



Policy Title: Clinical Supervision of Medical Students

Accountable Dean(s) or Director(s):

Associate Dean for Medical Education & Academic Affairs
Assistant Dean for Basic Science Education
Assistant Dean for Clinical Education

Reviewed By:

Phase I & Phase II Curriculum Subcommittees
T3/T4 Curriculum Subcommittee

Approval Body:

Curriculum Committee (CC)

RELEVANT LCME STANDARD:

9.3: Clinical Supervision of Medical Students

POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE:

The LCME states: A medical school ensures that medical students in clinical learning situations involving patient care are appropriately supervised at all times in order to ensure patient and student safety, that the level of responsibility delegated to the student is appropriate to the student's level of training, and that the activities supervised are within the scope of practice of the supervising health professional.

DEFINITIONS:

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- **Supervising Physician:** an attending physician with a TUSOM faculty appointment or a resident/fellow physician in a graduate medical education program at, or affiliated with, the School of Medicine.
- **Healthcare Provider:** Includes but is not limited to anesthesia assistants, dietitians, emergency medical technicians, medical sonographers, medical technologists, nurse practitioners, nurses, occupational therapists, paramedics, pharmacologists, physical therapists, physician assistants, psychologists, radiographers, respiratory therapists, social workers, surgical technicians, speech therapists and child life therapists.
- **Supervision Levels:**
 - **Direct Observation/Supervision:** the observing/supervising physician is physically present with the student and patient.

- Indirect Supervision with direct observation/supervision immediately available: the supervising physician is physically within the hospital or other site of patient care and is immediately available to provide direct observation.

POLICY GUIDELINES:

All students must receive adequate supervision while performing patient care activities within clinical learning environments. Note that course/clerkship directors are responsible for orienting students and physicians with supervision responsibilities to the provisions of this policy and for setting and communicating course/clerkship-specific expectations regarding appropriate levels of supervision.

- Medical students are not licensed and cannot provide unsupervised patient care. Clinical decisions and orders are never created or enacted by medical students without a supervising physician's input and approval. A supervising physician has the medical and legal responsibility for patient care at all times.
- A supervising physician is required to supervise medical students in clinical learning environments at a supervision level of 'indirect supervision with direct supervision immediately available' or higher.
- The supervising physician will determine the appropriate level of supervision by considering the clinical site policies, complexity of the situation or procedure, risk for adverse events and the medical student's level of training, demonstrated competence, maturity, and responsibility.
- The course/clerkship director will determine the patient encounters and procedures that fellows, residents and/or appropriately credentialed healthcare providers may provide supervision.
- Individuals who experience or witness a lapse in medical student supervision must report the incident to the course/clerkship director. Students may also anonymously report lapses in medical student supervision via the professionalism reporting system.
- The course/clerkship directors will ensure that supervising physicians and healthcare providers are appropriately credentialed and privileged.
 - For private practice settings in which healthcare providers are present, it is the responsibility of the supervising physician to ensure that health care providers are appropriately credentialed and privileged and capable of medical student supervision within the scope of their practice.

LAST REVIEW DATE/APPROVAL:

Curriculum Committee: 12/06/23

REVIEW CYCLE:

Every 3 years