



DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF MEDICINE

Undergraduate Medical Education Program

Observership Protocol/Information for Halifax-based Students

Approved by:	Undergraduate Medical Education Curriculum Committee
Application/Scope:	
Approved Date:	March 22 2016
Review Date:	

As part of the undergraduate medical education program, Halifax-based medical students spend a significant amount of time in the many health facilities throughout Nova Scotia completing core rotations and electives. Students may also choose to spend time with our faculty members, observing their medical practices in a variety of settings including clinics, emergency departments, etc. outside of the regular undergraduate medical education program. These experiences are called **observerships**. Medical students interact with patients and have access to patient information during observerships, but are not permitted to be involved in direct patient care.

UGME must approve all observership requests. Also, in order to ensure that students have the appropriate insurance coverage, students must obtain approval from the pertinent health authority. **The following procedures MUST be followed before any observership can take place:**

Step 1 – Action by Students:

- Students must identify a preceptor and ensure that the preceptor is willing to host them for an observership.
- Students must fill out an observership request form and have their proposed preceptor sign it.
- Students can either send the completed observership request form, with the preceptor's signature, to ugme@dal.ca or they can drop it off in person to the UGME office. Request forms without a signature will not be processed and will be returned to the student.
- **NOTE: THE PROPOSED START DATE MUST BE AT LEAST THREE (3) WEEKS FROM THE DATE THE REQUEST WAS SUBMITTED, and the date range cannot be longer than six (6) months. This lead time is required for the health authorities to complete their internal processes.**
- Forms that are submitted without the three (3)-week lead time cannot be approved and will be returned to the student.

Step 2 – Action by UGME:

- If the request is denied by UGME, the student will be notified.
- If the request is approved by UGME, the approval will be sent by UGME to the credentialing offices of the NSHA or IWK, depending on the site of the observership.
- If the request is approved by UGME, the student and preceptor will be informed by UGME. **At this point, the process is NOT complete. Please see below.**

Step 3 – Action by Health Authority:

- After they receive the request sent by UGME, NSHA and IWK have their own internal processes.
- Once they have completed their processes, NSHA will inform the student and the preceptor. IWK will contact the student to sign a Confidentiality Pledge before commencing the observership.

At this point, the process is complete.

NOTE:: This process is required for any contact with faculty outside of formal courses/learning experiences – there are no exceptions. ■