



**Clinical Instructor/Educator
Orientation Tool**

[Clinical Practice Supports - LibGuides at Nova Scotia Health](#)

Clinical Instructor/Educator (CI/E): _____

Site: _____ Unit: _____ Date of initial unit visit: _____

Unit Health Services Manager (HSM)

Name: _____ Contact: _____

Unit Clinical Nurse Educator (CNE)

Name: _____ Contact: _____

Unit Charge Nurse or Team Leader

Name: _____ Contact: _____

Unit Clinical Resource Nurse

Name: _____ Contact: _____

Main contact for student-related issues/concerns:

Name: _____ Contact: _____

AC&P Student Learner Placement: slpprovincial@nshealth.ca

Welcome!

Welcome to Nova Scotia Health (NSH) as a Clinical Instructor/Educator (CI/E) who supports group nursing placements. We are grateful to have such skilled and experienced professionals like you who bring valuable knowledge and expertise to our clinical learning environments. Your dedication to supporting and guiding students is essential in shaping the next generation of healthcare providers. This orientation tool is designed to provide you with helpful resources and information to enhance your important role in mentoring students and ensuring a positive, enriching clinical experience. It also reflects NSH's commitment to fostering a culture of learning and to create welcoming, inclusive environments where everyone feels they belong. We look forward to collaborating with you and supporting your continued success as a CI/E.

Clinical Instructors/Educators are accountable for their actions and are responsible for ensuring they possess the knowledge and teaching skills necessary to support safe, compassionate, competent, and ethical clinical education. While students begin their learning under direct and indirect supervision, CI/Es guide their progression, ensuring responsibilities align with each student's stage of learning and scope of practice.

Clinical Instructors/Educators will:

- Supervise and support students in providing patient care appropriate to their level of competency
- Collaborate with the education team and unit leadership, to develop students' core clinical proficiencies
- Help students apply theoretical and technical knowledge safely and effectively within their defined scope of practice
- Contribute to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of clinical education experiences and learning outcomes.

NSH expects CI/Es to model accountability and responsibility by ensuring they are prepared to support student learning in alignment with the NSH mission statement and core values.

Resources provided through the Clinical Instructor/Educator Orientation Tool are designed to support clinical teaching by reducing uncertainty, clarifying information, building confidence, and strengthening leadership in clinical instruction.

Please remember that you are not alone in this teaching role. Support is available from preceptors, unit mentors, clinical practice leads, nurse educators, and managers—all of whom are here to help you foster a successful and meaningful learning environment for students.

To be adequately prepared, CI/Es should schedule a unit orientation approximately two weeks prior to the start of a placement. The purpose of this orientation is to familiarize yourself with the unit layout, patient population, specific routines, and unit specific documentation procedures prior to receiving students. Typically lasting around four hours, the orientation may include shadowing staff nurses and/or a guided tour led by unit leadership. We strongly recommend reaching out to the unit's Health Service Manager to arrange this session. Below, you will find a list of key tasks to complete during your time on the unit.

CLINICAL INSTRUCTOR/EDUCATOR ORIENTATION CHECKLIST	
☐ Review unit-specific orientation package or checklist (if available) to become familiar with context and what is expected of the student on the unit. ☐ Unit Specific Orientation Package ☐ Unit Specific Orientation Checklist	NOTES
☐ Identify any security points requiring permission for access. Store codes/passwords in a safe and secure place as per NSH policy/procedure. Consider permissions and request access for: ☐ unit access (if required) ☐ medication room ☐ medication management system (Pyxis/OmniCell) ☐ supply storage areas (if required) ☐ staff/break room (locker area may be separate) ☐ any other secured area requiring code/ key	

Practice Considerations: ☐ Review patient population & commonly presenting conditions ☐ Review model of care: key nursing staff roles, interdisciplinary team roles ☐ Review applicable equipment used on the unit (e.g., IV pumps, bladder scanner, patient transfer devices/lift. ☐ Know if competency testing or training is required before use.	
Documentation ☐ Review unit specific forms and process, including but not limited to: • shift documentation records for nursing • pre-printed order sets and treatment plans • pre-printed care plans and other clinical documents • any other unit-specific paperwork • OPOR (see OPOR Training and/or OPOR Hub)	
Access Considerations: ☐ All CI/Es are required to wear a visible photo ID badge while on-site at an NSH facility. AP ID badges are acceptable for identification. • Contact unit manager if access to areas or equipment is required. ☐ All CI/Es are required to arrive with Active Directory and Pyxis access. • Request Active Directory from your academic institution clinical coordinator. If there are issues, they may contact email: nursingstudentIT@nshealth.ca. CI/Es who may be NSH employees should ALWAYS use their student-related active directory (AD) account and	

