GOOD LISTENER’?**

**YOUR COMMUNICATION STYLE WILL INFLUENCE HOW YOU SUPERVISE.**

**MAKE A FEW NOTES ABOUT WHAT COMMUNICATION STYLE WORKS BEST FOR YOU.**

A student says she is unable to work with a patient who has dementia. She says it is impossible to move him on to the table because he will not do what she asks.

**What would you do?**

A patient’s relative insists on coming into the room when the patient is being interviewed/treated. The student is refusing to start until the relative leaves.

**What would you do?**

**FURTHER READING**

Axboe M, Christensen KS, Kofoed P-E, Ammentorp J. Development and validation of a self-efficacy questionnaire (SE-12) measuring the clinical communication skills of health care professionals. *BMC Medical Education. 2016;16:272-282*


SECTION 2

CLINICAL/FIELDWORK TEACHING AND LEARNING

OVERVIEW

Being an effective supervisor requires time and commitment but guiding and teaching developing professionals can be very rewarding. Quality supervision requires you to be aware of and to monitor and to adjust the way you act as a clinical/fieldwork teacher. As a reflective practitioner you will put time and energy into reviewing your own clinical/fieldwork activities and modifying what you do to develop and enhance your practice skill.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This section is designed to help the supervisor to achieve the following outcomes:

1. create an effective and safe learning environment
2. provide professional supervision
3. ensure that professional responsibilities are met
4. maintain quality patient care
5. clarify learning expectations
6. provide positive learning opportunities

There are many ways of teaching and learning which you can incorporate into your clinical/fieldwork supervision. Attention to these will ensure effective student learning and quality patient care. It is necessary to take into consideration different clinical/fieldwork settings and individual differences in teaching and learning styles.

It is important to consider:

- effective interpersonal / communication skills
- using names appropriately - eg given or family names
- being enthusiastic about what you are doing
- being relaxed and friendly and inclusive of students
- having a caring and concerned approach
- involving students in department activities
- have an interactive problem solving approach
- student opportunities to initiate interactions and to communicate effectively with patients/clients

Clinical/fieldwork experience provides the student with the opportunity to put into practice many of the professional communication skills. While students may be competent socially, many need encouragement to consider the implications and responsibilities of treating patients/clients professionally. Quality supervision involves the modelling of effective communication strategies with patients/clients in order to encourage students to initiate and develop professional caring communication styles.
ACTIVITY

GIVEN YOUR PARTICULAR WORK ENVIRONMENT AND CLINICAL/FIELDWORK RESPONSIBILITIES HOW WILL YOU ENSURE THAT THE STUDENT IS ABLE TO LEARN MOST EFFECTIVELY WHEN BEING SUPERVISED BY YOU?

The student has been invited to participate in a range of workplace activities but avoids any informal interaction with you or other staff away from the work rooms. She seems quite withdrawn and this is impacting on your communication and her learning.

What would you do?

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

In your role as a clinical/fieldwork teacher you will use a range of different techniques to facilitate student learning.

How you do this will depend on many things including the teaching style you feel most comfortable with; the learning preferences of the student; their confidence and competence; the sensitivity of the problem; the ethical considerations; policies of your department; complexity of cases; the year level of the student and their expectations.

There is usually not a “right” and only way to teach a particular task or skill, however research suggests that when students are actively involved in the learning process learning will be deeper.

This section will consider the following issues:

• characteristics of effective clinical/fieldwork teaching
• characteristics of experiential learning
• ways of fostering deeper learning
• development of clinical/fieldwork competence

Both students and supervisors are individuals; this will bring a range of experiences, skills and knowledge to the clinical/fieldwork learning situation. Similarly they will bring a wide range of personal characteristics and different preferred learning and teaching styles.

Because of these challenges you need a range of skills that you can use for a particular student in a specific learning situation.

