

Professional Behaviour

Professional Behaviour in medicine is based on behaviour that comprises clinical competence, communications skills and ethical behaviour and professionally respectful and responsible behaviour. Medical students have certain privileges and responsibilities different from those of other students. Because of this, different standards of professional behaviour are expected of them. Medical students from the first day of commencing studies are reminded of the important role of professional behaviour. This plays an important role in maintaining trust amongst patients and the community.

Communication

Please direct all communications related to your medical elective to the mdelectives@uwa.edu.au email. Please only contact your clinical supervisor or host department if you have received explicit approval from them or from the UWA Medical Electives team. Please note that the Program's Professional Behaviour expectations include professional communication with staff and students. Students are expected to respond to any email from university staff as soon as possible and no later than five university days. This is important, as often communications regarding placements may be time sensitive.

Dress Code

Students may wear either professional clothes or uniform/non-uniform scrubs. All placement sites have been made aware students are permitted to wear scrubs. You must ensure you wear clothing or scrubs which are professional, clean, comfortable, and in good condition.

Clothing should be:

- Neat and modest (e.g. no cleavage, midriff or upper thigh exposed)
- In good condition and well fitting
- Permit physical examination without being revealing e.g. bending forward from the waist, crouching down on the floor
- Your name badge must be worn and clearly visible at all times.

Patient Confidentiality

As medical students you are in a privileged position in terms of your access to patient information. With this comes professional responsibilities in terms of using this information appropriately and ensuring patient information is kept confidential. Students must be aware of and comply with the Medical School and relevant clinical practices' policies on patient confidentiality and social media. As medical students you are encouraged to reflect and share your clinical experiences with each other, but this needs to be achieved without compromising patient confidentiality.

Doctor-patient relationships rely on implicit trust; patient information should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. Health professionals must always acknowledge the vulnerability of patients and protect their patient's personal information whenever possible. Although students need to use clinical information when directly related to their current placement, this must be in the context of the data being de-identified and sensible precautions being taken in terms of storage and disposal of clinical information. Any students not taking due diligence in this area are behaving unprofessionally and may have professional misconduct processes instituted.

Attendance

Punctuality at clinical placements is compulsory. It is your responsibility to check for details regarding alterations to the timetable.

During clinical placements, students will be expected to work Monday to Friday and during business hours shifts, depending on the activity of your clinical team (i.e total of 20 clinical days over a 4-week elective). Variations to this will be at the discretion of your facility and supervisor.

Absence during elective

Students may occasionally miss clinical days due to illness or unforeseen personal circumstances. Any requirements relating to missed clinical days, including whether make-up time is required, are determined by the student's home institution. Students should consult their home institution directly for advice and guidance regarding any absences during their elective placement.

Medical Student Involvement in patient care

The standard courtesies of clinical medicine are very important, and you must show due consideration for the patients and their relatives and friends. Interacting with patients is an enormous privilege; patients trust doctors and medical students with information about themselves and their lives, that they would often not consider divulging to their close friends. You must acknowledge and nurture that trust for the benefit of your patient as well as your profession. When interacting with patients you should always introduce yourself as a visiting medical student and ensure the patient/their guardian is comfortable interacting with you. If you are seeing a patient outside your assigned team or unit, you should ALWAYS seek prior permission from the medical and/or nursing staff responsible for their care.

Mobile phones and personal electronic devices

Students are required to comply with all regulations regarding the use of mobile phones within clinical environments. UWA strongly encourages students to store mobile phones securely and avoid bringing them into clinical areas wherever possible.

We recognise that there may be occasions when students are expecting an urgent communication. In such circumstances:

- Mobile phones must be kept on silent mode at all times.
- Mobile phones must not be used in a manner that disrupts clinical activities, teaching, patient care, or other individuals. This includes sending or receiving calls, text messages, emails, photographs, or other communications.
- Students must inform their clinical supervisor and obtain approval if they need to keep their mobile phone on their person during clinical activities.

Students must not use mobile phones to photograph, record, or access patient information under any circumstances unless expressly authorised in accordance with applicable hospital and university policies.

Professional Conduct and Elective Cancellation

The Medical School reserves the right to withdraw, cancel, or terminate an elective placement at any time if concerns arise regarding the accuracy of information provided in an application, or if a student demonstrates conduct that is unsafe, unprofessional, or inconsistent with the expectations of the medical profession.

This includes circumstances where a student's conduct is deemed by their clinical supervisor or the Clinical Director of the host facility to be in breach of the UWA MD Professional Behaviour Guidelines or other relevant professional, clinical, or institutional standards.