



**Nursing Clinical Handbook**  
**for**  
**Students, Preceptors, and Faculty**

Created September 2021 for Spring and Summer 2022

## UNIVERSITY MISSION

Heidelberg University is a community of learning that promotes and nurtures intellectual, personal and professional development, leading to a life of purpose with distinction.

## NURSING MISSION

The mission of the nursing program is to cultivate a community of learning that nurtures intellectual, personal, and professional development. This development of individuals promotes lifelong learning and preparation for living a life of purpose and distinction.

## NURSING PHILOSOPHY AND CORE VALUES

The philosophy of the nursing program aligns with the mission and goals expressed by Heidelberg University. The nursing program integrates the liberal arts education tradition to equip nurses with skills needed to lead professional and interprofessional teams, and organizations in a variety of settings. Based on trust, promoted through **integrity** and demonstrated as acts of **advocacy**, an expectation of caring and compassion for human existence is valued.

Advancing the science of nursing improves the health of all individuals. Through **innovation** and creativity, the program goal is to educate individuals to become **agile leaders** in nursing who easily adapt and promote health for individuals, families, and populations of the world. The nursing program is committed to offering opportunities that prepare students to become global citizens who communicate effectively, think critically, serve thoughtfully, and champion social justice.

Nursing is an academic discipline, a practice profession, and a champion of interprofessional **collaboration**. Professional nursing incorporates the nursing metaparadigms that include person, environment, health, and nursing. The metaparadigm of person focuses on the individuality of the recipient of care. The metaparadigm of health refers to the person's level of wellness or quality of life. The environment is simply the point of care.

Professional values to be conveyed include patient **confidentiality** to respect privacy and self-determination, **punctuality** to build trust, **personal appearance** to display professionalism, and **projected sense of service** through use of self to address the whole person with physical, psychological, social, or spiritual needs. These core values are consistent with the AACN. Nursing references the creative, knowledgeable, willing, service-oriented caregiver.

### Core and Professional Values Groupings

#### Core Program Values

Innovation  
Collaboration  
Leadership  
Integrity  
Agility Advocacy

#### Professional Values

Confidentiality  
Punctuality  
Personal appearance  
Projected sense of service

## **RN-BSN CLINICAL POLICY**

The RN-BSN pathway demonstrates quality clinical practice experiences, demonstrated through hands-on clinical experiences as part of two curriculum courses; NRS 440 and NRS 470.

### *NRS 440: Community and Population Health Nursing*

Clinical time is calculated in a 1:3 ratio. For a 3-credit hour course, 32 hours of hands-on clinical practice in a public or alternative healthcare site is required. Clinical sites may include, but are not limited to: outpatient clinics, home care, hospice, schools or health departments.

### *NRS 470: Leading and Managing Healthcare teams*

Clinical time is calculated in a 1:3 ratio. For a 3-credit hour course, 32 hours of hands-on clinical practice in a public or alternative healthcare setting is required. Clinical sites may include, but are not limited to: hospitals, outpatient centers, clinics, etc.

Preceptorships are required as well as signed contracts with agencies, once the site is approved by the program director or designee. Eight (8) hours are to be used to complete and submit a project that assists the preceptor, unit, or organization in the delivery of care.

## **CLINICAL SITE SELECTION**

It is the individual student's responsibility to find a site and potential preceptor. (See p. 5.) The site and manager's contact information are then submitted within the signed preceptor form to the Program Director or designee for review. Once the site is deemed acceptable, the program director or designee emails a copy of a site contract for completion and signatures.

This is not an observational experience. The student may use their current workplace, but not during "paid" work time and not under the same supervisory team. It is favorable to avoid clinicals in the organization in which the nurse is employed. The general area in which a nurse works should be avoided. Rationale: a different setting allows the nurse to grow and learn how different healthcare settings provide nursing care and manage and lead within the organization.

