
Integrating New Learners

Scheduling

It is important to balance the learning needs of your preceptee with the logistical realities of your clinic and providing excellent patient care. Before integrating your learner into the schedule, notify your patients that you will be supervising a learner and that you are still in charge of their care. Try to select a good cross-section of patients normally seen in your unit/site and gradually increase the level of care complexity from the beginning to the end of the preceptorship.

Before Start Date

Communicate relevant information to learners, including:

1. Clinic contact information
2. Your contact information
3. Arrival day/time
4. Dress code
5. Their schedule
6. Expectations for attendance, absences, and makeup days
7. Parking and building access

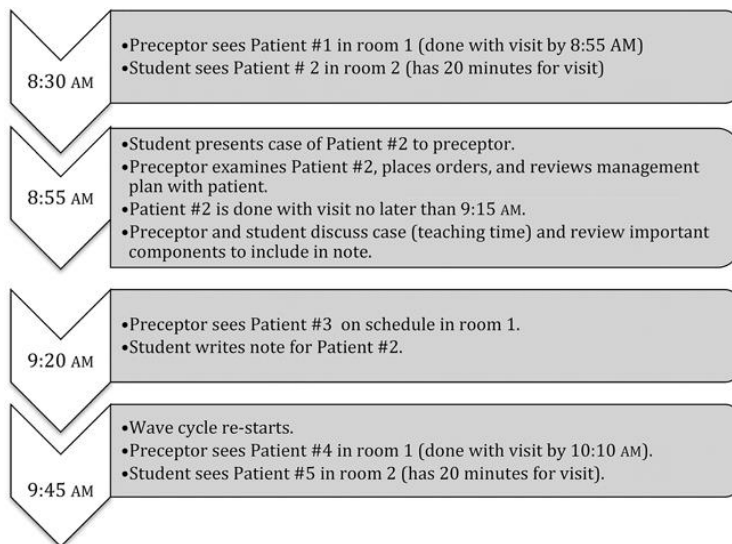
Create an agenda for their first day. It could include:

1. Discussion with learner about their past experiences, education, and expectations
2. Tour of the clinic/unit
3. Location of supplies, restrooms, and break rooms
4. Introduction to forms and relevant documentation practices
5. Hands-on experiences with supplies and equipment
6. Introduction to other staff
7. Discussion about learning objectives and knowledge gaps
8. Clarifying evaluation and feedback procedures and preferences

Strategies for Scheduling

Wave scheduling

The wave schedule model is an adaptable scheduling strategy that allows for efficient teaching in busy clinical settings. Essentially, two patients are scheduled at the same time. The preceptor sees Patient #1 on their own while the preceptee sees Patient #2 on their own. Both finish visits at the same time. The student then presents Patient #2 case to the preceptor who subsequently sees Patient #2, reviews management plan and then discusses with learner. Preceptor moves on to Patient #3 while the learner finishes their note for Patient #2. The wave then repeats. See an example of a wave schedule below.



Source: Lehner V, Smith DS. Wave Scheduling: Efficient Precepting in the Outpatient Setting. *J Physician Assist Educ.* 2016;27(4):200-202. doi:10.1097/JPA.0000000000000094

Manipulated structure scheduling

In this approach, students are integrated by focusing on limited portions of multiple visits. Patients are carefully selected based on student's experience, competency, and skill level. Preceptor and learner see patients together, with the student focusing on basics of patient care for that unit/site. Novice learners may see anywhere from 2-3 patients per day with the number and complexity increasing as their clinical skills develop. Following each day, learners create templates, notes, and strategies for routine elements of patient care. The student thus gradually expands their knowledge and patient visits provide opportunities for both observation of preceptor and student.

Source: Lazarus J. Precepting 101: Teaching Strategies and Tips for Success for Preceptors. *J Midwifery Womens Health.* 2016;61(S1):11-21. doi:10.1111/jmwh.12520