Facilitator Guide to Teaching Medical Students in Family Medicine Clerkship, MD Program

Dept. of Family Medicine, Faculty Development (2025)

TITLE SLIDE – **Facilitator Guide to Teaching Medical Students in Family Medicine Clerkship, MD Program**

Thank you for agreeing to teach a medical student as part of the Family Medicine Clerkship, a joint program between the Department of Family Medicine and the MD Program at the University of Alberta. We hope you will find this short video useful as we will be highlighting the most important aspects of having a clerkship student in your clinical practice.

SLIDE TWO: Objectives

This short video aims to:

1. Describe the structure of Family Medicine Clerkship in MD Program
2. Discuss Education Sessions and Absence Policies
3. Review the preceptor's roles and responsibilities when supervising a Year 3 clerkship student
4. Review assessment of students and required clinical encounters

SLIDE THREE: What is Year 3 Family Medicine Clerkship?

The purpose of the Family Medicine Clerkship is to provide clinical experiences in Family Medicine to senior (Year 3) medical students in the MD Program.

There are multiple reasons why clerkship is an important part of medical school training:

- The clerkship years provide students with opportunities for learning through real-life, authentic clinical encounters.
- Students get to experience one-on-one patient interactions which will help reinforce their communication, physical exam and clinical decision-making skills.
- Theoretical knowledge from the first two years of medical school can now be applied to real patients to solidify clinical reasoning and patient care.
- Most importantly, clerkship provides the necessary foundation for residency training.

SLIDE FOUR: Structure of Clerkship

- The Family Medicine Clerkship is an 8-week rotation that is often divided into 4 weeks at an urban location and 4 weeks at a rural location. Students may also choose to complete the entire 8-week rotation at a rural or regional site depending on site availability.
- Students are required to complete a minimum of 64 clinical half days over the 8-week rotation.
- The Family Medicine Clerkship follows the MD Program Clerkship Duty Hours Policy. As with all other clerkship rotations, students are permitted to be on home call no more than 1 in 3 nights and on in-house call no more than 1 in 4 nights.

- Preceptors can peruse the FMED546 Student Clerkship google site HERE for more information about the 3rd year family medicine clerkship structure at the University of Alberta.

SLIDE FIVE: Mandatory Education Sessions

- Mandatory Education Sessions are developed to provide students with a variety of opportunities for didactic, hands on, small group and peer teaching as well as self-learning.
- We have limited the number of didactic sessions in an effort to maximize clinical learning opportunities and also purposefully spread out the sessions over several weeks to support their clinical learning as students progress through the rotation.
- Be aware that the final examination is a written exam that occurs on the final Friday of the rotation followed by a feedback session with the MD Program where students can offer their evaluation of the clerkship. Additionally, there is a Longitudinal Themes Communication Session on the last Friday afternoon that covers Conflict Negotiation and Error Disclosure. As a result, the last day of clinic with preceptors will most likely be a Thursday.

SLIDE SIX: Absences

- Students can be absent from clinic for 2 main reasons.
- Firstly, as noted in the previous slides, students must attend mandatory education sessions and as such will be absent from their clinical duties during those times.
- Secondly, students may be absent for other reasons such as illness, personal emergencies, or personal or professional days. These types of absences must be submitted by the student and approved by the UME Office. Once approved, an approval email will be forwarded to you.

SLIDE SEVEN: Preceptor Roles and Responsibilities

A preceptor for Family Medicine Clerkship has the following roles which includes:

1. Maintaining a collegial relationship with the student
2. Setting expectations with the student
3. Providing an orientation to the clinical environment and possibly the community and life outside the clinic as well
4. Providing opportunities for SUPERVISED clinical experience
5. Informing patients that they will be seen by a supervised University of Alberta medical student
6. Providing the student with constructive feedback on a regular basis that may include the completion of EPA's
7. Performing timely formal written assessments of the student's clinical performance

The responsibilities highlighted in Points 6 and 7 takes us to next section which is assessment of students

SLIDE EIGHT: Assessment

- The clerkship assessment consists of 4 components: the URBAN preceptor clinical assessment (MDPA), the RURAL preceptor clinical assessment (MDPA), the written examination, and a project presentation. Each of these components is weighted equally at 25% each.
- In addition to passing the 4 components, students must also attend all their mandatory Education Sessions, meet the minimum clinical half-day requirements (8 half days per week), complete 16 EPAs, and log 13 clinical encounters.
- As their preceptor, you can help medical students meet these requirements by ensuring that the appropriate clinical encounters are provided, and that 2 EPA's are completed each week.