## **NRS 440 CLINICAL OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of the clinical experience the student will:

1. Synthesize physical, cultural, developmental, spiritual, psychosocial, and environmental variations to determine healthcare needs of a person, group, or population.
2. Develop appropriate nursing interventions for persons, groups, or populations across the lifespan in various settings, based on recognized health alterations and lifestyle.
3. Incorporate effective communication techniques to produce positive professional working relationships in the clinical setting.
4. Implement a plan of care based on authenticated needs of a person, group, or population, using interprofessional and accessible healthcare resources.

## **NRS 470 CLINICAL OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of the clinical experience the student will:

1. Establish collaborative relationships within the healthcare organization system.
2. Identify best practices for applicability in directing change within the healthcare organizations.
3. Determine learning needs within a health care system.
4. Provide education to meet identified quality improvement or identified continuing education need.
5. Apply management/leadership principles to identify areas to improve or enhance nursing practice.
6. Analyze nursing leadership and management roles in advocating for social justice in regards to policy, technology, finance, regulation, equity of care.

## CLINICAL EXPECTATIONS POLICY

### Site Expectations

1. Commits to planning and implementing a quality learning experience for BSN students.
2. Offers opportunities for BSN students to provide hands-on patient or population care.
3. Provides a safe environment for practice so students may meet the course clinical outcomes.
4. Communicates with faculty at regular intervals and as needed.

### Nursing Program Director or Faculty Responsibilities

#### *Responsibilities to the Preceptor and Site:*

1. Assure that the site contract is completed and signed; may use a contract by the school or the site.
2. Assure that all necessary preceptor forms and licenses are verified.

#### *Responsibilities to the Student:*

1. Assure that the clinical site and preceptor are acceptable and approved.
2. Communicate when the site and preceptor are approved for the clinical experience.

### Course Faculty Responsibilities

1. Assure that each preceptor receives a course overview and clinical objectives.
2. Provide regular contact with each preceptor during the course.
3. Share faculty contact information; be available to preceptor and student for guidance.
4. Assist in identifying clinical hands-on experiences pertinent to meet objectives.
5. Evaluate the student's clinical performance by collaborating with the preceptor.
6. Evaluate clinical experiences and assignments. Review clinical paperwork by students and preceptors.
7. Video conferencing, phone conference, or in-person visits may be used for evaluation.

### Preceptor Qualifications

The preceptor shall:

1. Hold an unencumbered Registered Nurse license.
2. Possess a preferred BSN degree or >3 years of expertise in the clinical site area.
3. Have a minimum of two years nursing with clinical experience.

### Preceptor Responsibilities

The preceptor shall:

1. Demonstrate a willingness to serve as a preceptor.
2. Complete all areas and sign the Heidelberg University Preceptor Form.
3. Submit resume information to the Nursing Program Director or designee.
4. Be supportive of the student's learning experience; act as a role model.
5. Orient the student to the clinical site and priority policies/procedures.
6. Acknowledge course/clinical objectives in the planning of clinical experiences.
7. Provide student opportunities that promote critical thinking and clinical reasoning.
8. Challenge the student to apply evidence-based practice to improve the practice area.
9. Provide feedback to the student.
10. Notify the faculty and participating agency of any incident requiring a formal report.
11. Complete the preceptor evaluation of clinical experience and return to Krista Kantner at [kkantner@heidelberg.edu](mailto:kkantner@heidelberg.edu) by the end the clinical term.

## **Nursing Student Responsibilities**

The student must be registered/licensed in the state of the student's residence. Clinical sites must be located in the state in which student resides. The process follows:

1. Submit the completed, signed preceptor form to the Director or designee.
2. Verify with course faculty and Nursing Program Director that all course paperwork is submitted and approved prior to starting the clinical experience.
3. Exchange contact information with the preceptor. (If either should need to cancel the day's experience, the planned clinical day will be rescheduled.)
4. If the preceptor is unable to work with the student on a particular day, the student may not be placed with another nurse as a preceptor; only the contracted preceptor is permitted without prior permission of the faculty and updated preceptor forms.
5. Ensure scheduling clinical hours (32) and maintain a clinical log.
6. Verify all course paperwork is submitted at the completion of the clinical experience with the course faculty. This includes the preceptor evaluation.
7. Develop a clinical project with the assistance of the preceptor and/or course faculty.

