



# UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS®

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**College of Education  
& Health Professions**  
*Eleanor Mann School of Nursing*

**RN-BSN Online**  
**Preceptor Handbook and**  
**Clinical Requirement**

For New Curriculum Clinical Courses: NURS 35503, 45303

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## **Introduction to the Clinical Practicum Experience**

Clinical courses offer our undergraduate online BSN students an opportunity to apply newly developed skills and implement theoretical content to professional nursing practice. Clinical situations give students exposure to learning and prepares students for advancing to the next level of nursing practice by enhancing skills in communication, teamwork, and critical thinking. Experiences are best assured when students are proactive in selecting availability at a time and geographic location suitable to each student's needs.

Important note: The student is embarking on the process of learning a new role as a BSN prepared Registered Nurse. The clinical experience in the BSN program requires the student to be actively involved in patient care as a direct care provider and interdisciplinary team member under the supervision of an RN preceptor.

These guidelines are provided to assist students in planning clinical experiences, and to clarify expectations for practicum experiences. Each clinical course requires a specific number of hours in an approved, preceptor facilitated, clinical experience.

## **Program Outcomes**

The goal of the BSN Program is to prepare graduates to provide culturally sensitive, evidence-based care to clients through the roles of caregiver, teacher, and manager in a variety of settings.

1. Integrate evolving nursing knowledge and knowledge from other disciplines to make innovative and effective clinical decisions.
2. Provide culturally congruent, person-centered care that respects the uniqueness, dignity, and worth of individuals.
3. Advocate for the health needs of diverse populations to increase health equity and promote social justice.
4. Synthesize evidence to inform nursing practice and contribute to the positive transformation of healthcare.
5. Utilize improvement science to refine healthcare processes essential for the provision of high quality, safe, and cost-effective patient care.
6. Collaborate effectively and intentionally with other healthcare professionals and community stakeholders to provide optimized healthcare.
7. Steward resources and partnerships to provide safe, quality, and equitable care to all people.
8. Employ information and healthcare technologies appropriately to support patient care, communication, and effective decision making.
9. Exhibit collegial, accountable, and emotionally intelligent behavior aligned with the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics and the Arkansas Nurse Practice Act.

10. Demonstrate a commitment to personal wellness, lifelong learning, and transformational leadership practice.

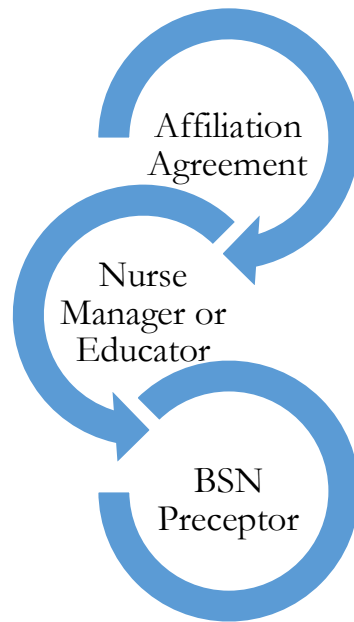
### **Clinical Practicum Experience Expectations**

Clinical experiences require active participation. A general rule of thumb is to observe for one day with a new preceptor. After this the student should be assuming some degree of patient care under the guidance and supervision of their preceptor while becoming immersed in the culture of the unit. Students will discuss course and personal objectives with their preceptor(s) at the beginning of each practicum course continuing through the completion of the course. Each course will also have a list of skills for the student to master throughout the experience. Students will debrief the preceptor at the end of each clinical day. Students will meet with the course instructor as outlined in each syllabus. It is the students' responsibility to seek help in finding opportunities to meet objectives.

### **Clinical Practicum Preceptor and Site Selection Process**

Recruiting qualified practicum preceptors and identifying appropriate practicum sites is a student-led process. Preceptors should have clinical expertise in the area of practice required for each practicum course (see qualifications below). **This process of identifying sites and preceptors begins by attending a practicum workshop.** The student should come prepared to the workshop with knowledge of potential practicum sites (e.g., what services the site offers). It is best to think of sites that can serve multiple clinical rotations. More instructions and resources are found in the orientation course; **students are responsible for all information found in the orientation.**

Gaining the needed clinical affiliations for new practicum sites is a lengthy process. It varies from facility to facility. Students should be prepared to work continuously on site and preceptor recruitment. Recruitment requires persistence and organization. The following diagrams show some of the key players when it comes to securing affiliations and preceptors.



