STANDARDS FOR
CLINICAL NURSING 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. Practice placements allow students to learn from their experiences and from role models on the ground. Such experiences will prepare them for entry-level practice in a complex and diverse healthcare environment.

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

Laboratory and simulation experiences provide students with an effective and safe environment to learn and apply cognitive knowledge and perform 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.

Singapore Nursing Board's (SNB) Education Committee have reviewed and established standards and measurable quality indicators for clinical education. The objective is to ensure that students are provided with sufficient breadth and depth of learning to hone their competencies at entry level practice and post-registration preparation. Students will be exposed to diverse patient population across the life span in various settings. The revised standards and quality indicators incorporate best practices learnt from international and national nurses involved in clinical nursing education. SNB aims to promote flexibility and collaboration between nursing schools and clinical placement providers to utilize both the Clinical Instructor and/or Clinical Preceptor Model for nursing students' supervision and assessment (refer to Appendix A on page 12)

These Standards will complement the Standards for Nursing Education and set the requirements by which SNB accredits clinical areas to facilitate holistic clinical education.

Registrar
Singapore Nursing Board
May 2022
Standards for Clinical Nursing Education

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STANDARD ONE:
GOVERNACE AND COLLABORATION

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.

Quality Indicators

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 the Singapore Nursing Board (SNB) Standards of Clinical Nursing Education.

1.4 The Education Institution and Clinical Placement Provider shall apply to the 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) and/or five (5) years. This shall be done at least 6 months before expiry of the accreditation period.

1.6 Both the Education Institution and the Clinical Placement Provider have policies and procedures that comply to SNB's Standards and Quality Indicators of Clinical Nursing Education to support students' clinical learning.

1.7 The Clinical Placement Provider shall appoint a named Registered Nurse to serve as a Clinical Liaison (CL) to collaborate with the Education institution's Clinical Facilitator (CF). Both CL and CF have oversight of the clinical placement's schedule and provide resources and support for students' learning in the clinical setting.

1.8 The Clinical Facilitator, in collaboration with the Clinical Liaison plans, develops and organises clinical education activities to achieve the programme's learning goals and outcomes.

1.9 The Clinical Placement Provider uses the evaluations of practicum experiences to improve the quality of clinical placement.

1.10 The Clinical Facilitator provides ongoing communication to the Clinical Liaison about any change in nursing curriculum or assessment methodology and/or clinical grading criteria.

1.11 The Clinical Liaison 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 are to be included.

STANDARD TWO:
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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

Quality Indicators

2.1. The Clinical Placement Provider shall assign unvarying/consistent Clinical Instructors (CI) Clinical Preceptors (CP) to supervise, guide and assess student's performance.

2.2. Students are introduced to the healthcare facility and their assigned Clinical Instructor/s and/or Clinical Preceptor/s on the first day of clinical placement.

2.3. The Clinical Placement Provider shall support and promote:

i) the provision of a learning environment that facilitates integration of theory into practice; and

ii) nursing practice that adheres to SNB Code for Nurses and Midwives.

2.4. Students have access to learning resources and equipment where appropriate and available.

2.5. To achieve optimal learning outcomes for students, the number of students assigned in each clinical area shall be:

i) one student to at least two patients/clients for inpatient acute/intermediate/ long term care.

ii) the number of students assigned to each clinical area shall be determined collaboratively by both education institution and clinical practice placement provider.

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.

Quality Indicators

3.1 The student is allocated with an appropriate patient care workload and is able to demonstrate expected levels of competencies and skills.

3.2 The clinical learning practicum shall include:

i) setting achievable learning outcomes at the beginning of the clinical placement;

ii) opportunities to provide holistic patient care at the student's level of education

iii) opportunities to demonstrate and be assessed on nursing competencies when caring for patients; and

iv) a minimum of 2 weeks for each clinical placement (excluding placements at specialized areas)

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, CLINICAL PRECEPTORS AND CLINICAL SUPERVISORS

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

Quality Indicators

4.1. The Clinical Facilitator (CF) is from the Education Institution and Clinical Instructor (CI) and/or Clinical Preceptor (CP) is from the Clinical Placement Provider. The CF, CI and CP provide guidance, supervision assessment and support for a group of students during their clinical placement period.

