

Work-Based Learning: Types of Work-Based Learning Models and Delivery Systems

Healthcare Clinicals

Key Aspects of Healthcare Clinicals

- Clinicals are based on observation and care of patients at different stages of medical practice. These experiences place students in a variety of healthcare settings so they may better understand the scope of the profession and healthcare needs.
- Clinicals are closely supervised and may require a significant number of off-site hours.
- This experience uses written training agreements to outline what students are expected to learn.
- Strong emphasis is placed on coordination and integration between the clinical site and classroom learning.
- Credit hours, outcomes, and levels of intensity vary depending on the course of study.

Steps to Setting Up Healthcare Clinicals

Identification of Potential Clinical Sites – The first step in setting up a clinical experience is finding individuals and organizations willing to take on the responsibility of working with a student, and those individuals who are approved by the appropriate medical state agency as an approved clinical site. If the clinical site is at a local college or medical provider facility, an Interagency Agreement (IGA) may need to be in place. Make sure to contact your district's legal team for details and documentation.

Preparation of Students for Clinicals – Students need to be thoroughly prepared before embarking on a clinical experience. Preparation includes classwork that focuses on research, career exploration, and skills that will be applied at the clinical site. Practical concerns must be addressed as well. Many districts provide students with a clinical handbook that includes the following:

- Clinical agreements: These agreements should include the purpose of the clinical experience and an outline of the clinical site supervisor's and the student's responsibilities.
- Dress and behavior expectations: Remind students that they are representing the program, the school, and themselves at a clinical site. The teacher/coordinator should be aware of the dress code at each clinical site and discuss appropriate attire with the student. Students must be informed about sexual harassment issues.
- Checklist: Give students a checklist that includes everything they need to do to prepare for clinicals. These may include preparing a résumé, developing objectives, contacting employers, arranging schedules and transportation, and doing background research.
- Evaluation materials: Students will be evaluated by their clinical site supervisors throughout the experience. Students should be provided with a copy of the evaluation forms and encouraged to become familiar with it to enable them to understand how they

are being appraised. Ask students to evaluate their clinical experience, as well. Student evaluations of the program are helpful to ongoing program improvement.

Overview of legal responsibilities – Clinical site supervisors need to be aware of legal issues related to a work-based learning experience. These include safety, child labor, discrimination, and sexual harassment laws. The WBL coordinator must ensure that clinical site supervisors understand their legal responsibilities and potential liabilities in advance.

Record Keeping: Accurate and up-to-date documentation of signed required forms, journals, and evaluations, specific to the work experience of the student, must be maintained. Records an employer may keep on file include: a student's job application, attendance record, self-evaluations, resume, and parents' contact information