

CAROLINAS COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES POLICY AND PROCEDURE

ACADEMIC

SUBJECT: UNSAFE CLINICAL PRACTICE

REVIEWER(S): Provost*
Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

POLICY

The faculty in clinical programs provide learning experiences so that students can develop and demonstrate competence in the skills necessary to practice in a clinical setting. The student is expected to contribute to the safety and well-being of the patient and practice in the clinical setting in a safe and responsible way towards him/herself, clinical professionals, and the environment. Students may be placed on action plans, disciplined and/or recommended for dismissal from a program of study for unsafe clinical practices.

PROCEDURE:

- A. Unsafe clinical practice is defined as any actions (or lack thereof) that may cause harm to others. This can include failure to assess or act appropriately on information that a majority of students at the same level would recognize as important to patient health and safety. In addition, unsafe clinical practice may be the result of poor judgment, inadequate preparation for patient care, and/or poor decision-making skills that can lead to life-threatening safety violations. Additional examples of unsafe practices may include, but are not limited to:
 1. Failing to adhere to college, system and/or facility policies or procedures.
 2. Exhibiting behavioral problems that result in unsafe clinical practices.
 3. Exhibiting physical, cognitive or emotional problems which conflict with safe practices and does not respond to appropriate treatment or counseling within a reasonable period of time.
 4. Requiring an inordinate amount of the instructor's time in the clinical setting, potentially jeopardizing the adequacy of supervision of other students.
 5. Requiring a significantly longer time than other classmates to perform the same procedures or tasks.
 6. Possessing a disability for which reasonable accommodations will not prevent unsafe clinical practices.
 7. Losing access to clinical facility placement.
 8. Violating the HIPAA policy.
 9. Refusing to participate in a clinical facility investigation related to an alleged HIPAA violation or a patient safety matter.
 10. Refusing to participate in a simulated or virtual clinical experience or an alternative learning activity.
- B. Clinical faculty provide a required orientation prior to students entering the clinical environment to outline student expectations and relevant policies and procedures. In addition, students in clinical programs are required to complete annual continuing education (ARL) modules that ensure students are current with relevant clinical practices and policies.
- C. Periodic evaluation by clinical instructors ensures that students maintain the necessary skills and adhere to high standards of professionalism and patient care.
- D. When an infraction occurs:
 1. The instructor discusses the issue/event with the student and determines whether the student remains in the clinical setting.
 2. The instructor notifies the clinical coordinator and/or program chair of the incident.
 3. For minor infractions, the instructor (and clinical coordinator or program chair, if necessary)

- meets with the student to provide counseling and/or an action plan.
4. More severe infractions, or repeated minor infractions, may be referred to the dean of student affairs and enrollment management for further counseling and/or action planning.
 5. Severe infractions, or continued infractions after counseling, may result in a recommendation for dismissal. Recommendations for dismissal are submitted to the provost and dean of student affairs and enrollment management and are referred to the Academic, Progression and Graduation (APG) committee for consideration in accordance with the Dismissal policy.
 6. Clinical access will be suspended during APG review and pending the outcome of the committee's findings. Clinical faculty may elect to offer alternative learning opportunities during the loss of access during review.
 7. Severe infractions that also violate other policies such as drug and alcohol, may result in immediate dismissal, or suspension, in accordance with those other policies.

E. The Unsafe Clinical Practice Policy will be reviewed biennially.

REFERENCES

Related Policies to Consult

Carolinas College:

ACADEMIC - Clinical Access and Eligibility; Dismissal; Student Action Plans

STUDENT AFFAIRS - Community Standards; HIPAA Privacy

Related Form - Student Action Plan Form