during group placements, should not use their employee accounts. • CZ Pyxis issues: Nursing Student IT Access nursingstudentIT@nshealth.ca • NZ Pyxis issues email: Lynn.Hoeg@nshealth.ca • WZ Pyxis issues email: Angela.Lutz@nshealth.ca • EZ pyxis issues email: Sharon.Macphee@nshealth.ca		
Unit Rounds & Huddles		
Time: _____ Location: _____ Type: _____ (i.e. safety, daily/unit, bedside, nursing)	Time: _____ Location: _____ Type: _____ (i.e. safety, daily/unit, bedside, nursing)	Time: _____ Location: _____ Type: _____ (i.e. safety, daily/unit, bedside, nursing)
Before starting rotation/shift with students:		
☐ Seek out Charge Nurse/Team Leader and introduce self upon arrival. Collaborate and review chart(s) to identify potential patient assignments for students. ☐ Establish how logistical students' needs will be met: locker space, break areas, and post-conference meeting room. ☐ Clarify unit-specific communication processes - staff breaks, transfer of information over breaks, etc.		

Preceptorship

The CI/E serves as both a mentor and resource in this learning journey. With your extensive knowledge, clinical expertise, and teaching experience, CI/Es provide structured guidance to help students grow in confidence and competence. Working within a **preceptorship model** and alongside other unit leaders, CI/Es:

- facilitate learning through **direct observation**, **hands-on skill practice**, and **guided clinical experiences**

- offer **constructive, timely feedback** to help identify strengths and areas for growth
- promote reflective practice, critical thinking, and safe, evidence-based care
- support the use of assessment tools to evaluate competency development
- encourage **open communication**, professionalism, and self-directed learning
- act as a liaison between the learner, preceptor, unit leadership, and educators to ensure alignment of goals and expectations

Although each student progresses at their own pace, a successful transition to practice is built on the following foundations:

- **clear, consistent communication** between instructor, student, preceptor, CNE, HSM, and rest of leadership team
- **willingness to learn and grow** in a supportive environment
- **active engagement** from all involved in the learning process
- **mutual respect in giving and receiving feedback**

As a CI/E, the goal is not only to support skill development, but also to foster confidence, critical thinking, and professional growth and development!

Clinical Practice Supports: Nursing Skills and Procedures

Resource	Purpose	Links
Clinical Practice Supports: Nursing Skills and Procedures	This NSH Library website contains a compilation of support material for competency maintenance, evidence-informed practice, and professional education.	• Clinical Practice Supports: Nursing Skills and Procedures - LibGuides at Nova Scotia Health
Dynamic Health	This website provides evidence-based resources designed to help nurses and allied health professionals find guidance on care interventions and to obtain fast, accurate answers to clinical questions. Some skills and procedures will feature workplace notes that have been created by NSH staff to add local context alongside best evidence.	• Dynamic Health • Dynamic Health in Practice with a student/learner • Dynamic Health Support - LibGuides at Nova Scotia Health

Resource	Purpose	Links
Dynamic Health (continued)	You must initially register at an NSH site/network computer to be able to access NSH content. Once registered at an NSH site, login is valid to use at any site or at home and will still give access to NSH content. • AD email preferred • Can use Student/personal email	
Learning Management System (LMS)	In this portal, you will find various required and additional learning activities/modules for NSH employees. There is a catalogue to search for specific items of interest. Please note that your student-related AD is required to login.	• Learning Management System (LMS)
NSH Policy Portal	This website contains NSH organizational wide Policies, Procedures (SOPs), Care Directives, Delegated Medical Functions and Clinical Intervention Guides Use the search function to navigate to policy of choice for review.	• Nova Scotia Health Policy Portal 
NSH Safety Improvement Management System (SIMS)	SIMS is an electronic incident reporting system used throughout NSH to report and manage patient safety incidents, privacy breaches, patient/family feedback, and more. SIMS enables processes to report, analyze, recommend actions, and monitor improvements. The goal of SIMS is to learn from incident reports to improve safety. Note: CI/Es must use SIMS through the Anonymous Log In LMS Module with SIMS content: • Safety Culture 0001.02	• SIMS - Log In 

Resource	Purpose	Links
Simulation	There are various simulation labs across NSH. To connect with zonal simulation teams: • centralsimulation@nshealth.ca • easternsimulation@nshealth.ca • northernsimulation@nshealth.ca • westernsimulation@nshealth.ca	For IPPL simulation site, you must be logged in on an NSH computer to access.
Student Specific	This link is the gateway to processes, requirements and resources for students in preparation for beginning placements.	Student and Learning Opportunities Nova Scotia Health
OPOR	The One Person One Record (OPOR) Hub is your one-stop shop for the latest information and resources. The Digital Practice Integration Learning Hub is where you will find information about job aids that have been created to support various OPOR-CIS workflows at NS Health. Student training covers an introduction to the CIS through online asynchronous learning that you can review.	One Person One Record (OPOR) Hub Digital Practice Integration Learning Hub  https://elearning.nshealth.ca, course codes 1528 and 1529
Additional Resource Links: • Computer Access Resource with NSH Compass information: ◦ NSH Computer Access Resource • New Nurse Mentorship Program at NSH: ◦ New Nurse Mentorship Program - LibGuides at Nova Scotia Health • Helpful to introduce to student nurses planning to transition to practice at NSH		