4.2. The Clinical Instructor (CI) and Clinical Facilitator (CF):

i) ensure that the clinical placement facilitates the achievement of stipulated clinical learning outcomes;

ii) ensure that the clinical placement promotes integration of theory to practice;

iii) provide regular feedback to the Clinical Placement Provider and Education Institution to improve the quality of students' clinical experiences; and

iv) conduct clinical assessment of students.

4.2.1 The Clinical Instructor is a Registered Nurse/Midwife:

i) with minimum 3 years' clinical experience;

ii) is competent in the area of practice; and

iii) has an interest in teaching & learning, and have successfully completed either an accredited Clinical Instructor (CI) course, the Specialist Diploma in Clinical Education and/or equivalent

4.2.2 The Clinical Instructor (CI) should supervise a group of learners.

Pre-registration & pre-enrolment nursing students:

i) One CI is assigned to supervise and assess 12 students;

ii) Contact time (for supervision, assessment and feedback) between CIs and students (one-on-one and or as a group where appropriate) should be at least twice a week and more frequent based on students' needs.

4.3 The student is allocated to a Clinical Preceptor (CP) who provides individualized guidance, supervision, support and assessment for student's learning experience.

4.3.1 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.

4.3.2 The Clinical Preceptor is a nurse/midwife from the Clinical Placement Provider

i) with minimum 2 years' clinical experience;

ii) is competent in practice; and

iii) has completed a structured and formal accredited Preceptorship course

4.3.3 Each Clinical Preceptor shall be assigned to one (1) student (for Year 1 students) and to two students (for Year 2 & Year 3 students).

4.3.4 The Clinical Preceptors will receive assistance, guidance and support from the Clinical Liaison, Clinical Facilitator, Clinical Instructor and Clinical Supervisor in performing their preceptor roles and responsibilities.

4.4 The Clinical Supervisor (RN in-charge of the clinical area) is a nurse/midwife from the Clinical Placement Provider who:

i) supports and facilitates student learning opportunities, supervision and assessment

ii) engages regularly with CIs and CPs to contribute to students' supervision and assessment

iii) works closely with the CL and/or healthcare institution's education unit to communicate and plan CI & CP assignments.

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 Liaison (CL) and Clinical Facilitator (CF) are jointly responsible to ensure that formative and summative assessments are done and feedback given to students.

Quality Indicators

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 is 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, Clinical Instructors, Clinical Liaisons, Clinical Supervisors and Clinical Facilitators 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, Clinical Preceptors, Clinical Instructors, and Clinical Supervisors at the completion of each clinical placement;

ii) facilitated by the Clinical Instructor/ Clinical Liaison 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.

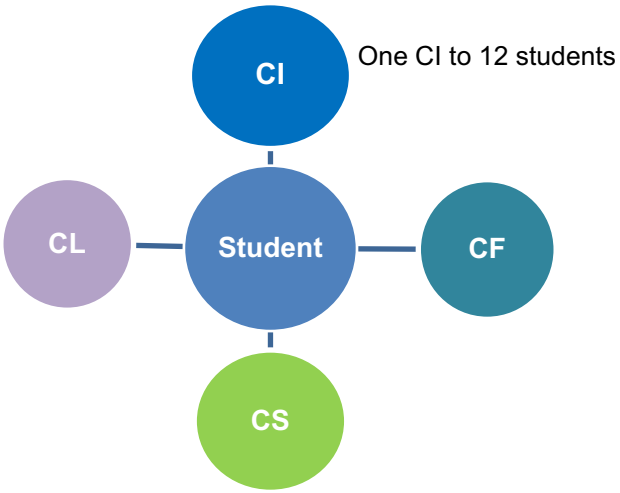
GLOSSARY

Assessment	The process of evaluating the extent to which students have achieved their expected clinical learning outcomes.
Clinical Liaison	A Registered Nurse/Nurse Educator from the 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.
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 clinical education.
Clinical Instructor (CI)	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.
Clinical Preceptor (CP)	A nurse/midwife from the Clinical Placement Provider who provides individualised guidance, supervision, support and assessment for student's learning experience.
Clinical Facilitator (CF)	A nursing education faculty from an Education Institution who plans, develops and organises clinical education activities to achieve the programme's learning goals and outcomes.
Clinical Supervisor (CS)	A Registered Nurse in a supervisory role, in-charge of the clinical area/ward/unit (e.g., Nurse Clinician/Assistant Nurse Clinician/Nurse Manager/Ward-based Nurse Educator/Charge Nurse) who supports students' clinical learning in collaboration with CIs, CPs and CFs
Evaluation	The process of appraising the overall effectiveness of clinical education programme and to make improvements and/or maintain the quality of the programme.