The first step is the Affiliation Agreement itself. There are many resources in the orientation course for starting the affiliation agreement.

### **Clinical Practicum Placement**

After the affiliation is secured, middle management (often the nurse educator, nurse manager, or student placement coordinator) is contacted to either approve an already identified preceptor or to guide students in the identification of a preceptor. This person will also provide instruction for any specific paperwork and requirements at their organization. The student must comply with all facility policies and requirements. Even if the student is employed by an institution, there may be additional paperwork to complete (check with the education director, HR, or the student coordinator as appropriate). The student should ensure all onboarding requirements have been met by established deadlines. These deadlines are specified for each term.

Finally, the student will be required to gather the Preceptor Agreement form from their preceptor and submit it to program personnel. This, along with proof of a valid RN license in the state of clinical practice, is required for final approval of the preceptor. After being approved, the preceptor is added to an Online Preceptor Orientation. This brief online course will award CE upon completion.

### **Preceptor Qualifications**

- BSN (or higher) prepared Registered Nurse
- Unencumbered RN license to practice in the state in which they practice.
- At least two years of experience in the clinical practice area

- Current practice area must be congruent with clinical experiences needed by the student.
- An affiliation agreement with the clinical site must be in place.
- Preceptor for NURS 45206 should have experience with the quality improvement (QI) process and ability to facilitate and provide guidance to the student in the development and presentation of a QI project.
- Desire to share knowledge in their area of expertise with students.
- Ability to communicate with course instructors to evaluate students' performance.

**This nurse will need to be approved by the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing (EMSON) prior to any clinical time being completed.**

Additionally, the following chart will help guide the student in understanding what types of preceptor and facilities are required for each practicum:

<b>Practicum Course (Pre-Fall 2024 Curriculum)</b>	<b>Clinical Hours Required</b>	<b>Potential Clinical Settings to be used:</b>
NURS 35503 Leading in Wellness, Chronic and Palliative Care Practicum	112.5	<b>Preceptor Required.</b> BSN level (or higher) nurse.  Wellness: schools, primary clinics (adult or pediatric), urgent clinics, outpatient mental health clinic.  Chronic/Palliative: Long-term care facilities, Home Care, Hospice
NURS 45303 Leading in Acute Care and Quality Improvement Practicum	112.5	<b>Preceptor Required.</b> BSN level (or higher) nurse working in an acute setting.  Acute care setting (hospital)

NURS 45303 provides the student with an opportunity to synthesize and apply knowledge of concepts developed throughout the nursing program through a clinical immersion experience. Evidence-based practice will guide the development of a quality improvement project in an area of the student's interest. The student is required to complete an evidence-based practice project and presentation in the practicum setting which culminates the practicum experiences for the program.

This process is evolving; it requires much flexibility and dedication on the part of the student. It is imperative that you communicate closely with the clinical team throughout this process. Each geographic area and facility are different and that requires us to be creative and flexible. For more information about which states are authorized for completion of practicum requirements, please visit [U of A Online website through Global Campus](#).

**New affiliation request due dates are found in the online BSN Practicum Training course**

**Preceptor and site paperwork, as well as full compliance (see section on compliance requirements), are due prior to enrollment in a practicum course; deadlines are specified each term.**

The EMSON shall comply with clinical facility placement requirements as stipulated in the formal affiliation agreement(s). **Note: No person has the authority to commit the University of Arkansas and/or the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing for any purpose e.g., enter into agreements) except as authorized by the Board of Trustees, University of Arkansas.**

### **Scheduling the Clinical Practicum Experience Hours**

Students are responsible for ensuring that all required hours of clinical experience with the preceptor, in approved and supervised settings, are completed. The scheduled hours will be arranged in conjunction with the approved practicum site and preceptor (as is reasonable to satisfy the practice experience requirement). Hours may not be carried over between sessions nor completed prior to the course start date. The requirement may be met with full days, partial days or consecutive days as agreed upon with the preceptor. **Active participation is required to be counted for clinical hours, no observation-only activity past the first day in each setting.**

Clinical experience can only occur while students are regularly enrolled in courses. Students cannot complete clinical experience outside of the regular semester. Clinical experience should not be planned during official university holidays. Before beginning any clinical experience, it is the student's responsibility to review the course objectives and clinical requirements with your preceptor and direct any questions toward the instructor for that course.