Resources for Difficult Situations

This topic looks different depending on situational context. Offering an opportunity to debrief can be a powerful tool when students/learners/colleagues experience a traumatic incident (primary, secondary, vicarious). NSH partnered with **TEND Academy** to offer a range of supports, including educational modules hosted on the **Learning Management System (LMS)** platform. There are 4 modules (each between 1 to 2 hours in length) that describe different topics:

Resource	Purpose	LMS Course Code
Resilience in Trauma-Exposed Work	This workshop will provide a framework to understand the mechanisms of stress and resilience within trauma-exposed environments. It introduces practical, best-practice approaches to increasing resilience and enhancing individual wellness and organizational health.	• 1166
Organizational Health in Trauma Exposed Environments: Essentials	Trauma-exposed work creates a unique climate with increased risk for serious stress and burnout and can lead to a rise in sick time, low morale, lack of team cohesion and high turnover. These consequences can, in turn, seriously limit a team's ability to work effectively and efficiently. As leaders, the managers and supervisors of these teams can play an essential role in mitigating the effects of stress and increasing the resilience of their staff.	• 1167
Compassion Fatigue 101	This online course explores the essentials of Compassion Fatigue or Empathic Strain – a normal consequence of working in a helping field. After completing the course, participants have reported feeling inspired to make meaningful changes in their personal, professional, and organizational lives in addition to learning practical strategies for identifying and dealing with the personal costs of caring.	• 1168
Staying Grounded in Stressful work	This online course provides skills to move helping professionals from states of reactivity or avoidance and to a place of possibility where we are centered amongst the chaos and can choose how we wish to respond. It is ideally suited for front-line workers, those working with forensic evidence, investigations, court, with witnesses and victims, and those working with individuals who have experienced difficult and traumatic experiences.	• 1169
Additional Resource Links TEND Academy: • TEND Low impact debriefing Low Impact Debriefing The TEND Toolkit		

Resource	Purpose	LMS Course Code
NSH: - Trauma-Informed Care: Trauma-Informed Care - LibGuides at Nova Scotia Health - Harm Reduction: Harm Reduction Interventions - LibGuides at Nova Scotia Health - Vicarious Trauma Vicarious Trauma Psych Ed Tool		

Resources for Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are important for everyone involved in clinical education. Practicing cultural humility means recognizing and respecting the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students and patients. This mindset helps to create inclusive, supportive, and effective learning and care environments where everyone feels valued.

Mi'kmaw Indigenous Patient Navigators (MIPNs)

MIPNs play a vital role in supporting Mi'kmaq and Indigenous patients as they move through the healthcare system, helping address and overcome barriers to timely, culturally safe care. Acting as a bridge between patients and healthcare professionals, they foster understanding, trust and clear communication, ensuring patients feel respected and supported.

- Central Zone (Halifax area, Eastern Shore and West Hants):
 - Jacque Potvin-Boucher & Stephanie Francis at CZMIPN@nshealth.ca
- Eastern Zone (Cape Breton, Guysborough and Antigonish areas):
 - Janice Basque and Caitlin Lameman at EZMIPN@nshealth.ca
- Northern Zone (Colchester-East Hants, Cumberland and Pictou areas):
 - Jennifer Crossman at NZMIPN@nshealth.ca
- Western Zone (Annapolis Valley, South Shore and South West):
 - Chanelle Beaumont at WZMIPN@nshealth.ca

Visit the [Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging](#) section of the LibGuide on New to Nova Scotia Health: Practice Support for Licensed and Unlicensed Health Care Providers for information and practical resources on topics such as the Health Equity Framework, responding to racism and belonging.

The following learning and development opportunities can help team members develop strategies to foster a **supportive** and **culturally inclusive** work environment.

Resource	LMS Course Code
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	• 1183.01
2SLGBTQIA+ Safer Spaces of Belonging	• 0841.02
Intro to Gender Diversity	• 0869.02
Intro to Gender Diversity: Expanded	• 0870.02
WeCARE	• 1064.01
Additional Resources: • NSH Library Services - Respectful Workplace • prideHealth	

Reporting Discrimination and Incivility

If discrimination (including racism) or incivility (e.g., bullying or sabotaging) **towards a student or instructor**, the reporting process is different (i.e., not through SIMS or SAFELINE) as they are not NSH employees.

