

## Policy on Clinical Supervision

Michigan State University – College of Human Medicine

### Purpose

To outline processes that ensure the safety of patients and learners and create a supportive environment of progressive responsibility with appropriate supervision in clinical settings.

### Policy

Medical students from the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine must be appropriately supervised when participating in required or elective clinical activities.

- A. Medical students may not provide care without supervision.
- B. Supervisors must either hold a faculty appointment or be supervised in their teaching and assessment role by an individual who holds a faculty appointment. Supervisors may include physicians, residents, fellows, and other licensed or certified health professionals supervising an activity within their scope of expertise or practice. Non-physician health professionals precepting students may be supervised by a physician administrator of the clinical experience, as long as they can be readily contacted if needed.
- C. There are two levels of supervision possible for medical students:
  1. Direct Supervision: The supervisor is present with the student and the patient
  2. Indirect Supervision with Immediate Availability: The supervisor, while not in the presence of the student and/or patient, is immediately available to the student and/or at the site of care to provide direct supervision. (This may include telemedicine.)

In some cases, it may be appropriate for a student to begin a history and physical exam after direction from the supervisor while their supervisor is enroute to the facility. In no circumstances should a student perform a procedure without the supervisor present.

- D. The following activities may be performed by students with indirect supervision:
  1. History-taking
  2. Vital sign assessment
  3. Physical examination (other than breast or genitalia exams) by students who have successfully completed HM 552
  4. Intramuscular or subcutaneous injections, when specifically authorized by the supervisor
- E. The following activities require direct supervision:
  1. Procedures
  2. Physical examination of the breast or genitalia
  3. Physical examination by students who have not yet completed HM 552
- F. Level of supervision may be increased by the supervisor based on individual factors including:
  1. Level of training of the student
  2. Previous experience and skill of the student with the clinical activity and setting
  3. Familiarity of the supervisor with the abilities of the student
  4. Acuity of activity and level of risk to patient or student
- G. The ability of any member of the health care team to “stop the line” is an important patient safety concept. At the direction of any health care professional responsible for a patient, the student must promptly stop the performance of any activity involving that patient to clarify patient care needs. The supervising physician should be notified promptly of any concerns.

### Procedures related to Clinical Supervision of Medical Students

- A. The supervisor must review and independently verify all student findings, assessments, and care plans.
- B. The clerkship/course director must communicate policies and procedures related to supervision to faculty, residents, and students participating in their curriculum, and monitor compliance with the policies and procedures with a report to the relevant governance committee upon request.
- C. Students should report concerns regarding adequate and appropriate supervision through mistreatment reporting, direct reporting to a clerkship/course director or coordinator and may also document concerns in clerkship/course evaluations at the end of the clerkship/course.

**Individuals responsible for oversight of compliance with this policy:**

Clerkship and Course Directors.

*Approved by MSU College of Human Medicine Curriculum Committee December 2022.*

*Amended by approval of MSU-CHM Curriculum Committee February 2023.*

**References**

Liaison Committee on Medical Education, Structure and Function of a Medical School – Standards for Accreditation of Medical Education Programs Leading to the MD Degree

UC Davis Health – Policy on Clinical Supervision