

CHART SMART

Documenting your preceptor role

By Linda S. Smith, RN, CLNC, MS, DSN

IF YOU'RE A CLINICAL NURSE PRECEPTOR, you're responsible for providing ongoing written documentation of the preceptee's progress and competence. Although you'll likely have a form for documentation, you may need to add commentary to provide legally defensible records of the preceptee's performance.

Before beginning your work as a preceptor, document your consent to the process and the outlined obligations and responsibilities for each party; the nurse you'll precept will also sign and date this form. Your facility may also require forms showing that you're qualified to be a preceptor and have been given authority by your nurse-manager to perform as a preceptor.

When documenting preceptee performance on a form, you may need to clarify general assessment statements calling for yes or no answers, such as "Did the preceptee use appropriate critical thinking?" Write clear, specific remarks that focus on behaviors that can be changed.

Document objective evidence, not your interpretation or opinion. For example, instead of writing that the preceptee was rude to the patient's family, write:

6/22/07 1830—Preceptee stated to patient's family, "I don't have time to answer separate questions from each and every one of you."

G. Yale, RN

You'll also make specific statements and suggestions, both orally and in writing, based on your observations of the preceptee's behavior. Your comments to the preceptee and your documentation should both be made as close to the time of occurrence as possible. For example, tell your preceptee that her words didn't demonstrate empathy to the family, and ask what she might have done differently. Role-play to give her a chance to practice therapeutic communication techniques. Commend her new skills and document her progress on the clinical supervision form. The final review and summary of her clinical performance will be better served if the documentation has been ongoing, specific, clear, and focused objective-ly on behavior. <>

RESOURCES

Freiburger OA. Clinical issues. Preceptor programs: Increasing student self-confidence and competency. *Nurse Educator*. 27(2):58-60, March-April 2002.

Freiburger OA. A tribute to clinical preceptors: Developing a preceptor program for nursing students. *Journal for Nurses in Staff Development*. 17(6):320-327, November-December 2001.

Linda S. Smith is director and associate professor in the associate degree registered nurse program at Idaho State University in Pocatello.

HRN
HRN SERVICES INC.
A HEALTH SERVICES SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS



PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT

EXCELLENT BENEFITS PROGRAM

Company Paid Insurance

Health

Dental

Vision

Life

Free Private Housing

Paid Utilities

Weekly Paychecks

Direct Deposit

401(k) Plan

RN License Reimbursement

COAST-TO-COAST ASSIGNMENTS

Gateway To TravelSM

888-476-9333



HRN Services Inc. has earned
The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of ApprovalTM

www.hrnservices.com

Copyright of Nursing is the property of Springhouse Corporation and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.