The instructor is to report the incident to:

- The unit manager
- The academic institution representative
- SLPProvincial@nshealth.ca

Resources on Giving Feedback and Managing Conflict

Quality feedback (specific, actionable, timely & respectful), when provided in a psychologically safe learning environment, is essential for learning. The following resources are helpful for developing competency in this skill:

- [LeeAnn Renninger: The secret to giving great feedback | TED Talk](#)
- [Feedback is a Gift](#)
- [Characteristics of Good Student Feedback](#)
- [Providing constructive feedback to a preceptor](#)
- [Providing Feedback to a Manager](#)

Build confidence in your ability to manage Conflict by exploring the following resource at [Conflict Competence - LibGuides at Nova Scotia Health](#) (includes 10-minute, 30-minute and more in-

depth resources). The image below highlights helpful steps to follow when giving feedback. If this is a new skill for you, please consider role playing scenarios with a trusted colleague to practice using language that is comfortable for you.

Resources on Giving Feedback and Managing Conflict (continued)

State the purpose of the feedback.	• Relate the feedback to desired team results. This helps set the focus for the feedback. It also lets the other person know what your intentions are.
Describe your observations and perceptions.	• Be specific about behaviors, incidents, facts, or perceptions on which you base your point of view. Be brief and clear.
Listen to the other person's view.	• Getting the other person involved in the conversation makes the process easier for both parties and helps to avoid defensiveness.
Jointly agree on action to be taken.	• Think of this as a plan of action. Your willingness to help can make it more effective.
Summarize your discussion and show appreciation.	• Receiving feedback is just as hard as giving it. Let the other person know you appreciate their openness.

(Adapted from: TIPS FOR TEAMS Kimball Fisher et al Pages 183-6 used in NSH CZ Preceptor Development)

Trouble Shooting Guide

We hope your experience as an instructor at NSH is positive and rewarding. However, if challenges do arise, we hope you find the guidance below helpful.

Issue/Concern	Actions
Discrimination or Incivility • Student or Instructor ○ Experiences discrimination (including racism) or incivility (e.g., verbal insults, bullying or sabotaging) ○ More information here	The instructor is to report the incident to: • The unit manager • The academic institution representative, and • SLPProvincial@nshealth.ca

Troubleshooting Guide Cont'd

Issue/Concern	Actions
Injury • Student or Instructor ○ Experiences an injury or near miss during placement ○ Workplace Incident Reporting Instructions	• Seek immediate medical attention or first aid, if required. • Report to: ○ The unit manager ○ The academic institution representative ○ Occupational Health Safety and Wellness (OHSW) using the method for your zone: ▪ Central: Call SAFE Line 902-473-7233 ▪ Eastern: Call SAFE Line 1-844-717-7233 ▪ Northern: Report via SIMS ▪ Western: Report via SIMS
OPOR Training (all zones) • Instructor • Classroom training and for eLearning through MAP Learning requires NSH email and the options are to: a. use NSH email if you are also an NSH employee b. use your NSH Nursing Student email or c. request NSH Nursing Student email through your placement coordinator if you don't yet have one • Register for in-person training or if none are available, register for computer space and virtual training.	• Contact nursingstudentIT@nshealth.ca
OPOR Training (all zones) • Student ○ Student eLearning training is a prerequisite for placement and can be reviewed through https://elearning.nshealth.ca course codes 1528 and 1529 ○ If there are questions or concerns contact nursingstudentIT@nshealth.ca	• Contact nursingstudentIT@nshealth.ca

Troubleshooting Guide Cont'd

Issue/Concern	Actions
IT concerns • Student or Instructor ○ Experiences IT related concerns during placement	• Review the Access section and if not resolved, • Contact nursingstudentIT@nshealth.ca
Practice Concerns • Student ○ e.g., one of my students is not on track to meet their learning objectives for this placement on the unit. ○ e.g., one of my students continues to demonstrate unprofessional behaviours, even after I have addressed the issue(s) privately with them.	• As soon as issues are identified, the instructor is to connect with: a. The academic institution representative, and if needed your rep will connect with the appropriate member of the NSH Student Learner Placement team.
Practical Concerns • Student or Instructor ○ e.g., challenges booking a conference room space ○ e.g., challenges coordinating learning opportunities with team members	The instructor should first bring the concern to: 1. The unit manager ○ If not able to resolve concern, then contact both: 2. The academic institution representative, and SLPProvincial@nshealth.ca
All other concerns of significance Student or Instructor	The instructor should first bring the concern to: 2. The unit manager ○ If not able to resolve concern, then contact both: 2. The academic institution representative, and SLPProvincial@nshealth.ca

THOUGHTS & REFLECTIONS