Standard Operating Procedure
Student and Trainee Clinical Placement

Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) establishes the requirements, roles and responsibilities of ACT Government Health Directorate (Health Directorate) staff, non Health Directorate staff, private sector health organisations and students and trainees for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the Health Directorate’s Student and Trainee Clinical Placement Policy.

Scope

This SOP applies to all individuals involved in the clinical placement, supervision and/or management of students and trainees, health care providers and staff of the Health Directorate.

Procedure

1. General

The Student Clinical Placement Unit (SCPU) has overall responsibility for the management and documentation of student/trainee placements.

1.1. Currency of Deeds with Educational Institutions

The Student Clinical Placement Unit (SCPU) must ensure that Educational Institutions:

- have a current Placement in ACT Health Facilities Deed (Deed) with the Health Directorate; and
- have current insurance (including Personal Accident) cover for their students.

Note:

Students/trainees not affiliated with an Educational Institution must contact SCPU regarding required insurance cover before commencement of placement.

1.2. Website for student and trainee clinical placements

SCPU will maintain currency of information contained on the Student and Trainee Clinical Placement Website.
2. Determining placements

2.1. For the various professions, placements are arranged as follows:

- **Allied Health**
  Placements are arranged either through the lead professional and/or Clinical Educator of the respective professions and the SCPU can provide the contact details. Placements will not be accepted without the approval of the lead professional and/or Clinical Educator in consultation with the operational area. All student and trainee clinical placements must be registered with the SCPU before placements commence.

- **Medical**
  placements are arranged through the ANU Medical School or the Health Directorate Medical Officer Support Unit (MOSU) for trainees. All medical students and trainee clinical placements must be registered with the SCPU before placements commence.

- **Nursing and Midwifery**
  Placements must be arranged through the SCPU. The SCPU Nursing and Midwifery Coordinator will arrange suitable placements for students as determined by the learning objectives and requirements for the individual student and/or student cohort. The SCPU Nursing and Midwifery Coordinator will directly liaise with the Manager of the various clinical areas to negotiate placements. All nursing and midwifery students and trainee clinical placements must be registered with the SCPU before placements commence.

NOTE: If a student or trainee contacts the clinical area directly, they should be referred to the appropriate channels above.

2.2. Students not affiliated with an educational institution

Where an individual student or trainee seeking placement and is not affiliated with an Educational Institution, the student or trainee will prior to being granted a placement provide the following to SCPU:

- Written evidence of a National Police Check (NPC); and
- Written evidence that they are compliant with immunisation policy.

Non affiliated students should also contact SCPU regarding the insurance cover they require before commencement of a placement.

2.3. Confirmation of placements

SCPU staff will notify the Educational Institutions and the student/trainee of a placement when it has been confirmed by the clinical area.
3. **Pre-commencement requirements**

3.1. **General**

Students/trainees must be aware of and understand the requirements of the Health Directorate prior to commencing their placement. Students and trainees are encouraged to use the Placement in ACT Health Facilities Deed, 2012 information available on the Health Directorate’s website for Student Clinical Placements and in the Health Directorate’s Student and Trainee Clinical Placement Policy and Standard Operating Procedures.

3.2. **Student Acknowledgement Form**

All students/trainees must complete a ‘Student Acknowledgement Form’ prior to or at the commencement of their clinical placements to confirm their understanding of the Directorate’s requirements in relation to a placement.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that students and trainees are aware of their obligations during a placement in accordance with the completed Health Directorate Student Acknowledgement form. This can be done at the beginning of each year for those students on multiple Health Directorate placements during that year, or at the beginning of a placement for those students and trainees undertaking one placement with the Health Directorate for that year. Clarification of students and trainees understanding of the contents of the form is essential.

A copy of this form is included in Appendix 5 of this document and is also available on the Health Directorate Student and Trainee website.

Supervisors must return the completed form to SCPU.

Students/trainees are encouraged to read the “Student Essentials” pages. These can be found in the appropriate health professional section of the Health Directorate Student and Trainee Clinical Placement website.

