

Three easy steps to Supervising staff from other professions

1. Identify possible learning opportunities

All professions share some similar values and treatment approaches. These can be assessed by clinical educators across the board, regardless of their clinical background. The interprofessional mentors supervise students from other professions only during the interprofessional learning activities (Deutschlander & Suter, 2011).

Examples:

- Identifying and explaining the roles of other health professionals
- Working effectively in a team
- Effective communication
- Client-centred care
- Maintaining patient safety
- Adequate provision of a care plan
- Inclusion of relevant stakeholders

The outcomes from these learning experiences then contribute to the profession-specific clinical educator's evaluation of the student placement. Profession specific requirements need further input from a clinical educator in their own health profession (Deutschlander & Suter, 2011).

Examples:

- A Speech Pathology swallowing assessment,
- A Physiotherapy back pain assessment,
- An Occupational Therapy shower assessment,
- An Exercise Physiologist exercise tolerance assessment.

2. Select the most relevant activity to address the student's needs

Depending on the student's level of experience, selection of appropriate learning opportunities is vital. Work shadowing a colleague from another profession may be suitable for the novice learner, while contributing independently to a case discussion may be more valuable to a final year student. **NB:** IPL can be achieved within a team setting or intersectorially if no immediate team exists. E.g. private practitioner, pharmacist, GP and radiology all work together to achieve best patient care, but do not necessarily communicate directly, frequently or face to face.

3. Evaluate with the student

Consolidating learning requires reflection – and it is no different for IPL. An interprofessional mentor needs to include clear goals for the session e.g. ‘student able to identify the roles of three other health professions’. The mentor then needs to follow up a session with a discussion that may incorporate:

- Their rationale for choosing particular interventions,
- What the student in their own role would look for in the same situation,
- Which roles could potentially be shared, and which are profession specific,
- Who else might need to be included in the patient’s care.

All discussions need to be focused on the overarching goals outlined in section 1 above.

Deutschlander & Suter, for the Alberta Health Services have created a feedback form to work through with your student upon completion of the activity.

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/careers/docs/WhereDoYouFit/wduf-stu-sp-ip-mentoring-guide.pdf> (final page of document)

Teaching tip

Learning opportunities and evaluations can be completed with a group of students, using the same set of questions.

Example: An OT, PT, SP and EP student participate in a case conference. You can provide the debriefing session upon completion, using the questions outlined above. Perhaps get them to write down a few ideas then compare during the discussion.

Group reflections work well as it can often save time and enrich the experience for the students.

References

Deutschlander, S, & Suter, E. (2011). *Guide to interprofessional mentoring program at Alberta Health Services*. Health Systems and Workforce Research Unit, Alberta Health Services.

Retrieved from <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/careers/docs/WhereDoYouFit/wduf-stu-sp-ip-mentoring-guide.pdf>