

## Clinical education and student interns

*By Amanda Chilvers PT, DPT*

Clinical education is a critical component of many healthcare professionals' graduate curriculums. Most programs dedicate a significant amount of time to the student being "out in the field" throughout their training. This clinical time may be referred to as an internship, rotation, or practical. They may vary from a few weeks to a few months or full years based on the individuals' specialty area. Clinical education provides students opportunity to practically apply classroom instruction and to develop their clinical and patient care skills under the supervision of licensed clinicians and practitioners. The student has the opportunity to learn through a more hands-on approach where they can pick up on clinical pearls and "bedside manor" that cannot be cultured from a book.

During these clinical education experiences, the student works under the direct supervision of one or more practicing clinicians, usually referred to as their Clinical Instructor (CI). The CI is responsible for ensuring the goals of the university or institution are met and many times evaluates the student by using national established outcome measurement tools to give the student an official grade

or performance rating for the experience. Many academic programs develop a working relationship with hospital facilities and clinics to establish them as official clinical education sites. This is not a task taken lightly and there are a number of expectations, regulations and professional guidelines set forth for individuals and the sites responsible for providing student clinical learning experiences. This creates a situation that can be both beneficial for the students as well as the site. It ensures progressive quality care is not only being provided but also being taught and set as a standard.

FCHPD has already started moving towards being a clinical education site for multiple medical disciplines including hospital administration, physical therapy, registered nurses, medical laboratory technicians, medical assistants, radiology technicians, medical doctors, doctors of osteopathic medicine, and nurse practitioners. With ongoing participation from our community as well as our clinicians who are willing to be clinical instructors, we will continue to build our district up as a progressive teaching facility.

*Prior Hospital Happenings available at <http://www.fcpd.org/news.html>.*

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