3.3. **Visas**

Overseas students/trainees are to contact the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship (formerly DIMIA) regarding Visa requirements. The Health Directorate is not responsible for seeking visas or specific approval to undertake a student or trainee placement. Overseas students and trainees are responsible for checking that their visa permits them to undertake a student placement. The Directorate does not accept responsibility for an individual not employed by the Directorate who breaches their visa conditions by undertaking a student or trainee placement.
3.4. Immunisation/Vaccination

All students and trainees must comply with the requirements of the Health Directorate Staff Screening and Immunisation Policy prior to the commencement of a placement. The Directorate will not provide a placement without written evidence that the student/trainee has received any required immunisations (Appendix 1).

Students/trainees must provide written evidence of compliance to SCPU.

3.5. National Police Checks

All students/trainees must provide satisfactory written evidence that they have undertaken a National Police Check (NPC). The Health Directorate will not accommodate the student or trainee on a clinical placement prior to the receipt of such evidence. SCPU can provide further clarification (Appendix 2).

Students/trainees must provide written evidence of compliance to SCPU.

3.6. Compulsory E-learning

All students/trainees are required to complete compulsory e-learning modules prior to commencement of clinical placement.
- A logon is automatically provided to each student via the Student Placement Online (SPO) system;
- Audits are conducted by SCPU to ensure compliance;
- Compulsory e-learning modules to be completed by all students on clinical placements include;
  - Fire and Safety
  - Manual Handling Awareness
  - Child Protection Level 1
  - Infection Prevention and Control
- Students and trainees will be advised by SCPU regarding additional discipline specific compulsory elearning requirements.

4. During a clinical placement

NOTE:

Supervisors are responsible for assisting all students and trainees to meet the objectives of their clinical placements. However, whilst providing a quality educational experience for the student or trainee, the primary responsibility of the supervisor in relation to student/ trainee clinical placement is the clinical care of the clients/patients.

Supervisors are responsible for reporting, via Riskman, any adverse incidents that occur during the clinical placement. SCPU should be contacted for assistance as necessary.
4.1. Orientation

a) General

The student or trainee must be provided with the name and contact details of the person/s responsible for their overall supervision. Additionally, they also need to be introduced to other staff members who can assist them when their supervisor is not available.

Supervisors must ensure that all students and trainees receive workplace orientation on or before the first day of their clinical placement.

b) Student Orientation Checklist

The Student Orientation Checklist (Appendix 7) outlines requirements in relation to workplace orientation, including:
- The work environment;
- Emergency procedures and equipment;
- Department routine;
- Occupational Health and Safety matters specific to the area, including manual handling equipment;
- Infection control systems, and
- Introduction to clients and consent for student to administer care or treatment.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the Check List is completed and signed for each student or trainee at the commencement of their clinical placement and returned to SCPU.

c) Other Relevant Policies and Guidelines

The supervisor is responsible for:

- providing access to the Health Directorate guidelines, manuals and policy and procedures necessary for the student/trainee to use during their clinical placement and for ensuring that students/trainees comply with such requirements
- ensuring students and trainees are aware of client confidentiality and the requirement to comply with the Privacy Act 1988;
- advising students/trainees of Health Directorate infection control requirements; and
- ensuring client/patient consent is obtained prior to a student/trainee performing a clinical procedure on a client/patient.

4.2. Manual Handling Training

Students and trainees are required to follow safe manual handling work practices, as defined in the Health Directorate’s Manual Handling Policy and attend manual handling training provided by the Health Directorate.
Students and trainees must take all possible measures to minimise the risk of injury to themselves, staff and clients when involved in manual handling.

4.3. Student identification and proximity cards

All students and trainees working in the Health Directorate facilities must be correctly identified and are provided with appropriate security access cards. The cards must be worn at all times and be returned to security services once the clinical placement is completed.

Supervisors must ensure that students and trainees comply with this requirement.

4.4. Information Communication Technology (ICT) Resources

Student and trainees access to Health Directorate ICT resources is limited to that which is required in order to meet the objectives of their clinical placement. Students or trainees should be given access to Health Directorate databases only when absolutely necessary and their use of patient information databases must be closely supervised.