SLIDE NINE: Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) – Assessment FOR Learning

Now, you may be wondering what EPAs are. EPAs stand for Entrustable Professional Activities and these are assessment activities directed towards learning and can be considered a form of feedback.

- EPAs are feedback opportunities based on direct observations
- If you are a graduate of a Family Medicine residency program in Canada, you may be familiar with field notes. EPAs have similarities with field notes in documenting professional activities in a formative way.
- The students are required to have at least 2 EPAs completed each week.
- The EPAs must be completed within 5 days of the observed activity to ensure timely feedback, and ultimately best completed and submitted at the time of review.

SLIDE TEN: Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) – Assessment FOR Learning (formative)

- This is an example of a portion of an EPA form that you will be completing for your students. As you can see, the assessment is anchored to expectations for the first day of residency.
- The feedback you are providing to your learner through this form is intended to help guide students towards residency.
- Click HERE in the transcript to explore a 2 minute video on how to complete EPA's for UME teachers.

SLIDE ELEVEN: MD Program Assessment Form (MDPAs) – Assessment OF Learning (summative)

- In contrast to EPAs, MDPAs are MD Program Assessments and these are assessment activities directed towards decision making. For example, does the student meet clerkship expectations or do they require more time in Family Medicine clerkship
- If you are a graduate of a Family Medicine residency program, you may be familiar with ITERs or In Training Evaluation Reports that occur at the midpoint and end of a rotation.
- MDPAs have similarities with ITERs.

- The students are required to have 1 MDPA completed every 2 weeks.
- The MDPAs must be completed within 5 days of release to ensure timely assessments are submitted to the program especially when there may be performance issues that need to be addressed.

SLIDE TWELVE: MD Program Assessment Form (MDPAs) – Assessment OF Learning

- In this example of a MDPA form, you can see the assessment is intended to determine whether a student has met performance expectations.
- The assessment is anchored to expectations for the time in rotation.
- The anchors help you select the correct assessment.

SLIDE THIRTEEN: Clinical Encounters Log

- Now that we've reviewed the assessments required for the Family Medicine Clerkship, let's briefly talk about the clinical encounters log.
- Students are also expected to log 13 clinical encounters that are a mandatory part of their Family Medicine Clerkship experience which include 3 procedures and 10 common family medicine encounters.
- Students will enter their logs into their assessment portal.
- Your role as a preceptor will be to ensure that the student has opportunities to complete all of these mandatory clinical encounters.

SLIDE FOURTEEN: Learner in Difficulty and Supports Available

Many of our experiences with medical students are fun and rewarding because they remind us of our excitement about medicine and help keep us up to date with ever advancing knowledge. But occasionally we may encounter a learner who may be struggling with the rotation. This may present in various ways, for example, issues with clinical performance, professionalism, or attendance. If this is the case for you, we are here to help you. Make sure you document your concerns and let us know early so we can help support you and the student. There are many avenues and supports available for medical students including options like referring to Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing if needed.

SLIDE FIFTEEN: Mainpro Plus Continuing Professional Development Credits

Thank you again for your commitment to medical education with the Department of Family Medicine. Remember teaching hours can also be used to claim Mainpro Plus credits!

SLIDE SIXTEEN: Leading with Purpose

Please reach out to our Family Medicine Clerkship team at fmunder@ualberta.ca if you have any questions or concerns about the Family Medicine Clerkship. Also, make sure you check out the other short video snappers on the Department of Family Medicine website under Faculty Development or the Professor Pages in Cally that are designed to support clinical faculty who are involved in teaching our medical students & family medicine residents at the University of Alberta.

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