Students must submit a clinical schedule to the course instructor at the beginning of the clinical rotation. This schedule should be developed and approved with your assigned preceptor. **Changing of the clinical schedule should only occur for university**

**approved excuses. Should a change be necessary, it is the student's responsibility to notify the course instructor as soon as this need is identified.** The clinical schedule must be completed one week prior to the intended day at the clinical site. It must be approved by the course instructor before you start your clinical practicum. Scheduled clinical hours may not exceed 12 hours per day, three 12-hour shifts per 7 days, or 40 hours per 7 days. This policy applies regardless if a student is taking more than one clinical course. Attendance will be monitored as outlined within each course. Students may be competing for clinical practice space at some locations. Flexibility for scheduling will help to ensure smooth clinical progression. Some night and weekend shifts will likely be required. **Clinical practicum hours may not be completed during the students' work hours. If you complete clinical hours at your workplace, you must arrange them on a different unit from which you work.**

### **Attendance Expectations**

Students are expected to present to the clinical facility as scheduled, each clinical day. Students should report directly to their assigned preceptor at the beginning and ending of each clinical day. Students will work directly with their preceptor throughout their clinical experience.

Clinical learning activities represent a responsibility to patients and require an essential application of knowledge. Consistent, punctual attendance facilitates learning, while tardiness interferes with the attainment of course outcomes. Therefore, students are required to be present and on time for each clinical experience. If there is a university excused reason that a student will be missing clinical time in any course, communication must be initiated with the clinical instructor and preceptor right away to make alternative arrangements.

Written and virtual clinical activities will be required in each clinical practicum and will be detailed within the Blackboard Ultra course. These activities are designed to help facilitate translation of didactic content into clinical application.

Web-based clinical conferencing will also be required to facilitate discussion and shared experiences. Use of clinical conferencing will be outlined within the syllabus for each course. Additionally remote meetings between the student's preceptor and clinical instructor must be completed for proper evaluation of clinical objectives. Practicum courses require multiple contacts with the preceptor while the student is engaged in clinicals. Students should be proactive in facilitating contact between the instructor and the preceptor for practicum evaluation purposes. Students should not use staff nurses or other personnel in place of their



approved preceptor when scheduling clinical evaluation contacts with their course instructors.

## **Dress Code / Professional Appearance**

The primary purposes of the uniform are for student identification and to project a professional image to clinical agencies and the clients served.

### **Uniform Guidelines**

Unless otherwise specified by the course/instructor, EMSON approved uniforms are to be worn when the student is engaged in U of A clinical practicum nursing activities, and at no other time.

The EMSON Uniform must conform to the following Uniform Requirements:

- Uniform is to be clean, wrinkle free, and unstained
- Scrubs
  - Color ‘True Red’
  - Pants and top may be any style, must be ‘True Red’ color that matches the top. Pants and top must match in color.
  - Must fit loosely and allow for ease of movement. Tight, form-fitting scrubs are not allowable. Low rise not allowed.
  - The red EMSON patch that the student independently purchases from the University Bookstore, must be adhered to the exterior of the left sleeve of the scrub top.
  - Suggested brand/style: Cherokee 4700 Unisex V-neck Tunic ○ Landau 8219 V-neck Tunic ○ Scrubzone Unisex 2-pocket 70221 ○ Cherokee 4876 Unisex V-neck (longer torso) ○ Landau 7502 Men’s Scrub Top ○ Cherokee Workwear WW120, WW620, WW670, WW140
  - Retailer Option: Uniform Corner at [myuniformcorner.com](http://myuniformcorner.com) (25% discount) or Premier Uniforms in Fayetteville, AR
- White socks or stockings (in good repair without design) must be worn.
- White or black nonporous/no fabric shoes (no high-top sneakers, clogs, open toe, or shoes with writing).
  - Shoes and shoelaces must be washable and kept clean and neatly polished.
- White or black long or short sleeved turtleneck or crew neck T-shirts without logos or advertisements may be worn under the uniform.
- For practicum at mental health facilities, business attire is required (see below)

- For students with religious/cultural considerations, skirts or dresses may be worn in lieu of pants. A solid white head covering may be worn but may only cover the hair, full face must be visible.
- The red EMSON patch that the student independently purchases from the University Bookstore must be adhered to exterior of the left sleeve of the scrub top.
- Nothing other than the lab coat (sweatshirt or jacket) is to be worn over scrubs during clinical.
- Students may be subject to compliance of hospital uniform policy.