4.5. Intellectual Property

Students and trainees must comply with the Health Directorate’s Intellectual Property Policy. This Policy is available on the Health Directorate’s Policies and Clinical Guidance Documents Intranet.

4.6. Use of Government cars

Students/trainees, while on clinical placement with the Health Directorate, are not eligible to drive government cars.

The only exemptions to this are:

- Where the safety of the student/trainee may be compromised if they use a private car or taxi.
- Where the course objectives require a student/trainee to undertake clinical placement activities with minimal direct supervision. This is applicable to final year students and trainees only.
- To facilitate cross-campus mobility in a timely manner, enabling a community based and multi-site care delivery model.

Where the student’s/trainee’s use of a car is warranted, the supervisor must ensure compliance with the ACT Public Service Passenger and Light Commercial Vehicle 2010 Management Guidelines. This includes the completion with the student/trainee of the “Drivers check list” and the “Driver authorisation forms” and submission of these as required by the Guidelines.
4.7. Absences

Students must notify the relevant placement unit of any illness or absence.

SCPU will notify the relevant placement unit of any known or anticipated student or trainee absence during the clinical placement period.

4.8. Issues and Disputes

As per the Deed, the initial management and resolution of any student or trainee related placements issues, will be undertaken at the unit level.

The clinical supervisor must notify SCPU in the event of a dispute arising in relation to a placement, (including the failure of a student or trainee to meet the required standard of conduct and behaviour).

Students or trainees should contact their Health Directorate supervisor or SCPU regarding issues of concern that arise during the placement (for example, being asked to work outside their scope of practice). In the event that the student contacts their Educational Institution instead, the Educational Institution staff are required by the Deed to contact SCPU to report issues affecting the placement. SCPU will notify relevant staff of any issue raised by students/trainees.

Where possible SCPU and the lead professional or clinical supervisor will determine a resolution in consultation with the student/trainee.

If the issue cannot be solved at the unit level, SCPU will notify the Educational Institution and a resolution will be sought.

Under the Deed, Educational Institutions are required to respond in a timely manner to inquiries from the Health Directorate in relation to a placement. Section 14 of the Deed allows for a clinical placement to be terminated if the Educational Institution fails to respond to an urgent request from SCPU.

For nursing and midwifery issues and disputes, refer to Appendix 6 - 1. Nursing and Midwifery Issues/Concerns Flowchart.

5. On conclusion of a clinical placement

5.1. Clinical Placement Evaluation

SCPU evaluates the clinical placement from the student or trainee’s perspective at the completion of their placement. This evaluation will be automatically sent to students via email on the last day of their clinical placement.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that every student/trainee has the opportunity to complete an evaluation survey at completion of their placement.
Student Clinical Placement Unit contact details

Email: SCPU@act.gov.au

Phone: +61 (0)2 6174 5887

Physical address: SCPU, Level 1, Building 5, Canberra Hospital Campus, Yamba Drive, Garran, ACT 2605

Postal address: SCPU, Health Directorate, PO Box 11 Woden 2602, ACT, Australia

Evaluation

Outcome Measures

- 100% compliance that all clinical placements are covered by a current Deed and Schedule.
- Demand and supply of clinical placements (number of placements requested and facilitated,) identified, monitored and tracked.
- All students and trainees on clinical placements prior to commencement:
  - A Produce a National Police Check
  - Meet Immunisation requirements
  - Receive workplace orientation
  - Have a named supervisor
  - Compete mandatory training

Method

- SCPU will provide an annual report showing that Deeds and Schedules are current and filed in accordance with the Territory Records Act 2002.
- The Student Placement Online (SPO) system will provide current and projected student placement data to help identify, monitor and report the demand and supply of clinical placements.
- SPO reports demonstrating compliance for each student and trainee have prior to commencement of placement:
  - A National Police Check
  - Immunisation requirements met
  - Workplace orientation provided
  - A named supervisor
  - Competed mandatory training