Characteristics of effective clinical/fieldwork teaching are

• encourage active participation
• demonstrate a positive attitude to teaching
• emphasise problem solving
• focus on the integration of questions and clinical/fieldwork knowledge
• provide support during learning
• allow adequate opportunities to practice skills
• model quality patient care
• provide stimulation and challenges
• be patient orientated
• be aware and responsive to student learning
ACTIVITY
IDENTIFY THE STRENGTHS YOU BRING TO YOUR CLINICAL/FIELDWORK TEACHING.
CONSIDER STRATEGIES THAT WOULD IMPROVE AND FURTHER EXTEND YOUR CLINICAL/FIELDWORK TEACHING SKILLS

ACTIVITY
THERE ARE DIFFERENT WAYS OF TEACHING DIFFERENT CLINICAL/FIELDWORK SKILLS,
FOR EXAMPLE:
• OBSERVATION
• DEMONSTRATING
• TRIAL AND ERROR
• DOING WITH VERBAL INSTRUCTION-(TALKING OUT LOUD TECHNIQUE)
• FEEDBACK FOLLOWING ACTIVITY
• FACILITATED PRACTICE
• COACHING
CONSIDER WHEN THESE MAY BE USED EITHER ALONE OR IN COMBINATION WHEN TEACHING CLINICAL/FIELDWORK SKILLS.

After continually observing a student's attempt to work with an elderly patient with severe arthritis she is still unable to complete the procedure. She is motivated to continue although close to tears.

What would you do?

CHARACTERISTICS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
Kolb, (1984) describes experiential learning as a cyclic pattern in which the student observes, reflects on what s/he has seen, actively participates and then reflects on what has occurred. This cycle is used effectively in clinical/fieldwork teaching where the student observes an experienced clinician undertake an examination. The student reflects (thinks, questions, clarifies, understands) then tries the examination himself/herself and then reflects on the process and outcome.

The student, with the support and feedback of the supervisor can then modify/refine the way the procedure is undertaken and can further improve.
Much of the learning students will be doing in the clinic is experiential learning. A simplistic way to facilitate experiential learning is to follow these 5 steps.

1. watch you perform an examination
2. ask you questions about it
3. think about what they know about this procedure
4. try the procedure with supervision
5. perform the procedure independently

**ACTIVITY**

**THINK ABOUT PROCEDURES/PROFESSIONAL TASKS THAT YOU TEACH STUDENTS WHERE YOU COULD UTILISE THE PROCESS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING DESCRIBED ABOVE.**

**CONSIDER WHY THIS TECHNIQUE MAY BE USEFUL IN THESE SITUATIONS**

**WAYS OF FOSTERING DEEPER LEARNING**

When students are given the opportunity to struggle with new material they internalise it, relate, reconcile what they are learning with what they already know. This is deeper learning. To foster this type of learning students need support to grapple with the information within a relevant context. This process enables the student to actively construct meaning through interaction with their supervisors, their peers, the learning material and the clinical/fieldwork environment.

**STRATEGIES TO STIMULATE DEEPER LEARNING**

- ask questions the students is able to find answers to
- suggest tasks for exploration in your department
- encourage students to be responsible for decision making
- support self evaluation of activities undertaken
- provide specific responsibilities
- ensure ongoing communication with patients/clients
- contribute to departmental quality assurance activities

**ACTIVITY**

**YOUR STUDENT HANGS AROUND EXPECTING YOU TO TEACH HER AND INITIATE ALL WORK RELATED ACTIVITIES.**

**BRAIN STORM IDEAS ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MAKE HER MORE RESPONSIBLE FOR HER OWN LEARNING?**
DEVELOPMENT OF CLINICAL/FIELDWORK COMPETENCE

With theoretical knowledge, practice in the clinics/workplace and positive supervision students will progress from a novice practitioner to an emerging competent practitioner. As they progress through these stages from being a novice or beginner to eventually becoming a competent practitioner their questioning, clinical/fieldwork understanding, communication with patients/clients and professionals and confidence will develop. Students will still require supervision however the extent and the type of the supervision will change as their competence develops.

ACTIVITY

YOU HAVE 3 STUDENTS. A FIRST YEAR, A SECOND YEAR AND A THIRD YEAR ON FINAL PLACEMENT.