## **Expected Student Clinical Experience Behaviors**

Students participating in the clinical experience shall:

1. Demonstrate safety and confidentiality in the provision of patient care.
2. Maintain accountability for one's own professional growth.
3. Demonstrate a positive attitude that will enhance patient care, foster collaborative interprofessional work and positive interpersonal relations with the healthcare team.
4. Be accountable for nursing judgments, addressing new situations with agility.
5. Demonstrate accountability, organizational skills, and critical thinking during clinicals.
6. Demonstrate ethical, behaviors of integrity to patients, families, and agency staff.
7. Perform clinical activities under the supervision of the clinical preceptor, offering ideas of innovation and potential changes for quality improvement.
8. Discuss clinical performance with the preceptor at regular intervals; confer with the preceptor for mutual evaluation of clinical objectives.
9. At the end of the clinical practice experience, students will meet with the lead faculty member to review evaluation.
10. Students must receive a satisfactory grade on the final clinical evaluation in order to successfully complete the course.

## **Student Evaluation of Clinical Site, Preceptor, and Course Faculty**

1. Student evaluations of the course, preceptor, and faculty are to be submitted to Krista Kantner at [kkantner@heidelberg.edu](mailto:kkantner@heidelberg.edu).
2. The student will use forms found in the course syllabus and/or emailed from Krista Kantner.

## **CLINICAL EXPERIENCES**

### **Function for Clinical Site**

Students must be able to function properly at a clinical site: physically, emotionally, and mentally, especially when dealing with stressful patient situations. Students must possess the senses needed for assessment such as vision, hearing, smell, and touch; and have fine motor and gross motor skills necessary for providing care. Critical thinking, decision-making, and communication skills increase effectiveness in the nurse role to perform duties necessary for providing care as a member of the interdisciplinary care team. Clinical sites may have additional requirements to be followed.

### **Student Health Policy: Post-licensure Pathway**

Health requirements for students: health insurance, immunization titers, must meet clinical agency requirements, and may include additional health-related responsibilities. Students are responsible for the expenses incurred for tests, vaccines, and documentation listed below.

### **Post-licensure Clinical Requirements**

Prior to attending clinicals in courses NRS 440 and NRS 470, students must satisfactorily complete specific documentation:

- FBI/ BCI check within 1 year of the clinical experiences
- BLS for healthcare providers by the American Heart Association is to be maintained throughout the post-licensure pathway.
- Physical health examination results current to within the 3 years
- Hepatitis B: 3-immunization series or lab evidence of immunity
- MMR: vaccine or evidence of immunity; if history of known positive, evidence of a baseline negative chest X-ray and TB questionnaire every 12 months
- Varicella Zoster: immunization, evidence of history of chicken pox, or lab evidence of immunity
- DPT vaccine with the past 10 years
- Influenza: evidence of annual immunization with the most current vaccine
- Tuberculosis: date and results of the 2-step Mantoux test within one year
- Hematology lab values: 9- or 10-panel sets will be accepted
- Drug screen of usual drugs of abuse
- Title IX pregnancy requirements are in effect. If restrictions exist, such must be noted by the physician and documentation submitted for the student's file.
- *Some clinical sites may require additional vaccinations, lab tests, and/or legal clearance.*

Clinical site contracts will outline site requirements at the time a site and preceptor are identified by the student. It is recommended these checks be completed the semester prior to the two aforementioned clinical courses because delays in results may occur.

The above clinical requirements will be submitted to the Program Director or designed, likely the administrative assistant.