Related Legislation, Policies and Standards

Legislation

- Health Records (Privacy and Access Act) 1997
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)
- Territory Records Act 2002
- Crimes Act 1900 (ACT)
- ACT Public Sector Management Act 1994
• Working with Vulnerable People Act 2011 (ACT)
• ACT Occupational Health and Safety Act 1989
• ACT Manual Handling Regulations 1997

Policies and Standard Operating Procedures
• Health Directorate Staff Screening and Immunisation Policy
• Health Directorate Manual Handling Policy
• Health Directorate Acceptable Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Resources
• Health Directorate Clinical Records - Release or Sharing of Clinical Records or Personal Health Information SOP
• Health Directorate Child Protection Policy
• Health Directorate Clinical Record Management Policy
• Health Directorate Infection Prevention and Control Policy
• Health Directorate Staff identification Policy
• ACT Government Public Service Code of Conduct
• ACT Government Mobile Devices Policy
• ACT Government Encryption Policy
• ACT Government ICT Security Policy
• ACT Government Password Policy and Standards
• ACT Public Non-Executive Passenger And Light Commercial Vehicle Management Policy

Standards
• Work Save Australia: For the Prevention of Musculo-skeletal Disorders from Performing Manual Handling Tasks at work
• National Standards for Manual Tasks Canberra August 2007
• Work Cover ACT Manual Handling Code of Practice 1999
• Work Cover Australia National Code of Practice August 2007
• Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4360: 1999 Standards Australia
• ACT Public Sector Management Standards 2006

Definition of Terms

Approved practitioner - a suitably qualified Health Directorate staff member that students/trainees can go to for assistance if they cannot contact their Health Directorate supervisor. An example is the supervisor’s manager or lead professional or the delegate of a lead professional.

Assessment (for immunisation status) - referred to in Appendix 1. For the purpose of this SOP is the full evaluation of a person by an appropriately trained clinician, in relation to their level of protection against vaccine preventable diseases covered by the Policy as well as an evaluation of their tuberculosis status.

Blood borne diseases - referred to in Appendix 1. For the purpose of this policy, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) are classified as blood borne diseases.

Client - refers to all hospital inpatients and outpatients, residents serviced by Canberra Hospital and Health Services or any other health service provided by Health Directorate.
Clinical area - area of health facility where student clinical placements occur. This includes hospital and community settings.

Clinical placement - refers to a professional practice placement undertaken within an ACT Government Health Directorate workplace setting by Medical, Allied Health, Nursing and Midwifery students. This includes undergraduate, post-graduate and 'return to profession' programs, that are formally undertaken with an education/vocational institutions and/or professional association bodies.

Clinical supervision - refers to the provision of both formal and informal constructive feedback through direct or indirect observation and support. It can also include constructive facilitation of treatment planning, progress reporting and the provision of student/trainee performance evaluation.

Deed - refers to a Deed between the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), represented by ACT Government Health Directorate and one of the following:
1. An Educational Institution;
2. Another Health Service Provider;
3. A Training Organisation; or
4. An individual.

A Deed sets out the terms and conditions that apply to ACT Government Health Directorate’s provision of access to its facilities and clients to students or other individuals, for the purpose of providing the students or individuals with opportunities to obtain practical clinical experience, usually to fulfil educational and/or training requirements.

Demand for clinical placement - refers to the number of students requiring placement, the duration of that placement, the number of hours/days, the distribution of those hours across the week/month/year, the supervision requirements including hours and ratio, and the location of the placement.

Documented evidence - refers to immunisation status and includes a written record of vaccination signed by the provider and/or serological confirmation of protection. This does not include a statutory declaration.

Exposure prone procedures (EPPs) - referred to in Appendices 1 & 4, are a subset of invasive procedures where there is potential for contact between the skin (usually finger or thumb) of the health care worker and sharp surgical instruments, needles or sharp tissues (splinters/pieces of bone/tooth) in body cavities or in poorly visualized or confined body sites including the mouth.

