

Last Reviewed April 2022 | Review every 4 years (Next Review in 2026)

## Supervision of Medical Students on Clinical Rotations Policy

<b>Office of Accountability:</b>	Associate Dean, MD Program, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry
<b>Office of Administrative Responsibility:</b>	MD Program
<b>Approver:</b>	MD Curriculum & Program Committee
<b>Scope:</b>	Compliance with this policy extends to all members of the team involved in patient care.

### Overview

This policy provides for the supervision of medical students on clerkship rotations. Clinical supervision is fundamental to safeguarding standards, professional expertise and the delivery of quality care.

This policy addresses the **Committee on the Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS)** element 9.3, Clinical Supervision of Medical Students, which states:

A medical school ensures that medical students in clinical learning situations involving patient care are appropriately supervised at all times in order to ensure patient and student safety, that the level of responsibility delegated to the student is appropriate to his or her level of training, and that the delegated activities supervised by the health professional are within his or her scope of practice.

### Purpose

Clinical supervision is a formal process of professional support and learning which enables medical students to develop knowledge and competence, assume supervised responsibility and enhance patient safety in complex clinical situations. To ensure patient safety and medical student safety, the three main functions of clinical supervision are to educate, support and evaluate the medical student.

The Faculty, the supervising physician and/or resident and the medical student all play important roles and share responsibility in this process. The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry is committed to these principles and has developed this policy which outlines the standards for supervising medical students and the role of each member of the team.



## POLICY

### 1. RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, the supervising physician or resident and the medical student are set out below.

- a. Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry shall:
  - i. support clinical supervision as an integral part of patient care;
  - ii. ensure that all physicians who supervise medical students have faculty appointments and are licensed by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta.
- b. Supervising physician or resident shall:
  - i. promote and model high standards of professional conduct at all times comply with [College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta Standards of Practice](#);
  - ii. maintain a professional relationship with medical students and identify issues including those related to conflict of interest, harassment, intimidation, and medical student safety; and be familiar with university, faculty and program specific policies relating to these issues. When issues arise, provide support and collaborate with the Office of Professionalism, the Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing, the clerkship coordinator and the MD Program;
  - iii. be aware of the learning objectives for the learning situation;
  - iv. ensure that medical students are supervised at all times by the supervising physician or a delegate (who may be a resident) and that the supervising physician is immediately contactable by phone /pager if not physically present and can attend in person promptly depending on the urgency of the situation ensure on-call schedules for supervising physicians and residents are structured to provide medical students with continuous supervision;
  - v. confirm that the medical student has received orientation at the start of the clinical rotation and understands their role and responsibilities at the start of each learning situation where this is the first time meeting the medical student or the situation is new to the medical student;
  - vi. confirm communication arrangements with medical student for each clinical learning situation;
  - vii. take into consideration the medical student's level of training and ensure the medical student is capable to attempt a delegated clinical activity;
  - viii. ensure that the patient is informed that the medical student is a medical student and not a graduated physician;
  - ix. determine the medical student is capable of caring for the number of delegated patients, and ensure the medical student is aware of all patients designated to them;



- x. recognize when a medical student is unable to provide safe patient care because of the number and/or complexity of patients assigned and/or because of fatigue, illness or perceived risk of contracting illness or any other reason and to intervene immediately to support the medical student and the patient's care that has been delegated to the medical student;
  - xi. confirm the clinical findings of the medical student and review the management plan, as well as patient progress with the medical student;
  - xii. make necessary modifications to the patient care plan managed by the medical student;
  - xiii. complete midpoint evaluations when required and complete all assessments in a timely manner according to guidelines issued by the MD Program.
- c. The medical student shall:
- i. maintain a professional relationship with physician/resident supervisor, and display professional conduct at all times with colleagues, paramedical staff, patients and members of the public;
  - ii. comply with College Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta Standards of Practice
  - iii. inform patients (or responsible family members) of their status as a medical student and provide the name of the responsible supervising physician (resident or staff);
  - iv. identify the limits of their personal knowledge and clinical skills;
  - v. practice within the limits of their personal knowledge, skills and experience and when -unknown or uncertain seek confirmation and guidance from the supervising physician
  - vi. inform their supervising physician or resident if they feel unable to care for patients delegated to their care for any reason including fatigue, illness or perceived risk of contracting illness;
  - vii. inform their supervisor when a patient's condition deteriorates and/or if the diagnosis and/or management of the patient are in doubt;
  - viii. complete an evaluation of rotation form at the end of each clinical rotation.

## 2. MEDICAL STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

- a. In order for clinical supervision to be effective, the medical student must feel safe that any issues reflected upon will be shared in confidence.

There are circumstances where confidentiality does not apply, examples include:

- i. concern for medical student well-being (contact with Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing, itself a confidential service);
- ii. concern for possible illegal activity;
- iii. concern for unsafe or unethical practice.

A medical student retains a right of appeal if it is felt that confidentiality has been breached and seek advice from the Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing, the Office of Professionalism or other university services outside of the faculty.

### **RELATED LINKS**

<a href="#">Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS)</a>
<a href="#">Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy</a>
<a href="#">Office of Advocacy and Wellbeing</a>
<a href="#">Office of Professionalism</a>
<a href="#">College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta Standards of Practice</a>

### **APPROVAL HISTORY**

<b>APPROVER</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>DATE</b>
MD Program Committee	Approved	26 September 2013
Kent Stobart, Associate Dean, MD Program	Revised scope from <i>Applicable to all members of the team involved in patient care to Compliance with this policy extends to all members of the team involved in patient care.</i>  First sentence under <i>Purpose</i> , deleted "clinical rotations" and replaced with "clerkship rotations."	26 February 2014
Dr. Tracey Hillier, Associate Dean, MD Program	Updated formatting for consistency and changed the approving committee to MD Curriculum & Program Committee	10 June 2020
MD Curriculum & Program Committee (MDCPC)	Approved	28 April 2022