

Lake Area Technical College

Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program

Strategies for Facilitating Student Learning

Have the student:

- Observe other disciplines; have the student prepare ahead of time with a list of questions for the other therapist and/or how they went about treating the same goal for the patient differently than physical therapy
- Attend/participate in case/team conferences
- Develop a treatment plan with other disciplines to achieve collaborative team goals
- Describe how foundational sciences (anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, etc.) support the plan of care
- Develop a set of questions prior to treating the patient
- Articulate multiple options for theoretical frameworks that support the plan of care
- Ask for feedback rather than asking for information/answers
- Do an in-depth interview of other practitioners involved with a patient to gain insight into their perspectives on the patient is this the same or different from the PT perspective?
- Shadow leaders in areas of interest and journal about essential characteristics that made them leaders; compare the initial assumptions with information gained from shadow experience
- Shadow a patient (visit to MD, spend time with patient in the home, spend time with patient's family)
- Go on patient care rounds with the physician in the morning; discuss with the student what he/she learned
- Complete a peer review of a medical record and identify if essential components are included in the documentation and how to improve upon the documentation
- Develop and defend multiple treatment approaches for the same patient
- Develop a plan of action to reach his/her own goals in an area of interest (such as leadership) including realistic timeframe, expectations and learning experiences
- Provide an environment that supports "thinking out loud"
- Compare/contrast how he/she treated patients with similar diagnoses during a previous clinical experience or compare an approach during the first week of the clinical with the last week of the clinical
- Compare own clinical reasoning and/or clinical judgment to that of master clinicians as described in the literature
- Read the mission of your facility and reflect on how he/she contributes to that mission as a student (may include in student orientation to the facility)
- Identify (from newspaper, professional association webpage, etc.) current political/legislative issues and discuss their impact on the profession/health care with mentor/staff
- Accompany you to a local/national professional association or community service activity
- Be involved on a committee or task force and/or to volunteer for the professional association in some way
- Attend patient support groups, after hours exercise/wellness groups
- Identify advocacy needs of patients, families
- Identify the impact of an injury, disease, disability, condition on the patient's family/caregivers
- Follow the medical record system from the initial note through billing (spend time with medical records and/or billing-coding staff)
- Get involved in facility accreditation activities/requirements
- Analyze effectiveness of group dynamics of group/team at your facility (committee, care team, discharge planning team, task force); identify own role in the group dynamic
- Participate in or organize a journal club at your facility
- Compile a facility resource notebook with current literature on a topic of interest to the staff
- Team with personnel from marketing, billing, custodial, nursing assistant, medical records, ethics committee, etc.
- When multiple students are at your facility, involve upper level students with beginning students (orientation, chart review, documentation critique, problem solving/treatment planning, practice techniques on each other, etc.)

- Prepare for future role of clinical instructor by:
 - helping a CI prepare for a student
 - assisting a CI with a student – PT or PTA
 - assisting the CCCE in duties of that role
 - examining research in the teaching/learning area
 - creating a clinical education website for the facility
- Videotape in-service and self-assess/critique the presentation (teaching ability)
- Get involved in health promotion activities (health fairs, talk shows, company newsletter article)
- Communicate with insurance companies to advocate for a patient
- Complete a chart review. Chart review ideas:
 - comparing patients with similar diagnoses but different clinical presentations or plans of care;
 - comparing patients at different ages and with similar diagnoses;
 - comparing management of similar patients by different therapists;
 - giving students only patient history and having them articulate examination approach
 - read OT, SLP, RN, psych, etc. notes and discuss how this information impacts physical therapy
- Contrast/compare how different practitioners think – i.e., how is the OT focus different from the PT focus or the RN focus different from the PT focus, etc.
- Research equipment the clinic is contemplating for purchase
- Serve as a technology resource (setting up a web page for the facility or program)
- Track own productivity
- Track patient outcomes with a similar type of patient during the entire clinical
- Develop a portfolio during the clinical. This portfolio might include:
 - comparisons of 1st week documentation to midterm to final week
 - changes in observation ability over time – watching to same movement or skill but seeing it differently
 - daily/weekly productivity tracking
 - track and compare outcomes with similar/dissimilar types of patients over the entire clinical
- Determine how a given reimbursement dilemma might be addressed
- Write learning objectives and plan for self-emphasizing a non-preferred learning style
- Describe the organizational culture of the facility from the student's perspective. Discuss how the organizational culture impacts patient care
- Compare the core values/mission of the facility to the PT core values
- Identify and discuss ethical dilemmas and/or positive resolutions to ethical situations

Model questions to ask students:

- What will your learning/insights lead you to do differently?
- What influences do your emotions have on the patient? On your decision making?
- Describe a decision you made today – how did you make the decision? Describe your reasoning. Diagram your clinical reasoning process. Compare/contrast your own clinical reasoning with that of your CI. Find a metaphor that reflects your clinical reasoning.
- What influence might culture have on this relationship/situation?
- What do you assume about a situation and what impact might your assumptions have on this situation?
- Did you ask the patient all the necessary questions and how would you determine this?
- What did you do today that made you feel like a PT/PTA/COTA/SLP/OT?