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East Carolina University  
Department of Physical Therapy  
Doctor of Physical Therapy Program

This Clinical Education Handbook contains information that is essential to the clinical education portion of your DPT student requirements. After reading this information and reviewing some important parts of this handbook during orientation, you will be asked to read and sign the final page stating that you understand the information contained herein. Any changes made to this handbook while you are a student will be presented to you for an additional signature.

Clinical Education Faculty

Patricia Hodson, DPT, PT, Clinical Professor, Director of Clinical Education (DCE)  
Sarah Johnson, DPT, PT, COMT, OCS, Clinical Assistant Professor, Assistant DCE

Overview

The Department of Physical Therapy affiliates with approximately 300 hospitals, clinics, and facilities. The majority of clinical education sites are in North Carolina with about one-third of the facilities outside North Carolina. Students are assigned to clinical affiliation sites using computer assisted matching software. Students are assigned to clinical affiliations for a total of 32 weeks of full-time clinical experience. Entry-level skills and knowledge needed in the general practice of physical therapy are obtained through working in a variety of settings and with patients of all ages and health conditions. Working in partnership with clinical sites, the goal of the clinical education program is to provide excellent clinical experiences emphasizing patient/client management that incorporates all aspects of professionalism. Students are expected to progress in their skill development and achieve competency commensurate with the level of the affiliation from beginner/advanced beginner, to intermediate/advanced intermediate, entry level, and in some cases, beyond entry level competency.

Students are not permitted to set up their own clinical affiliations. Requests to develop new clinical education sites must be submitted in writing to the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) a minimum of 6 months in advance of placements. In the event that a clinical site cancels a clinical affiliation assignment, the DCE in collaboration with the student will reassign the student to another site based on the student’s learning needs. This is accomplished with telephone calls and emails to sites.

During fall semester of the first year, all students will complete the Consortium for Clinical Education and Practice (CCEP) Core Orientation at: https://www.wakeahec.org/hctriangleclinical.htm.

In coordination with the DCE, students will provide proof of Eastern CCEP Clinical Passport requirements for student participation in clinical settings. Students will be required to complete criminal background checks, drug screens, and immunization records and upload information on Castle Branch, an online compliance management platform. Initial cost for student profiles will be approximately $103.00.
The DCE reviews the evaluations from the clinical instructors, as well as other required course documents, and assigns grades for each affiliation. The DCE has final authority in assigning students to sites for all the clinical education courses. Patient safety, proper professional conduct, and the progressive demonstration of competency and independence as a PT clinician are expected. The DCE, with the approval of the chairman, has the authority to require a student to either stay longer at a clinical site or repeat specific components of a clinical course as deemed necessary to insure patient safety and the student's expected level of professional development and mastery of clinical skills. The location of repeated clinical experiences will be subject to available sites and at the discretion of the DCE. Students are allowed remediation on only one clinical affiliation. If a student is required to repeat an affiliation, payment of additional tuition and fees, delayed progression in the curriculum, and/or delay of graduation may be necessary. The student who fails to successfully remediate this portion of the curriculum is subject to termination from the program. Prior to starting an affiliation, students are required to contact the Center Coordinator of Clinical Education if any accommodations are requested during a clinical affiliation. The DCE requests permission from a student to share any additional information related to student learning issues in compliance with FERPA and HIPAA.

Any grossly unsafe behavior, illegal, unethical, or unprofessional performance on a clinical affiliation may result in dismissal of a student from a clinical affiliation site, failure of the course, and dismissal from the program.

Risks

Students are at risk for exposure to infectious diseases when affiliating in hospitals and clinics. Students are at risk for injury when performing patient transfers, performing sharp wound/burn debridement, and in other patient care activities.

Students need to be aware that a patient has the right to refuse treatment by a student during any clinical education experience.

Clinical Education Requirements

Before a student can attend a clinical education site they must:

- Have Student Professional Liability Insurance (offered through the CAHS).
- Maintain annual certification in CPR through the American Heart Association.
- Have TB skin test (two-step or QuantiFERON Gold) annually.
- Have a complete medical record on file with the university including a physical examination and vaccination record.
- Complete online training to self-assess on PT CPI web.

Expenses Related to Clinical Education

Students are responsible for all expenses during clinical education affiliations. There are four clinical affiliations for a total of 32 weeks. The expenses will vary according to the assignments, but you should expect these experiences to cost approximately $3000 to $3500 for the four rotations.
Please budget accordingly to cover these expenses! Some locations provide housing, but not always free of charge. See AHEC Housing Policy included in this handbook.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR): All students are required to be certified in CPR before the first clinical education affiliation in March. CPR certification will be part of the Introduction to Patient Care course. The fee is usually $40.

Vaccinations/Titers/TB tests: For ECU enrollment, all students must meet ECU requirements (NC State Law Immunization Requirements) and requirements for health care workers per the health care industry standard. All students must either be vaccinated for Hepatitis B or sign a release indicating that they do not desire to be vaccinated. Hepatitis B vaccination is strongly encouraged. The vaccination is a three-shot series with a titer. Arrangements can be made with ECU Student Health for these shots during the 1st Fall semester. Students are also required to have current TB skin tests. The cost is approximately $150. Students may be required to demonstrate proof of immunity to varicella (chicken pox). Hospitals require that students receive seasonal flu vaccinations in compliance with requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Flu shots may be available at Student Health Services free of charge. Call Health Sciences Student Health Services at (252) 328-6841 for an appointment.

Emergency health care: The affiliating agency will provide on-premise emergency health care for students at the facility. Students are financially responsible for health care provided by the facility. ECU, the UNC system, and clinical sites require students to have health insurance.