### **Laboratory Coats**

A wrinkle free white lab coat should be worn in the following situations:

- Students must purchase a white lab coat. The black EMSON patch that the student independently purchases from the University Bookstore must be adhered to the left side of the lab coat, under the lapel, on the pocket if available.
- Lab coats may be worn to and from the clinical practicum experiences or in compliance with specific clinical agency policies.
- During school activities not requiring the school uniform, such as community health and/or mental health clinical practicum, home visits, site orientation sessions, etc.

### **Uniform Accessories**

Name tag

- Should always be visible on the front of the uniform or lab coat on the upper right side.
- Is an official/authenticated University of Arkansas, Eleanor Mann School of nursing identification badge. The badge is printed with the student's first name, last name initial only, and photo by the card office at the UofA. Also included on the badge is the credential, "BSN Student".
- The official UA/EMSON issued badge/nametag must be worn at all clinical practicum experiences (Arkansas State Board of Nursing requires that all healthcare providers are clearly identifiable through name tags with credentials listed).
- Name tag ordering instructions were provided upon acceptance to the program via Blackboard Orientation Non-credit Course.

Equipment includes:

- A pair of bandage scissors
- Pen light
- A stethoscope
- May need pocket calculator, hemostats, eye protection, blood pressure cuff.

### **Business Attire**

Professional attire is expected whenever you are representing the EMSON. Some activities may require the student to wear business attire with or without wearing a lab coat. The following are general examples of appropriate attire:

#### Women

- Dress, Blouse, and skirt (skirt length- knee length or below)
- Shirt with collar or polo style
- Dress Slacks / khaki pants
- Shoes - comfortable low-heeled pumps, loafers, or boots, must be closed toe

#### Men

- Suit/jacket/blazer/sweater
- Shirt - traditional shirt with collar/ polo style
- Slacks
- Tie
- Shoes - dress/loafers/lace-ups (no flip flops, sneakers, or sandals), must be closed toe.

Unacceptable clothing for either sex includes jeans, sweatshirts, shirts of underwear type, see-through clothing, sleeveless shirts or any clothing that exposes a midriff, back, chest or underwear.

### **Personal Hygiene**

- It is essential that health care providers be free of offensive body odors including smoke residue.
- Perfume or aftershave should not be worn in the clinical practicum areas.
- Chewing gum or tobacco products may not be used in any clinical practicum.
- Hair
  - Should be neat, clean, and controlled.

- Should be worn up, restrained, and fastened so that it does not fall below chin level or collar.
- Or may wear hair in a short length, in a style that will not fall below the chin or into the face with movement.
- Solid white, black, or red headbands are allowed.
- Mustaches and beards are permissible if kept neatly trimmed.
- Tattoo visibility is subject to each agency policy. Tattoos that are determined by the clinical faculty to contain obscene, offensive, or discriminatory images or text that result in complaints from visitors or coworkers must be covered.
- Nails
  - Should be short, neatly groomed, and not extend beyond the fingertip.
  - No nail polish or artificial nails of any kind are allowed.
- Jewelry
  - When in the clinical practicum area, because of the potential for spread of infection and injury to client and/or student, jewelry is limited to only:
    - A durable analog watch
    - Earrings should be no larger than a nickel in diameter and should not extend below the earlobe or hang off the ear.
    - No visible body piercings (besides earrings) are allowed while in patient care areas.
    - If a piercing (non-earlobe) cannot be removed, it must be covered.
      - and secured at all times while in the clinical and laboratory settings.
    - A flat band on a ring finger may be worn while in patient care areas. No other rings are allowed.
    - Necklaces should not be worn.

**NOTE: If the agency's dress code is more restrictive than this policy, the student is expected to comply with the agency's policy. Exceptions to or differences in any of the policies may occur in some clinical practicum areas or with individual instructors to meet the clinical practicum experience requirements. Students will be notified of any exceptions. Faculty and/or preceptor may dismiss a student from a clinical practicum setting if the above policy is violated. Any questions should be discussed and clarified with the clinical practicum instructor and preceptor prior to clinical practicum participation.**

**Noncompliance with this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action by the faculty such as verbal warning, written warning, or dismissal from the clinical practicum site.**

**Professional Liability Insurance**

A specially designated student professional liability insurance policy is required of all students enrolled in the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing. Liability insurance fees have been incorporated into the student fees structure by the University of Arkansas.

