

**STANDARDS FOR  
CLINICAL NURSING EDUCATION**

**AND**

**STANDARDS FOR  
ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSE  
CLINICAL EDUCATION**



**SINGAPORE NURSING BOARD**

# Preface

Clinical nursing education focuses on developing, refining and applying students' classroom knowledge and skills to manage care as part of an interprofessional team in a clinical setting.

Clinical practice placements expose students to practical issues such as technological innovations, unpredictable care transitions, fast-paced environment and complex system issues. Clinical nursing education will allow students to learn from their experiences and role models on the ground to prepare them for entry-level practice in a complex and diverse healthcare environment.

Nursing programs must ensure sufficient clinical placements across a range of practice settings and across the continuum of care. Placements must be safe, supportive, and conducive for groups of students to practice and to develop their professional roles within defined scopes of practice.

Singapore Nursing Board's (SNB) Education Committee and Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) Training Committee have reviewed and established standards and measurable criteria for clinical education. The objective is to ensure that students are provided with sufficient breadth and depth of learning to hone their competencies for entry level practice and post-registration preparation. Students will also be exposed to diverse patient population across the life span in various types of settings.

Laboratory and simulation experiences provide students with an effective and safe environment to learn and apply the cognitive and performance skills needed for actual practice. Simulation is a valuable element of clinical preparation. Patient care experiences with actual patients form the most important component of clinical education. Direct patient care clinical experiences provide valuable opportunities for student learning not found in other settings.

These Standards will complement the Standards for Nursing Education/ Standards for Advanced Practice Nurse Education and sets the requirements by which SNB accredits the clinical areas to facilitate holistic clinical education.

**Registrar**

**Singapore Nursing Board**

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**STANDARDS FOR**

**CLINICAL NURSING EDUCATION**

## STANDARD ONE: COLLABORATION BETWEEN EDUCATION INSTITUTION AND CLINICAL PLACEMENT PROVIDER

The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are jointly accountable for providing clinical placements that achieve the goals and outcomes of the nursing education program.

### Criteria

- 1.1 The Education Institution is responsible to seek out appropriate Clinical Placement Provider(s) that meets the clinical education outcomes of their programmes.
- 1.2 The Education Institution has a formal and written agreement with the Clinical Placement Provider(s).
- 1.3 The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are responsible to ensure and maintain standards of clinical nursing education.
- 1.4 The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider shall apply to the Singapore Nursing Board (SNB) for accreditation of their clinical area(s) for clinical nursing education.
- 1.5 The Clinical Placement Provider shall be responsible to apply for re-accreditation of their clinical area(s) every three (3) to five (5) years. This shall be done at least 6 months before expiry of accreditation period.
- 1.6 Both Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider have policies and procedures that incorporate best practice/quality assurance statement(s) to support students' clinical learning.

- 1.7 The Clinical Placement Provider shall provide a named Registered Nurse to serve as a Clinical Placement Coordinator to liaise with the Education institution to facilitate clinical education for nursing students. This Clinical Placement Coordinator has oversight of the clinical placement's schedule and provides resources and support for students' learning in the clinical setting.
- 1.8 The Education Institution shall appoint a named nursing education staff member as a Clinical Programme Coordinator. The Clinical Programme Coordinator plans, develops and organises clinical education activities to achieve the programme's learning goals and outcomes.
- 1.9 The Clinical Programme Coordinator together with the Clinical Placement Coordinator shall oversee and co-ordinate the students' overall clinical education in order to achieve their learning outcomes.
- 1.10 The Clinical Placement Provider uses the evaluations of clinical practicum experiences to improve the quality of clinical placement.
- 1.11 Clinical Programme Coordinator provides ongoing communication to the Clinical Placement Provider about any change in nursing curriculum or assessment methodology and/or clinical grading criteria. This is to ensure compliance to changes made.
- 1.12 The Clinical Placement Provider shall submit to SNB, an Annual Report (template to be obtained from SNB) to provide an update on the accredited clinical area's collaboration with education institutions, learning environment and evaluation of students' clinical learning. Any improvements/ innovations initiated to enhance clinical learning to be included.

## STANDARD TWO: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Clinical Placement Provider is responsible for setting up a favourable learning environment; introduce best practices in clinical education to achieve students' clinical learning outcomes.

### Criteria

- 2.1. The Clinical Placement Provider shall assign Clinical Preceptors to supervise, guide and assess student's performance.
- 2.2. The student is orientated to the healthcare facility on the first day of clinical placement.
- 2.3. The Clinical Placement Provider shall support and embrace/promote:
  - i) the provision of a learning environment that facilitates integration of theory into practice; and
  - ii) nursing practice that adheres to SNB Standards of Nursing Practice.
- 2.4. Students will have access to learning resources such as relevant books, journals, e-learning facilities and equipment.
- 2.5. The number of students assigned in each clinical area shall be:
  - i) one student to at least 2 beds for inpatient acute/intermediate/long term care; and
  - ii) two students to 1 client for independent services such as home nursing and counselling service.