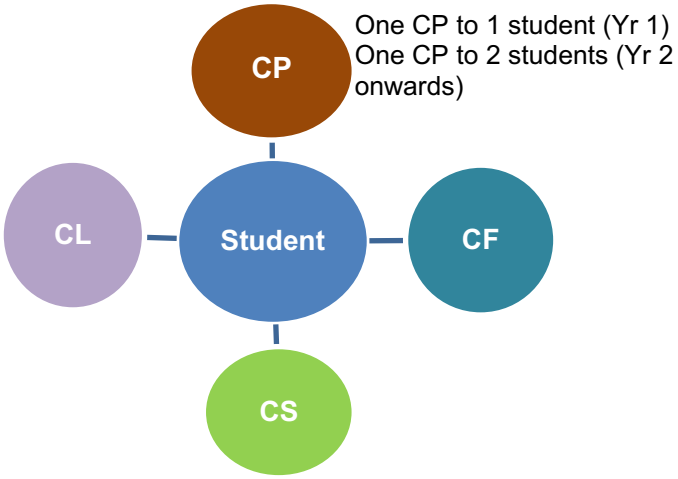
APPENDIX A

MODELS OF CLINICAL NURSING EDUCATION
Collaboration between Education & Healthcare Institutions

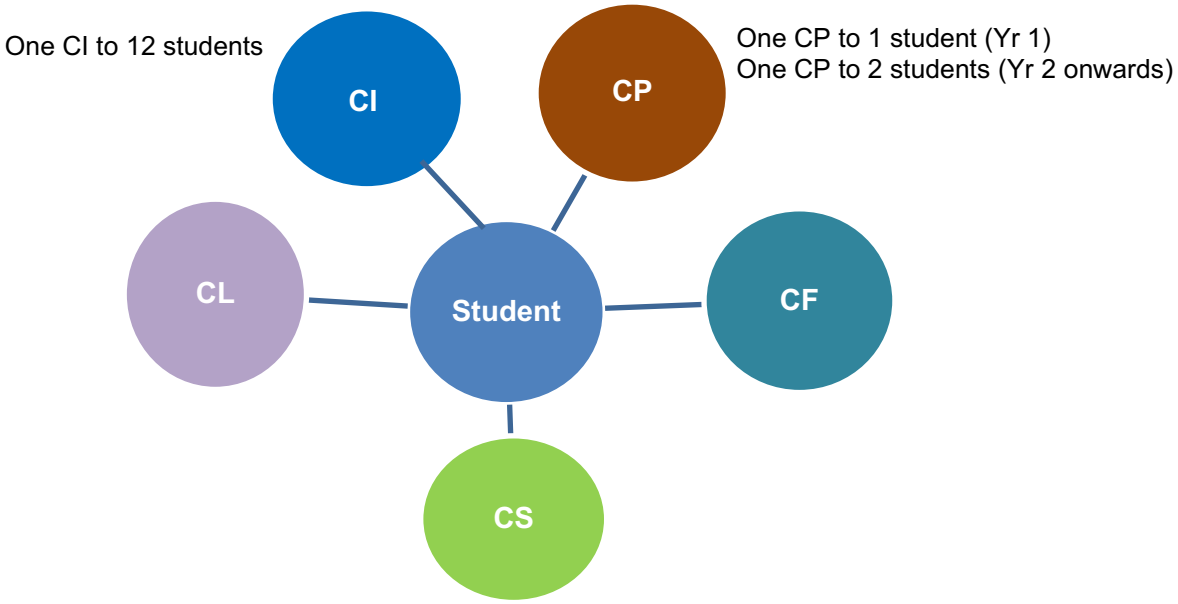
Clinical Instructor (CI) Model



Clinical Preceptor (CP) Model



CI and CP Hybrid Model



NB: The Hybrid Model gives healthcare institutions flexibility to combine both the CI and CP clinical nursing education models.

Legend
Clinical Liaison (CL) from healthcare institutions
Clinical Facilitator (CF) from education institutions
Clinical Instructor (CI) from healthcare institutions
Clinical Preceptor (CP) from healthcare institutions
Clinical Supervisor (CS) RN in-charge of ward/unit of healthcare institutions

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