Liability insurance coverage is applicable only when the student is functioning in the student role, in a clinical practicum course and expires on the date of graduation. The policy does not cover students while employed in clinical agencies. A copy of the professional liability insurance policy is on file in the EMSON office.

### **Use of Electronic Devices**

Use of any electronic devices to store/enter any type of patient information is a violation of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and may result in disciplinary action which may result in dismissal from the program.

Cell phones and other electronic devices (including telephone accessories; this excludes calculators) may not be visible or audible in the clinical setting.

Students are responsible for following the policy for electronics in the individual facility/organization in which they will be completing clinical practicum hours. It will be the student's responsibility to seek out this policy, understanding it, and follow it.

Pictures or recording of *any kind* (cameras, videos and/or audio recorders, cell phones and other devices) is prohibited in any clinical practicum or classroom setting.

### **Clinical Practicum Compliance Requirements**

All University of Arkansas, Eleanor Mann School of Nursing (EMSON) students enrolled in clinical practicum courses must be fully compliant with requirements for clinical prior to enrollment in each course. All compliance requirements can be found in EXXAT.

While a student in the EMSON, students are required to submit copies of:

- Annual TB screening
- MMR Vaccination Series or Positive Titer
- Varicella Vaccination Series or Positive Titer
- TDaP Vaccination within the last 10 years
- Flu Vaccination (Annual)
- Hepatitis B Positive Titer
- COVID Vaccination (per clinical site/CDC requirements)

- BLS Certification (Current)
- Health Insurance Card (Annual)
- Students must maintain compliance in EXXAT at all times while enrolled in practicum courses. If students are non-compliant in any area, they will not be allowed to attend practicums until compliance is met.

Any falsification or alteration of EXXAT documents are subject to investigation by the Office of Academic Integrity. The appropriate disciplinary action will be determined and may include dismissal from the program. See also the student handbook.

## **Responsibilities of Clinical Practicum Participants**

### **Faculty**

1. Coordination of clinical experience.
2. Provide student and preceptor with orientation to course expectations/requirements.
3. Establish and maintain patterns for communication (honest and timely) with clinical preceptor and student.
4. Facilitate problem-solving. Provide on-going guidance to clinical preceptor and student.
5. Meet with the clinical preceptor and the student according to an arranged schedule (minimum of three times per semester).
6. Review progress toward course outcomes and goals for personal and professional growth.
7. Evaluate student's clinical practicum performance incorporating data supplied by clinical preceptor and student.
8. Assume responsibility for the overall evaluation of the experience collaborating with the agency, clinical preceptor, and student.
9. Abide by the standards established by EMSON and the nursing profession regarding professional conduct.
10. Promote a learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. The University of Arkansas prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race/color, sex, gender, pregnancy, equal pay/compensation, age (over 40), national origin, disability, religion, marital or parental status, protected veteran or military status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity and retaliation and any other characteristic protected characteristic under applicable federal and state laws. For more on the University's policy please see: [Discrimination \(Including Discriminatory Harassment\) – Employment, Education, Programs and Services | VCFA | University of Arkansas \(uark.edu\)](#). To file a complaint please see: [Discrimination/Harassment | OEOC | University of Arkansas \(uark.edu\)](#)

### **Preceptor**

1. Act as a role model as practitioner, teacher, supervisor and/or manager.

2. Provide the student with ongoing constructive feedback related to student performance standards.
3. Provide feedback on student clinical practicum performance and progress toward attainment of objectives to both student and their course instructor.
4. Assist student with opportunities to gain competence and confidence in skill attainment necessary to perform in the BSN role.
5. Contribute to the student's summative evaluation.
6. Supervise student activities in the clinical setting. (NURS 45303) requires support and supervision during the formal presentation of the student's final project in the clinical setting.)
7. Communicate with faculty at set intervals to discuss student progress toward outcomes.
8. Validate students' attendance by verifying recorded hours and signing the clinical time log daily.
9. Report any issues with student attendance to the course instructor immediately.
10. Report any concerns with student performance/professionalism/absenteeism to course instructor immediately.
11. Work with course instructor to provide any necessary accommodation required for a student. EMSON faculty are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. For more information, see guidelines set by the [Center for Educational Access](#).
12. Maintain student rights and privacy as a partner with the University of Arkansas. See [FERPA Guidelines](#) for more information.
13. Promote a learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. The University of Arkansas prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race/color, sex, gender, pregnancy, equal pay/compensation, age (over 40), national origin, disability, religion, marital or parental status, protected veteran or military status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity and retaliation and any other characteristic protected characteristic under applicable federal and state laws. For more on the University's policy please see: [Discrimination \(Including Discriminatory Harassment\) – Employment, Education, Programs and Services | VCFA | University of Arkansas \(uark.edu\)](#)