The number of students assigned to each clinical area shall be determined collaboratively by both education institution and clinical practice placement provider, to achieve optimal learning outcomes for students.

## STANDARD THREE: CLINICAL LEARNING

The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are accountable for facilitating students' clinical learning and outcomes appropriate to their level of competency.

### Criteria

- 3.1 The student is allocated with an appropriate patient care workload and is able to demonstrate expected levels of competencies and management skills.
- 3.2 The clinical learning practicum shall include:
  - i) setting achievable learning outcomes at the beginning of the clinical placement;
  - ii) opportunities to experience holistic patient care at their level of training; and
  - iii) opportunities to demonstrate and be assessed on nursing competencies when caring for patients.
- 3.3 The student is given opportunities to:
  - i) set their learning objectives; and
  - ii) reflect on their clinical learning and evaluate whether their learning objectives have been achieved.

## STANDARD FOUR: ROLE OF CLINICAL INSTRUCTORS AND CLINICAL PRECEPTORS

The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are accountable for allocating Clinical Instructors and Clinical Preceptors to optimise students' learning during clinical practicum.

### Criteria

- 4.1. The Clinical Instructor is from the Education Institution and/or Clinical Placement Provider. He/she provides guidance, supervision assessment and support for a group of students during their clinical placement period.
  
- 4.2. The Clinical Instructor (CI):
  - i) ensures that the clinical practicum facilitates the achievement of the stipulated clinical learning outcomes;
  - ii) ensures that the clinical placement promotes integration of theory to practice;
  - iii) provides regular feedback to the Clinical Placement Provider to improve the quality of students' clinical experiences; and
  - iv) conducts clinical assessment of students.
  
- 4.3. The Clinical Instructor is a Registered Nurse/Midwife:
  - i) with minimum 3 years' clinical experience;
  - ii) has recognized skills in the area of practice;
  - iii) has an interest in teaching & learning and have successfully completed a Clinical Instructor (CI) and/or teaching and assessing course facilitated by healthcare institutions and/or the Specialist Diploma in Clinical Education; and
  - iv) CIs supervising post-registration specialty nursing courses must have an Advanced Diploma and/or its equivalent in the area of related practice and have a minimum of 2 years' experience in the area of specialty.

- 4.4. The Clinical Instructor should supervise a realistic number of learners.
- i) Pre-registration & pre-enrolment nursing students:  
One CI is to supervise and assess not more than 12 students. Contact time (for supervision, assessment and feedback) between CIs and students (one-on-one and or as a group depending on the learning/assessing need) should be at least twice a week, with each contact time not less than 30 minutes.
  - ii) Post-registration nursing students:  
One CI is to supervise and assess not more than 8 students. Contact time with students (one-on-one and or as a group depending on the learning/assessing need) should be at least once a week, with each contact time not less than 30 minutes.
- 4.5. The student is allocated to a Clinical Preceptor who provides individualised guidance, supervision, support and assessment for student's learning experience.
- 4.6. The Clinical Preceptor is responsible for:
- i) supporting and enabling student's learning;
  - ii) providing appropriate supervision of nursing students that is relevant to the student's level of learning; and
  - iii) conducting clinical assessment of students.
- 4.7. The Clinical Preceptor is a nurse/midwife from the Clinical Placement Provider
- i) with minimum 3 years' clinical experience;
  - ii) has recognized skills in the area of practice; and
  - iii) has completed a structured and formal preceptorship/clinical supervision course.
- 4.8. Each Clinical Preceptor shall be assigned to a maximum of 2 students at any one time.

- 4.9. The Clinical Preceptors will receive assistance, guidance and support from the Clinical Placement Coordinator and Clinical Instructor in performing their preceptor roles and responsibilities.

## STANDARD FIVE: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The Clinical Instructor and Clinical Preceptor are responsible to perform formative and summative assessment of the students and to provide feedback on their clinical performance. Both Clinical Placement Coordinator and Clinical Programme Coordinator are jointly responsible to ensure that formative and summative assessments are done and feedback given to students.

### Criteria

- 5.1. Clinical assessments are conducted at:
  - i) mid-point during the placement period with feedback given for improvements (formative); and
  - ii) the end of the placement period (summative).
  
- 5.2. Specific feedback on students' performances are given regularly and in a timely manner to reinforce good performances and to encourage and respect students' efforts.
  
