

## ASSISTING THE STRUGGLING STUDENT IN A PRACTICUM PLACEMENT<sup>12</sup>

### Step 1: Clinical Educator (or Clinical Coordinator) Meets with Student to Discuss Concerns (as soon as issues arise)

- Get the student's perspective on their progress within the placement and determine their own insight into any issues
- Describe your concerns and the behaviours observed, as well as the student's strengths
- Be objective; avoid interpretation
- Reflect on your own teaching style and expectations
- Brainstorm with student around ways to remediate concerns
- Inform the student that you will be contacting the Clinical Coordinator
- Keep notes during the meeting, including feedback you provided, student response to described concerns, what clinical competencies and objectives need to be targeted, and the strategies for meeting these competencies /objectives that were discussed

### Step 2: Clinical Educator Contacts Clinical Coordinator to Discuss Concerns

- Clinical educator describes concerns, behaviours and/or issues and reviews details of initial discussion with student
- Clinical Coordinator assesses concerns/behaviours and possible consequences

### Step 3: Clinical Coordinator Contacts Student to Discuss Concerns, Remediation Plan, and Consequences

- Clinical Coordinator reviews clinical educator concerns and obtains student input into the issues
- Clinical Coordinator provides overview of remediation plan process and consequences of not meeting clinical competencies (must meet necessary clinical competencies to obtain a passing grade for the practicum placement)

### Step 4: Remediation Plan Developed and Implemented

- Clinical Coordinator develops the remediation plan, seeking input from the Clinical Educator and Student. If appropriate, the Clinical Coordinator may consult with select School faculty members with expertise in the deficient areas to assist with development of the remediation plan.
- The remediation plan generally includes clinical competencies and objectives to be targeted, strategies for working on each objective and clinical competency, feedback and evaluation schedule, timelines for meeting objectives, outcomes that need to be achieved by the end of the placement, and consequences of not meeting clinical competencies
- Clinical Coordinator informs the School's Director and/or Graduate Coordinator of the current situation and remediation plan

### Step 5: Clinical Educator (and/or Clinical Coordinator) Monitors Student's Ability to Follow the Remediation Plan

- Keep daily notes and closely monitor the student's ability to follow the plan of action
- Provide the student with frequent feedback on their progress toward the defined goals/clinical competencies
- Clinical Coordinator checks in on a weekly basis (or determined time frame) with Clinical Educator and Student (via email or phone) on the student's progress toward meeting the defined objectives and clinical competencies

### Step 6: Determining Outcome

- Grade of Pass: If the Clinical Educator determines that the student has met all clinical competencies by the end of the placement, a passing grade may be assigned.
- Grade of Incomplete: If the Student has demonstrated the ability to significantly improve their skills, but requires more time to meet all clinical competencies, an extension of the placement may be granted. The extension is dependent on the clinical educator's availability. The placement may need to be completed at a different site and with a different clinical educator (when one is available). As a result, it will be necessary to share information about the student's remediation plan with the extension clinical educator to ensure they can continue to support the student in implementation of strategies/goals. The student may be assigned a grade of pass or fail at the end of the practicum placement extension, depending on his/her ability to meet clinical competencies.
- Grade of Fail: If the student is not meeting the objectives within the remediation plan and is not showing sufficient improvement toward meeting clinical competencies, the student may be assigned a failing grade for the practicum placement and dismissed from the program.

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<sup>12</sup> Adapted from "Preparing to be a Preceptor: A Handbook for Health Care Aide Preceptors", Alberta Health Services, 2011 (<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/hr-student-hca-preceptor-handbook.pdf>), "Supporting the Struggling Student", BC Preceptor Development Initiative, 2012 (<http://www.practiceeducation.ca/modules.html>), & "Preceptor eLearning Course", Dalhousie University, Faculty of Health, 2013 (<http://preceptor.healthprofessions.dal.ca/>)