### **Student**

1. Assume responsibility for meeting all course requirements and outcomes.
2. Develop goals for personal and professional growth communicating these to faculty and clinical preceptor.
3. Assume responsibility for fulfilling goals and directed learning activities.
4. Maintain lines of communication with clinical preceptor and faculty to promote achievement of directed learning activities.
5. Maintain punctual clinical practicum attendance according to a predetermined schedule. Notify clinical preceptor and faculty immediately if schedule cannot be met.

6. Maintain an accurate record of clinical attendance in EXXAT and on clinical time log. Ensure that time log is validated with preceptor's signature, daily.
7. Ensure that recording of practicum clinical hours is represented accurately and honestly in required course documents. Obtain preceptor signature on time log daily to validate clinical hours.
8. Assume responsibility for arranging and maintaining the schedule of conferences with faculty.
9. Maintain clinical practicum journal to be utilized for self-reflection on the clinical evaluation tool.
10. Complete an honest self-evaluation of own professional growth and weaknesses.
11. Participate in the evaluation of achievement of directed learning activities and the clinical preceptor experience.
12. Maintain a professional attitude of learning, humility, and service to others. Above all, the students will conduct themselves in a manner that exemplifies the high standards of the University of Arkansas, the EMSON, and the nursing profession.
13. Complete all orientation and onboarding required of clinical facility/University.
14. Maintain patient confidentiality according to HIPAA, the facility and University policies.

### **Experience Evaluation**

Grading criteria for each practicum will be outlined within each specific course. To assist with that process and to facilitate continuous quality improvement, at the end of the practicum experience, evaluations will be required as outlined below.

### **Student Evaluation**

- Student will complete a self-evaluation for each practicum based on the outcomes for the course. Complete details will be provided within each Blackboard course.
- The preceptor will complete evaluations of the students. These occur at regular intervals throughout the course. The final evaluation includes an internet survey. Students will also be evaluated by the preceptor at least twice during their clinical rotation. The student is responsible for ensuring these evaluations are completed. Without preceptor input on student performance, student's self-evaluation cannot be validated.

### **Preceptor and Clinical Site Evaluation**

- Students will evaluate the preceptor by completing a survey that will be provided within each course.



- Students will evaluate the clinical site by completing a survey that will be provided within each course.

### **Experience Evaluation**

- Survey items will be included for preceptor to provide feedback on the course, expectations, general experience satisfaction, faculty collaboration, etc.
- Students will have the opportunity to provide feedback during the student evaluation process at the end of each semester.

### **Policy for Infection Control**

Students enrolled in a practicum will follow all site policies pertaining to infection control, including required PPE.

### **Policy for Student Injury in the Clinical Practicum Setting**

1. Administer first aid.
2. If the injury occurs in the Clinical Practicum Setting:
  - a. Fill out an incident report for the clinical agency and submit a copy of the report (complete with the appropriate signatures) to the School of Nursing.
  - b. Notify the course instructor as soon as possible to fill out an Eleanor Mann School of Nursing incident report.
  - c. Incident report will be filed in student cumulative record.
3. Assessment of the student's status is required.
  - a. If the clinical agency has an emergency service department with a healthcare provider available, the student is required to be evaluated by the provider at that time. If the clinical agency does not offer this service, the student is required to be evaluated by a provider elsewhere. A report of the attending healthcare provider's assessment of the student's status and/or recommended treatment must be submitted to the School of Nursing.
4. The expenses for the above assessment and/or treatment will be borne by the student.

### **Performance Improvement Plan**

In the event the student does not comply with any of the expectations discussed in this handbook, or displays unprofessionalism as reported by preceptor, clinical facility personnel, or faculty member, the student will receive a Performance Improvement Plan, to be reviewed with the student by EMSON clinical course faculty.

Falsification or forgery of clinical hours will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity. Disciplinary action will be taken, including possible dismissal from the program.