- 5.3. Clinical Instructors and Clinical Preceptors conduct debriefing sessions to facilitate students' reflection of their practice and evaluation of their clinical performance.
  
- 5.4. Clinical Preceptors and Clinical Instructors communicate and collaborate as a team to facilitate student assessments and evaluate the effectiveness of the overall clinical education.
  
- 5.5. The evaluation of the clinical placement is:
  - i) obtained from students and Clinical Preceptors at the completion of each clinical placement;
  - ii) facilitated by the Clinical Instructor in collaboration with the Clinical Placement Coordinator to evaluate the effectiveness of clinical learning; and
  - iii) used by the Clinical Placement Provider and Education Institutions to make improvements to the clinical learning experience and adopt best practices.

**STANDARDS FOR**

**ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSE**

**CLINICAL EDUCATION**

## STANDARD ONE: COLLABORATION BETWEEN EDUCATION INSTITUTION AND CLINICAL PLACEMENT PROVIDER

The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are jointly accountable for providing clinical placements that achieve the goals and outcomes of the Advanced Practice Nurse education programme.

### Criteria

- 1.1 The Education Institution is responsible to seek out appropriate Clinical Placement Provider(s) that meets the clinical education outcomes of their programmes.
- 1.2 The Education Institution has a formal and written agreement with the Clinical Placement Provider(s).
- 1.3 The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are responsible to ensure and maintain standards of Advanced Practice Nurse clinical education.
- 1.4 Both Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider have policies and procedures that incorporate best practice/quality assurance statement(s) to support students' clinical learning.
- 1.5 The Clinical Placement Provider shall provide a named Advanced Practice Nurse to serve as a Clinical Placement Coordinator to liaise with the Education institution to facilitate clinical education for nursing students. This Clinical Placement Coordinator has oversight of the clinical placement's schedule and provides resources and support for students' learning in the clinical setting.
- 1.6 The Education Institution shall appoint a named Advanced Practice Nurse who is a staff member as a Clinical Programme Coordinator. The Clinical Programme Coordinator plans, develops and organises clinical education activities to achieve the programme's learning goals and outcomes.

- 1.7 The Clinical Programme Coordinator together with the Clinical Placement Coordinator shall oversee and co-ordinate the students' overall clinical education in order to achieve their learning outcomes.
- 1.8 The Clinical Placement Provider uses the evaluations of clinical practicum experiences to improve the quality of clinical placement.
- 1.9 Clinical Programme Coordinator provides ongoing communication to the Clinical Placement Provider about any change in nursing curriculum or assessment methodology and/or clinical grading criteria. This is to ensure compliance to changes made.
- 1.10 The Education Institution shall submit to SNB, within (3) months, notice of any significant change in resources or facilities that may affect students' clinical learning.

## STANDARD TWO: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The Clinical Placement Provider is responsible in setting up a favourable learning environment, including best practices in Advanced Practice Nurse clinical education to achieve students' clinical learning outcomes.

### **Criteria**

- 2.1. The Clinical Placement Provider shall assign Preceptors to supervise, guide and assess student's performance.
- 2.2. The student is orientated to the healthcare facility on the first day of clinical placement.
- 2.3. The Clinical Placement Provider shall support and embrace/promote:
  - i) the provision of a learning environment that facilitates integration of theory into practice; and
  - ii) advanced practice nursing that adheres to SNB Scope of Practice for Advanced Practice Nurse.
- 2.4. Students will have access to learning resources such as relevant books, journals, e-learning facilities and equipment.
- 2.5. The number of students assigned to each clinical area may be determined collaboratively by both education institution and clinical practice placement provider, to achieve optimal learning outcomes for students.

## STANDARD THREE: CLINICAL LEARNING

The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are accountable for facilitating students' clinical learning and outcomes appropriate to their level of competency.

### Criteria

- 3.1 The student is allocated with an appropriate patient care workload and is able to demonstrate expected levels of advanced practice nursing competencies.
- 3.2 The clinical learning practicum shall include:
  - i) setting achievable learning outcomes at the beginning of the clinical placement;
  - ii) opportunities to experience holistic patient care at their level of training or stipulated milestones; and
  - iii) opportunities to demonstrate and be assessed on competencies at the advanced nursing practice level.
- 3.3 The student is given opportunities to:
  - i) set their learning objectives; and
  - ii) reflect on their clinical learning and evaluate whether their learning objectives have been achieved.
  - iii) access to training resources in the clinical areas.
  - iv) have regular sessions with preceptors for learning and assessment purpose.

## STANDARD FOUR: ROLE OF CLINICAL INSTRUCTORS AND PRECEPTORS

The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider are accountable for allocating Clinical Instructors and Preceptors to optimise students' learning during clinical practicum.

