**Title**

**Guideline on the Clinical Placement of Undergraduate Degree Nursing Students in the Community.**

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This is a controlled document and may be subject to change at any time.
1.0 Guideline:

1.1 This guideline on the clinical placement of Undergraduate Degree Nursing Students in the Community will aid the preceptor PHN and the BSc. Student in maximising the learning outcomes of the clinical placement within the community.

1.2 The Public Health Nursing service, in co-operation with patients and/ or carers, aims to implement evidenced based practice within its service. Each nurse is accountable for their practice, legally and professionally (ABA, 2000).

2.0 Purpose

2.1 To provide experience and supervision commensurate with enabling students to meet the learning outcomes of the BSc Nursing programme.

2.2 To provide guidance to the preceptor who facilitates the student’s placement.

2.3 The preceptor has a responsibility to inform the student of any concerns linked with his/her professional assessment and their concerns should be conveyed to the relevant Lecturer within the University.

3.0 Scope

3.1 To ensure that the clinical placement for the student nurses on the undergraduate programme is of the utmost standard/ quality so as to contribute to their clinical competence and their ultimate qualification.

3.2 An Bord Altranais recommends that during the clinical placement, the student is supported by a PHN preceptor.

3.3 All registered PHN’s have a responsibility in supporting and enabling students in the achievement of competence during their clinical placement, by ensuring a positive clinical learning environment.

4.0 Glossary of Terms and Definitions

4.1 Public Health Nurse (PHN), A Nurse who is deemed eligible to be registered on The PHN division of the An Bord Altranais (ABA) register.

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4.2 **Preceptor**: is a registered Nurse/ Midwife/ Public Health Nurse who has been specially prepared to guide and direct student learning during clinical placement. S/he acts as a resource for the assigned student for a specific time span.

4.3 **Faculty Support facilitator**: The Faculty support facilitator acts as a resource for students and preceptors, in the placement area particularly when using the competencies handbook. S/he is available to address clinical learning queries specific to students in the named placement area. Communication regarding competence / non competence is channelled towards this facilitator. The faculty support for the community placement is Jan McCarthy.

5.0 **Roles and Responsibilities**

5.1 **The responsibilities of the DPHN:**

5.1.1 To ensure that the clinical area standards for BSc. Student placements are met (ABA, 2005).
5.1.2 To ensure a positive learning environment is maintained within the organisation.
5.1.3 That policies, guidelines and standards are formulated and implemented as required.

5.2 **The responsibilities of the ADPHN:**

5.2.1 To ensure leadership and mentoring of the preceptor PHN.
5.2.2 To ensure the BSc. student has knowledge of her contact details.
5.2.3 To provide support for the BSc. student when required.

5.3 **The responsibilities of the Preceptor PHN:**

5.3.1 To ensure that all BSc. students complete the prescribed community placement as required by An Bord Altranais.
5.3.2 To ensure the BSc. student has knowledge of her contact details.
5.3.3 To expose the student to the diverse roles and responsibilities of the many varied personnel and health professionals who operate within the community.

5.3.4 To expose the student to the concept of community as client.

5.3.5 To ensure that the student PHN is exposed to the holistic assessment of client’s needs within the community.

5.3.6 To promote and maintain a safe environment for the student.

5.3.7 To inform the university if a student should be absent for any reason from their community placement.

5.3.8 To ensure that their car insurance allows for the carriage of students while on placement.

5.3.9 Ensure that each student is made aware of the folder available within each health centre that contains pertinent information for the student.

5.4 The responsibilities of the Faculty Support:

5.4.1 To act as a resource for the BSc. Student.

5.4.2 To circulate this guideline prior to the student commencing their community placement.

5.4.3 To offer support to the relevant PHN with the student placement if and when the need arises.

5.5 The responsibilities of the BSc Student:

5.5.1 To discharge his/her duties in a professional manner, during clinical placement in the community, to act at all times in the best interest of the patients/clients with whom s/he comes into contact, to ensure that client confidentiality is respected and adhered to, ensuring ethical principles are adhered to according to the Code of Professional Conduct (ABA, 1988). It is important that clients are afforded the opportunity to decide if they will allow a student into their homes.

**Note:** Personal mobile phones are to be switched off while on duty.

5.5.2 To complete the prescribed community placement as required by An Bord Altranais.

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5.5.3 To work in partnership with the preceptor PHN so as to maximise the learning potential of the clinical placement through reflection on and in practice and to seek clarification on any issue that may arise during the placement.

5.5.4 To seek clarification on any issue that may arise during placement, in doing so actively engage in the educational process.

5.5.5 To make known as soon as possible any difficulties he/she might experience while on placement and bring it to the attention of the relevant person.

5.5.6 If students are unable to attend clinical placement due to illness, they must inform the PHN with whom they are placed. She in turn will inform the university.

5.5.7 To work a 35 hour week, Monday to Friday 09:30 to 17:20 with half hour lunch break. Attendance sheets must reflect 35 hr. week.

5.5.8 To contact the relevant PHN on the Friday before their placement.

**Dress Code:**

Students are expected to present themselves appropriately attired and groomed.

Student Nurses are required to wear appropriately professional attire therefore clothing must not be revealing or overtly casual.

- No visible underwear; miniskirts; belly tops; trailing trousers / tracksuit legs, denim jeans permitted.
- Clothing to allow for freedom of movement.
- Nails to be kept short and clean. Nail varnish or false nails are not permitted.
- Hair to be well groomed.
- With regard to jewellery: No body piercing. Rings should be flat or wedding band only.
- Shoes should be supportive and comfortable.
- Protective clothing i.e. aprons to be worn where identified as necessary.