Health worker - referred to in Appendix 1. Health Directorate employees, persons who work in health care settings (including students, trainees and voluntary workers) whose activities normally involve client care and/or contact with blood or body fluids. See Table 1 (Appendix 1) for further risk categorization of health care workers.

Health facility - for the purpose of this SOP refers to a defined service location such as a hospital, community health centre or other location where health services are provided.
Hepatitis C (HCV) - referred to in Appendix 1. HCV status is the presence or absence of Hepatitis C infection and/or active disease.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) - referred to in Appendix 1. HIV status is the presence or absence of HIV infection and/or active disease.

Immuno-deficient - referred to in Appendix 1, is a state where the immune response of the body is lowered. This can increase the risk to an individual from infectious diseases and alter the immune response to vaccination by either reducing the response to the vaccine or by increasing the risk that a live vaccine may cause progressive infection. The degree of immuno-deficiency can vary from insignificant to profound and this should be taken into account when considering a schedule of vaccination or risk from exposure to infectious diseases.

Institution - refers to an Australian Educational Institution offering vocational and professional qualifications. It includes universities, and institutions of technical and further education. This may also include international institutions.

Lead professional delegate - is the person or persons nominated by the Allied Health lead professional to coordinate the teaching and training for that discipline. This person is often a clinical educator for that profession.

MOSU - Medical Officers Support Unit

NPC - National Police Check – must be completed prior to commencement of clinical placement

Non-responders - referred to in Appendix 1, are persons who have been fully vaccinated according to Table 3 (Appendix 1), which indicates acceptable evidence of protection, but who have failed to demonstrate adequate antibody levels.

Protection - referred to in Appendix 1, for the purpose of this SOP means the necessary measures that need to be taken to enable a person to be considered not susceptible to a specific disease.

Risk assessment - referred to in Appendix 1, is the overall process of estimating the magnitude of risk and deciding what actions will be taken.

Schedule - refers to the part of the Deed that contains specific details relating to a particular clinical placement that is to take place under that Deed.

Student - refers to students undertaking a course of study in nursing, midwifery, medicine or an allied health profession at an Educational Institution.

SCPU - Student Clinical Placement Unit

Supervisor - one who has been approved by the Health Directorate and/or an Educational Institution to facilitate student/trainee learning experience and/or the assessment, directing, monitoring and evaluating of treatment or care undertaken by a student/trainee.
**Tertiary Institution** - refers to Australian institutions offering vocational and professional qualifications. It may also include overseas institutions. It includes universities and institutions of technical and further education.

**Trainee** - refers to a person not employed by ACT Government Health Directorate but seeking to obtain clinical placement in ACT Government Health Directorate and may include:

- An overseas qualified health professional participating in a course administered by Health Directorate for the purpose of obtaining registration in the ACT or elsewhere in Australia, or to meet any other relevant professional requirements to practice in Australia.
- A health professional that requires clinical placement experience to obtain or maintain registration in the ACT or elsewhere in Australia, or to update existing qualifications.
- A student of an overseas institution seeking to gain clinical placement experience in Australia.
- A non-citizen of Australia sponsored by an international health organisation, for example the World Health Organisation, seeking to gain clinical placement experience in Australia.

Any other person the Health Directorate considers as being appropriate to be subject to a Deed for placement.

**Attachments**

Appendix 1: Information Sheet - Student and Trainee Immunisation
Appendix 2: Information Sheet - Student and Trainee National Police Check
Appendix 3: Information Sheet - Student Identification and Proximity Cards
Appendix 4: Information Sheets for Students and Trainees
Appendix 5: Forms
  1. Authorisation to Release Personal Information for Further Investigation of a Police Check
  2. Authorisation to Release Personal Information for Further Investigation of Immunisation Status
  3. Student and Trainee Placement Obligations
Appendix 6: Process Flowcharts
  1. Nursing and Midwifery Issues/Concerns Flowchart
  2. Allied Health Placements Flow Chart
  3. Medical ANUMS Placement Flow Chart
Appendix 7: Orientation Check List
Appendix 8: Placement in ACT Health Facilities Deed, 2012

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