### **Policy for Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens**

1. Administer first aid.
2. Management of student injury:
  - a. Fill out an incident report for the clinical agency with a copy of the report (complete with the appropriate signatures) and submit it to the School of Nursing.
  - b. Notify the course instructor as soon as possible to fill out an Eleanor Mann School of Nursing incident report.
  - c. Assessment of the student's risk status with treatment and follow-up is required. If the clinical agency has an emergency service department with a healthcare provider available, the student is required to be evaluated by the provider at that time. If the clinical agency does not offer this service, the student is required to be evaluated by a provider elsewhere. A report of the attending healthcare provider's assessment of the student's status and/or recommended treatment must be submitted to the School of Nursing.
  - d. Identification of the source patient and subsequent risk appraisal should be included in the report.
  - e. Expenses for the assessment and treatment will be borne by the student.
3. The injured student should discuss his/her medical history and status with the assessing provider.
  - a. A history of documented Hepatitis B infection or completion of Heptavax or equivalent immunization should render the student immune to Hepatitis B, although assessment of immune status may be needed (e.g., incomplete Heptavax series or intragluteal injection).
  - b. An individual who is HIV antibody positive or a low-risk individual known to be HIV negative requires no immediate testing.
  - c. A student with unknown HIV status and no history of Hepatitis B infection or immunization may need baseline HIV antibody or Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBSA) testing (see specific instructions below).
4. If the source patient cannot be identified, or if he/she refuses evaluation and is of unknown risk status for HIV and Hepatitis B infection:
  - a. The student, if not immune to Hepatitis B, should receive a single dose of Hepatitis B Immune Globulin (HBIG), 0.06 cc/kg, as soon as possible after exposure. Heptavax immunization should also be initiated (with consent) within seven days of exposure; 1 cc in the deltoid muscle, booster doses

should follow after one month and six months. Students who do not receive Heptavax should receive a second dose of HBIG after one month.

- b. If the student's HIV antibody status is unknown, a baseline HIV antibody test should be done and, assuming negativity, repeated at six to eight weeks and at six months.
  - c. The student should inquire about relevant symptoms of HIV and Hepatitis B infections and should notify his/her physician if clinical problems occur. Counseling may be needed for emotional reactions, and education for reducing the risk of transmitting a potential infection.
5. If the source patient is identified and consents to evaluation:
- a. If the source patient is known to be immune to Hepatitis B, the student may be reassured (if not immune).
  - b. If the source patient is not immune to Hepatitis B, he/she should have an HBSA test; negative, the student may be reassured if he/she is not immune; if positive, and if the student is not immune, treatment should be initiated within seven days (see 3a above).
  - c. If the patient is considered low risk for HIV infection or is known to be HIV negative, he/she may not need to be tested; the student should be tested only if anxious.
  - d. If the patient is of high or uncertain risk for HIV infection, an HIV antibody test should be done and repeated in six to eight weeks and in six months. The student should also be tested as in 3b above.
  - e. If the patient is known to be HIV antibody positive, the student should be counseled and tested as indicated in 2b and 3b above.
  - f. If the patient is acutely ill, other prophylactic or follow-up measures should be done as appropriate.
  - g. Counseling, education, and follow-up are encouraged (see 3c). Expenses for follow-up treatment will be the responsibility of the student.

Note: These Guidelines were developed by the University of Arkansas Health Center. The initial statements as to the management of the exposure have been adapted to meet the requirements of the School of Nursing and the online student.

### **Helpful Hints for Preceptors**

1. Set the tone for open and honest communication early and be clear on your expectations (e.g., no cell phone, follow when I lead, appropriate times to ask questions, etc.).
2. Be liberal with communication about their performance.

3. The course instructor will be in contact with you prior to the student's start and throughout the student's clinical time. If you do not hear from them or need assistance other than what they can provide, you may reach out to [nurseprac@uark.edu](mailto:nurseprac@uark.edu).
4. Encourage the student to be proactive in achieving their goals and course objectives.
5. Complete the preceptor continuing education course available through the University.
6. If you are having any issues with a student, do not wait until scheduled evaluations to report this. Contact the student's course instructor immediately with your concerns. If you need an instructor's contact information you may reach out to the practicum team at [nursprac@uark.edu](mailto:nursprac@uark.edu)
7. Remember that you are a vital part of the student's educational journey. Share your expertise! This is your opportunity to help shape the future of our profession.
8. Although our students are licensed nurses, they are to perform a student role while in clinical. Supervising skills helps them to learn new techniques or perfect ones they have been using to prevent short cuts or bad habits from being reinforced.

**Revised August 2024**