



Your First Contact with the Learner

It is critical to set the tone for the year early on and develop rapport with your learner. Consider reaching out to the student before your first session if time permits to set up a time to have coffee, chat on the phone, or communicate via email to get to know your student. This is a great opportunity to provide your basic expectations, answer questions, and get to know one another by creating a channel for open communication.

Orientation to setting:

- Inform your health care team that the student will be a member of the team for the entire year.
- Email your team with a brief introduction to the student prior to their first day.
- Introduce the student to the entire care team (MA, SW, RN, clerks, counselor, etc.)
- Reiterate to learner that they are part of the team and should feel empowered to reach out to members of the care team directly.
- Discuss your expectations of the student for the first month and be clear that expectations change as the student progresses during the year.
- Inform student your preferred method of communication for questions (email, text, phone, etc.)
- Review the preferred note template to use and any preferences you have in documentation.
- Arrange the physical workspace so you can work next to the student and be in close proximity to the MA if possible to promote ease of communication.
- Ask the student about their interests and career goals so that you may support them in gaining additional experience in those areas, if possible, throughout the year.
- At the beginning of the year, discuss with the student your preferred teaching and learning styles.

Creating safe space for vulnerability:

- Emphasize to the student that you want to create a safe learning environment and that it is okay to not know things and to ask questions. This can in part be accomplished by encouraging bi-directional feedback.

Overarching goals:

- At the beginning of the year, discuss your end of year goals and how you expect the student to progress towards them. It can be helpful to schedule dates to revisit these goals and set expectations for how often you will provide informal and formal feedback.



TESTIMONIALS

"I found it really helpful when my preceptor on our first day like introduced me to everyone, and...you could tell that they had coached their staff that they're not just a student, they're part of the team."
(Student)

"If you get to know your preceptors as people and they get to know you as a person, it provides a much more fruitful professional relationship." (Student)

"Get to know the students and figure out their interests and how they align and with whom they align at the clinic, and then have them be introduced and spend time with them."
(Preceptor)