



UMass Boston College of Nursing and Health Sciences Preceptor Definition and Role

What is an NP Preceptor?

An NP preceptor is defined as licensed health care professional (NP, MD, PA, MW) who role models, teaches, consults with, assesses, and evaluates a student who formally contracts with the preceptor to learn a set of advanced nursing practice skills.

What is the role of the NP Preceptor?

The role of the NP preceptor is defined as a clinical practitioner-preceptor-educator role (see *DeWitt, 1996*). The clinical NP educator demonstrates expert patient care skills with the added scope of teaching expert clinical skills and knowledge to the NP student.

Where can I get more information about precepting APRN students?

The National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculty hosts a free website to which you have access. Please go to: https://www.nonpf.org/page/PreceptorPortal_Main

What is the model of educating NPs?

The conceptual model for educating NP students is based on the Dreyfus Model of Novice to Expert. The clinical evaluation tool for the student is a progressive formative tool is based on the Primary Care Competencies of the Nurse Practitioner in Specialty Areas (HRSA, 2002). During the preceptor experience, students progress along a continuum towards mastery learning of functional domains of the nurse practitioner role (See footnote). Mastery learning is achieved through an interactive process in which the preceptor-learner determines:

- The overall goals and objectives for the practicum experience based on course objectives provided by the college faculty,
 - Identifies and discusses the learner's needs in order to meet the course objectives;
 - Assesses the nature of particular patient-care encounters that will enable the student to meet their learning objectives.
 - Utilizes appropriate teaching methods to help the student meet his/her learning objectives,
 - Evaluates whether the learner's objectives have been achieved and provides the learner with feedback via the evaluation process (DeWitt, 19

What characteristics make a good preceptor?

Valued preceptor characteristics include preceptor attitudes and qualities that reflect the ethics of health professions including:

- communicating respect for the student's faculty, curriculum and program,
- respecting the NP student as professional nurse and adult learner,
- understanding that students may not know everything they should know;
- problem solving with students using clinical knowledge, theory and research,
- addressing uncomfortable situations as they arise in a private confidential manner,
- fostering the tenants of diversity and acceptance of difference,
- role modeling interdisciplinary and collaborative communication skills and
- demonstrating sound professional ethics.

What are my responsibilities as a preceptor?

- Serving as a direct teacher in areas where the student is not knowledgeable or is outside to the scope of knowledge that student should have achieved prior to coming to the clinical experience;
- Suggesting references to texts and resources that students may use in obtaining information on identified subjects;
- Holding students accountable for application of prior learning;
- Helping students to learn from their mistakes;
- Holding students accountable to evaluate their performance and learning progress;
- Encouraging students to consult and collaborate with other members of the interdisciplinary team;
- Model the highest standards of professional ethics and comprehensive care for patients and families.
- Evaluating in a collaborative manner the student ***at midterm*** and ***at the final*** and completing and signing the clinical evaluation form provided;
- Evaluating student's ability to do a clinical presentation clearly and according to criteria in the guidelines for evaluation;
- Communicating with faculty via email or phone if there is any reason to question the student interns' safety or deliberate preparation for clinical practice, attendance or performance.

DeWitt, Thomas. (1996). Faculty development for community practitioners. (Pediatric Resident Education in Community Settings: Proceedings of a Conference Held on March 23 and 24, 1996 in Chicago, Illinois), *Pediatrics*, 98(6), 1273-1277.