### **Signed Consent to Release Health Records**

Nursing students may be required to share health records with other institutions, (health facilities). In such cases, students must sign the consent form to release health records. The consent form is available at the Health & Counseling Center on Heidelberg Campus, where students sign and submit the permission to share their health records. A request for the electronic form from the Center as well as signed, scanned document submission is sufficient.

## **CLINICAL SITE INFORMATION**

1. Electronic forms and signatures of student, preceptor or site coordinator and faculty are required. Refer to specific course syllabi for clinical assignments and objectives as shared by the course faculty.
2. Appropriate tools must be brought to the clinical site (e.g., stethoscope) so the student is ready to perform the identified and pre-planned role.
3. Timeliness, punctuality, and adherence to clinical site practices and policies are expected.

### **Required BLS Certification for Clinical Sites: Pre- and Post-licensure**

American Heart Association - Basic Life Support (BLS) for the healthcare provider is to be maintained throughout the post-licensure pathway of the Nursing program. Healthcare provider BLS from the American Heart Association is the only provider accepted for nursing pathways.

### **Student Files**

Student academic and clinical files are confidential and are maintained to protect student and patient privacy/confidentiality. A secure shared drive among the director, faculty, and Registrar is maintained for communication purposes only.

### **Student Professional Liability Insurance**

Students are strongly encouraged to carry professional liability insurance. Students must not perform procedures for which one lacks educational preparation. For best protection, institutional policies (university and/or healthcare facilities) are to be followed at all times. Adequate supervision is always necessary when working in clinical settings and varies by level of expertise, and determined by the site preceptor.

## **CLINICAL GUIDELINES**

Clinical experiences will be allowable at a student's employment, but may NOT be precepted by the student's immediate supervisor or on the student's unit/department of employment. It is suggested that students seek clinicals outside of their employment agency to enhance personal and professional growth.

Practice experiences include activities that support health and/or provide care, interacting with a variety of providers and/or with patients and with oversight by a provider designee and Heidelberg nursing faculty. Patients throughout this document are defined as individuals, families, groups, communities, or populations. Practice experiences, including those completed in the student's agency of employment shall include specific objectives, expected outcomes and competencies, and an evaluation provided by a faculty member.

Practice experiences transition the post-licensure nursing students' competencies to the baccalaureate level of proficiency and include organization/systems' understanding, leadership development, evidence-based practice, information management and integration of technologies into practice, interprofessional collaboration and communication, population health, comprehensive assessment, and quality improvement strategies.

Didactic and practice (hands-on) experiences are required in order to achieve expected skills and knowledge to integrate into practice. Practice experiences assure that students upon graduation have attained end-of-program competencies delineated in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Baccalaureate Essentials.

Clinical performance expectations include the advancement of clinical reasoning and proficiency in performing psychomotor skills. Psychomotor skill development for the post-licensure student is different from the expectations for the entry-level student. If a student has physical or psychomotor skill deficits, they are to schedule a meeting with the director of the nursing program and the clinical faculty prior to entering the clinical site for the clinical experience.

### **Clinical Dress Code**

Attire must be clean, neat and appropriate. One's used work uniform, such as scrubs after a shift of work, is not suitable. The Heidelberg name badge must be worn above the waist when present at the site for clinicals. The student will dress according to the setting in which the clinical is occurring. Thus, required attire may change from site to site.

### **Student Incidents and Needle Stick Policy**

If a patient incident occurs at a clinical site, students must follow the site's chain of command, requirements, and forms, but must also contact the faculty as soon as possible (within 24 hours.) Students must follow proper emergency care if needed. Students must have their own health insurance. It is the student's responsibility to pay for any follow up care regarding the injury.

### **Occupational Exposure Definition**

An occupational exposure is defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as: reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, non-intact skin or parenteral contact with blood and other potentially infectious materials that may result from the performance of an employee's duties. See the Exposure Control Plan of the Heidelberg University Health & Counseling Center for policy details. Note: If a student misses clinical due to a personal Emergency Department visit or hospitalization, he or she must present with written permission prior to return to clinical.