### Criteria

- 4.1. The Clinical Instructor is from the Education Institution and/or Clinical Placement Provider. He/she provides guidance, supervision assessment and support for a group of students during their clinical placement period.
  
- 4.2. The Clinical Instructor:
  - i) ensures that the clinical practicum facilitates the achievement of the stipulated clinical learning outcomes;
  - ii) ensures that the clinical placement promotes integration of theory to practice;
  - iii) provides regular feedback to the Clinical Placement Provider to improve the quality of the students' clinical experiences; and
  - iv) conducts clinical assessment of students.
  
- 4.3. The Clinical Instructor is an Advanced Practice Nurse:
  - i) with minimum 5 years' clinical experience;
  - ii) has recognized skills in the related area of practice and
  - iii) has an interest in teaching & learning and have successfully completed a Clinical Instructor (CI) and/or teaching and assessing course facilitated by healthcare institutions and/or the Specialist Diploma in Clinical Education.
  
- 4.4. The ratio of Clinical Instructors to students is not more than 1 Clinical Instructor to 6 students, in order to provide adequate supervision throughout the clinical practicum.

- 4.5. The student is allocated to a Preceptor who provides individualised guidance, supervision, support and assessment for student's learning experience.
- 4.6. The Preceptor is responsible for:
  - iv) supporting and enabling student's learning;
  - v) providing appropriate supervision of nursing students that is relevant to the student's level of learning; and
  - vi) conducting clinical assessment of students.
- 4.7. The Preceptor is medical specialist or an Advanced Practice Nurse with 5 years' experience in the area of practice.
- 4.8. Each Preceptor shall be assigned to a maximum of 2 students at any one time.
- 4.9. The Preceptor will receive assistance, guidance and support from the Clinical Placement Coordinator and Clinical Programme Coordinator in performing their preceptor roles and responsibilities.

## STANDARD FIVE: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The Clinical Instructor and Preceptor are responsible to perform formative and summative assessment of the students and to provide feedback on their clinical performance.

### **Criteria**

- 5.1. Clinical assessments are conducted at regular interval as prescribed by the educational institution.
- 5.2. Specific feedback on students' performances are given regularly and in a timely manner to reinforce good performances and to encourage and respect students' efforts.
- 5.3. Clinical Instructors or Preceptors conduct debriefing sessions to facilitate students' reflection of their practice and evaluation of their clinical performance.
- 5.4. Clinical Instructors and Preceptors communicate and collaborate as a team to facilitate student assessments and evaluate the effectiveness of the overall clinical education.
- 5.5. The evaluation of the clinical placement is:
  - i) obtained from students and Preceptors at the completion of each clinical placement;
  - ii) facilitated by the Clinical Instructor in collaboration with the Clinical Placement Coordinator to evaluate the effectiveness of clinical learning; and
  - iii) used by the Clinical Placement Provider and Education Institutions to make improvements to the clinical learning experience and adopt best practices.

## GLOSSARY

Assessment	The process of evaluating the extent to which students have achieved their expected clinical learning outcomes.
Clinical Placement Coordinator:	<p>A nursing staff member (Registered Nurse from a Clinical Placement Provider who liaises with the Education Institution(s) to facilitate clinical education for nursing students. He/ She has oversight of the clinical placement's schedule and provides resources and support for students' learning in the clinical setting.</p> <p>Clinical education of Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) will be provided by an Advanced Practice Nurse (may be adjunct staff with the Education Institution) of a Clinical Placement Provider. He/She may also serve as a Clinical Instructor if he/she meets the criteria.</p>
Clinical Placement Provider	A hospital, institution or healthcare service provider that is accredited by the Singapore Nursing Board to provide students access to their clinical areas for their clinical education.
Clinical Instructor (CI):	<p>A Registered Nurse (with at least 3 years clinical practice experience), employed by an Education Institution and/or Clinical Placement Provider to provide guidance, supervision and assessment for a group of students during their clinical placement period.</p> <p>For the clinical education of APN, the Clinical instructor is an Advanced Practice Nurse with at least 5 years of clinical practice experience.</p>
Clinical Preceptor (CP):	<p>A nurse/midwife from the Clinical Placement Provider who provides individualised guidance, supervision, support and assessment for student's learning experience.</p> <p>For the clinical education of APN, the Preceptor is a medical specialist from the Clinical Placement Provider or an Advanced Practice Nurse, from the Clinical Placement Provider working in the same area for at least 5 years.</p>
Clinical Programme Coordinator:	A nursing education staff member from an Education Institution who plans, develops and organises clinical education activities to achieve the programme's learning goals and outcomes.
Evaluation	The process of appraising the overall effectiveness of clinical education programme and to make improvements to maintain the quality of the programme.

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