6.0 **Procedure/Guideline**

6.1 Learning Objectives for Students on placement:

This is a controlled document and may be subject to change at any time.
Student nurses will receive, where possible, a variety of clinical placement experience within the community. Each student will be placed for one week with a PHN who will endeavour to give each student as broad a range of experience as possible in community nursing.

At the end of the experience students should:

- Have an understanding of the complexity of caring for patients in their own home.
- Be knowledgeable of the Primary, Community and Continuing Care (PCCC) programme.
- Have an awareness of the other roles of PHN’s within PCCC, see appendix 2.
- Have an awareness of the roles of other health professionals in PCCC.
- Be familiar with the services offered to children aged 0-5, and the school health service including the immunisation schedule for children.
- Have experienced the use of the Personal Health Record (PHR). See appendix 1.
- Have experienced the nursing of older people in their own home and be aware of the services available. See appendix 1.
- Be familiar with the liaison process between hospitals and the community and have an understanding of the necessity of good hospital discharge processes.
- Receive information on voluntary services operating in the area where the student is placed, e.g. meals on wheels, day centres, mother and toddler groups etc.
- Be familiar with disability services in the community.

### 7.0 Implementation Plan

7.1 The guideline will be signed and dated by each of the three Directors of Public Health Nursing and the Faculty Support Facilitator of the HEI, following review.
7.2 An original of this guideline will be maintained by each of the three Directors of Public Health Nursing, by the Practice Development Coordinator and by the Faculty Support Facilitator from the HEI.

7.3 Once signed the guideline will be circulated by the Practice Development Coordinator to those specified by the Directors in their areas of responsibility.

7.4 Each nurse will be asked to sign that they have received a copy of the guideline.

7.5 Following adequate time given for the guideline to be reviewed, the nurses will then be asked to sign that they accept the guideline. At this time each nurse is responsible to identify their own training needs should they deem training necessary.

7.6 BSc students will be given a copy of the guideline by the allocations office staff prior to commencement of placement with the Public Health Nursing Service.

7.7 This Guideline must be filed in the guideline folder for the general guidelines and easy access to the guideline must be facilitated in all Health Centres.

7.8 Please note these are controlled and legal documents.

7.9 Should any questions arise please contact the DPHN/ADPHN/Faculty Support Facilitator.

### 8.0 Evaluation and Audit

Ensure all preceptors and students are aware of the guideline and facilitate the transition of Student to the community.

Effectiveness will be based on PHN and student feedback.

### 9.0 References

An Bord Altranais, (1985). The Nurses Act


This is a controlled document and may be subject to change at any time.
An Bord Altranais, (2003). Guidelines on the Key Points that may be considered when developing a Quality Clinical Learning Environment.


A WHO European Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery Education. (1999).


Royal College of Nursing (2002). Helping Students get the Best from their Practice Placements, A Royal College of Nursing Toolkit.


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Appendix 1: Information on the Care Groups.

**Care Group- Children and Families Child Health**

The Public Health Nursing service provides a comprehensive Child Health/ Welfare promotional programme for children. The service is provided for all children and families in the state, free of charge.

Services currently provided are to promote the positive health and wellbeing of each child in the context of a constructive relationship between professionals and families.

- To provide information and support to parents/families, thus assisting them to exercise their responsibilities for their children’s health.
- To detect abnormalities and make appropriate referral.
- To identify families and children at risk.
- To work in partnership with other professionals in providing services which best meet the needs of children.
- To provide immunisations and other health promoting initiatives.
- To provide nursing care to children with special nursing needs.

This is achieved through a programme of active child health monitoring, home visiting, clinics, group work and school health

**Care Group- the Older Person**

The purpose of the Public Health Nursing Service is to enable older people to live at home at an optimum level of health and independence.

Services currently provided

Primary: Primary prevention of ill health by participating in programmes to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Preventative/anticipatory care of the older person, by promoting independence as much as possible and support clients where care needs are identified.

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Secondary: Secondary prevention in detecting unrecognised ill health through assessment and regular surveillance with appropriate referral for services needed.

Tertiary: The provision of tertiary nursing care as needs arise.

Observe the completion or review of the assessment chart for the older person and the assessment tools contained within same.

**Services to Persons with Disabilities**

The Public Health Nursing Service provides ongoing support to families of children and adults with physical, sensory and learning disabilities.

Services Currently Provided

- The Public Health Nursing Service works in conjunction with the multidisciplinary team, service providers, and with voluntary agencies, to provide a service, which spans the life spectrum for people with disability.

- A substantial part of the work of the PHN with the Disability Care Group is with the young chronic sick, where the provision of essential nursing care to allow them to live as independently as possible in their own homes is provided as required and assessed.

Note: There is one specialist PHN working in conjunction with CDC providing support and liaison services.

**Primary Nursing Care**

Primary Nursing Care is the provision of episodic and terminal nursing care in the community to persons under 65 not included in any other defined care group.
Appendix 2 Specialist PHN’s

There are also a number of specialist PHN posts. You may meet these PHNs during the course of your placement.

These positions include:

- Traveller Health PHN.
- Counselling/Liaison PHN for people with disabilities.
- Senior PHN with responsibility for immunisation.
- Care and case managers for older people/ Home Care Package Coordinator.
- Community Intervention Team
- Hospital Liaison PHN
G009 Guideline on the Clinical Placement of Undergraduate Degree Nursing Students in the Community. Version 1.

**Signature Sheet:**

*I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the attached Policy, Procedure, Protocol or Guideline:*

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