Insurance: Students are required to have liability insurance. At this time the coverage of the liability insurance is paid by ECU.

Name tags: Students will be identified as ECU DPT students with the school name tag worn on the shirt or lab coat. In all clinic settings, patients have the right to refuse to be evaluated and/or treated by a student. Name tags are ordered through the department and they cost $8.00. Students will be required to purchase a replacement at the same price if they lose/break their first name tag.

Additional requirements: Some clinical facilities may require students to be fitted with a personal respiratory filter device. Training and fitting of such devices will be available in the Department of Family Medicine, ECU Brody School of Medicine. There may be a fee. Also, most sites require criminal background checks and drug screening, both of which require a fee. Criminal background checks will be submitted to clinical sites by the College of Allied Health Sciences Contracts Clerk. Students will sign a Release of Information for immunization records, drug screens, and criminal background checks to be shared with clinical sites.

NC AHEC Student Housing

NC AHEC Student Housing is short-term lodging for health sciences students who are completing community-based rotations in North Carolina. Students are not required to use NC AHEC housing, and NC AHEC housing is not meant to serve or replace a student’s permanent residence. Our goal is to make community-based education at clinical sites more accessible.

We have provided student housing since the 1970s, now providing over 56,000 nights annually. The nine regional AHECs provide housing in 50 counties in approximately 70 towns and cities
across the state. The majority of our housing is through rented apartments or AHEC-owned homes/condos, but we also utilize private homeowners, especially in rural areas.

For our primary academic partners or affiliated universities (see list below), the current rate is $7 night. In compliance with UNC General Administration Board of Governors directives, AHEC does not collect any fees from students of affiliated schools. The NC AHEC Program Office invoices affiliated universities twice yearly for their student’s use of housing. Local AHECs collect housing fees directly from students of non-affiliated schools.

Any health sciences student may apply for NC AHEC housing through our online portal at my.ncahec.net. Each AHEC reviews applications taking into account a variety of factors (date of application, length of stay, co-ed status, and school affiliation) and notifies the student as soon as possible. We also implemented an online evaluation process and welcome students’ feedback on their stays at NC AHEC housing.

While we are not able to meet every housing request and the demand for student housing continues to grow, NC AHEC student housing is among the largest (if not the largest) student housing system within the National AHEC Organization.

Students requesting NC AHEC housing create a MY AHEC account and submit requests to Student Housing Coordinators. Once approved, the student will notify administrative staff in the CAHS Dean’s Office. Students will pay the cost of housing at $7 per night to ECU CAHS Dean’s Office.

**AHEC Student Housing Process: Effective July 1, 2010**

The College of Allied Health Sciences will be invoiced for students' use of AHEC housing at the rate of $7.00 per night (including weekends). The College has agreed to pay for student housing for those completing an internship in a rural area of North Carolina. Since housing is limited in rural areas, some students may need to use housing in an urban city. The CAHS is looking at the location of the clinical site to determine coverage of housing costs.

An urban area is considered, by the College of Allied Health Sciences, as any city the equivalent or larger than Greenville, North Carolina. This includes, but is not limited to: Wilmington, Raleigh, Durham, Cary, Charlotte, and Asheville.

Each department in the College of Allied Health Sciences that uses AHEC housing for students has a coordinator that is in charge of approving all student housing requests. Housing requests will not be approved if the specific clinical site name is not included in the request.

A student may use AHEC housing at $7.00 per day for rotations at clinical sites located in urban areas at the student’s expense. The student must receive prior approval from the department coordinator and the College of Health Sciences’ Dean’s Office. This approval must be in writing and the student must pay the Dean’s Office for the housing prior to the stay.

An invoice is received by the College from AHEC every six months (December and June) and includes details of housing usage, student names, dates, location, etc. After review of the invoices, if a department has failed to follow the set guidelines, the department will be held financially responsible.

In the event of budget cuts, this program may be discontinued or severely curtailed.
**Standard Operating Procedure on Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screening on Students for Clinical Field Site Placement**

ECU COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES
August 20, 2004

Due to JCAHO regulations that now require students to provide criminal background checks and, in some cases, drug screenings to prospective clinical sites the following standard operating procedure is being established for students in the College of Allied Health Sciences.

It is a student’s responsibility, when applying for placement in a clinical site associated with the completion of degree requirements, to obtain and provide required reports/copies of the requested criminal background checks and/or drug screens to the appropriate official(s) at the prospective clinical site for review and consideration in determining acceptance for the clinical field experience placement. Students are responsible for arranging, paying for, and submitting the required documentation to any and all clinical sites where students have been assigned for placement. Academic departments, the College of Allied Health Sciences, the Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University are not responsible for arranging, paying for, or submitting the required reports, or determining the student’s eligibility for placement at the clinical site as a result of the contents of the required reports. Academic departments, the College of Allied Health Sciences, the Division of Health Sciences, or East Carolina University are not responsible or liable for nor will they intervene in any way in the decision by a clinical site to not accept a student based on the contents of required reports. Decisions by clinical sites are final and have no reflection on or responsibility to the student’s academic department.

Please print and sign the following document.

It needs to be turned in to Karen Eastwood by **Tuesday, June 1, 2021**.
Verification of Reading Presented Material

By my signature, I verify that I have received and read the material presented in the document *Essential Requirements of Physical Therapy Education at East Carolina University, Department of Physical Therapy: Standards for Admission, Retention and Graduation* and understand and agree.

Printed Name___________________________________

Signature ______________________________________

Date___________________________________________

Please print and sign the following document. It needs to be turned in to Karen Eastwood by **Tuesday, June 1, 2021**.