THINK ABOUT THE WAYS YOU WILL SUPERVISE THESE THREE STUDENTS IN TERMS OF:

PROCEDURES THEY WILL UNDERTAKE
RESPONSIBILITY IN TALKING WITH PATIENTS/CLIENTS ABOUT THEIR EXAMINATION
LEVEL OF SUPERVISION
SELF-DIRECTED ACTIVITIES
INTERACTION BETWEEN DIFFERENT LEVELS OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE

REFERENCE

Kolb D. Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development. Eaglewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall; 1984

FURTHER READING

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SECTION 3

PROVIDING EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

OVERVIEW

The learning process effects change in a number of domains:

- knowledge
- skills
- attitudes

This change is continuous. However to ensure it is both developmental and appropriate, feedback which is both fair and purposeful is required.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This section is designed to help supervisors to achieve the following outcomes:

- select an appropriate environment for providing feedback
- encourage student self evaluation
- identify positive aspects of students performance
- discuss areas for improvement
- develop strategies for implementing feedback into practice
- schedule appropriate times for feedback in advance

Effective feedback allows a student to both reflect on clinical/fieldwork participation and to obtain a fair, objective, clear and constructive evaluation of their performance.

The aim of feedback is to help a student to identify positive clinical/fieldwork participation and performance and to modify or improve future performance.

Feedback should not be used as a disciplinary measure but should be an integral part of the learning process. As such it must be clear, carefully constructed and presented, enabling students to use it to modify and improve their clinical/fieldwork performance.

Feedback may be either formative, for example, comments, suggestions, questions or guidance during day to day tasks. Usually it is continuous during clinical/fieldwork work together and the type and content develops as the student gains competence and competence.

Summative feedback is more formalised. It is usually at a set time and in a place away from work tasks and interruptions. Summative feedback provides students with information about their performance as a whole or may focus on specific issues that need to be discussed in more depth than is allowed either during or between procedures.

Summative feedback may be multi-level and should provide students with a clear picture of both their strengths and areas for development. This feedback should be clear and objective and should inform students whether they are meeting the required standards.

Encourage students to develop self-assessment skills and to critically evaluate their own professional skills. Ask them to tell you about their performance rather than providing them with a critique. Allow them to think about what they have undertaken, how well they completed the task/s and what they may do in the future to improve them.
ACTIVITY

THERE ARE MANY FORMS THAT FEEDBACK CAN TAKE AND MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK. WHEN COULD YOU PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO YOUR STUDENT?

You have told your second year student that she needs to improve her communications skills with patients/clients. She says that you should have given her this feedback “ages ago” as she thought she was doing ok.

What would you do?

ACTIVITY

YOU WANT TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK/ TALK TO YOUR STUDENT WHO HAS JUST:

• EXCELLED HERSELF WITH HER HANDLING OF A “DIFFICULT” PATIENT
• ARRIVED LATE TO WORK AGAIN
• PRESENTED WELL AT A CASE CONFERENCE
• BEEN TALKING ABOUT PATIENTS/CLIENTS IN THE CAFE

WHAT ARE WAYS THAT YOU COULD START THESE DISCUSSIONS THAT WOULD ALLOW THE STUDENT TO REFLECT ON HIS/HER PARTICULAR SITUATION?

GUIDELINES FOR THE PROVISION OF FEEDBACK

• before giving feedback ensure the student has the opportunity to discuss their performance and feelings about it with you in a safe and supportive setting
• never provide feedback in situations where you might be overheard by Patients/clients and or other staff
• always direct feedback to specific examples of student work that you have observed. Students must know precisely where you think they could have provided a more effective service to the patient
• talk about the students’ strengths before you identify their current limitation/s
• keep feedback precise and factual
• ensure the student knows what needs to be improved together with realistic suggestions about how they might improve
• try and provide feedback as close to the event as possible
• do not overwhelm the student with too much detail
• ensure the student understands what you are telling them; remember emotions can prevent the message from being accurately received
• make regular feedback a part of your everyday interaction with students
ACTIVITY

IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT FOR STUDENTS TO EVALUATE THEIR SKILLS OR ABILITIES ON A PARTICULAR TASK OR ON THEIR PERFORMANCE AS A WHOLE.

IN WHAT WAYS COULD YOU ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO EVALUATE THEIR LEVELS OF COMPETENCE?

FURTHER READING

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Wilson A. Giving feedback to student paramedics in the clinical setting. Whitireia Nursing and Health Journal. 2013;20:19-23