

Preceptorship Program

Stage 5

Students participating in this program will have completed the following at the UNSW Optometry Clinic as part of their Stage 4 and Stage 5 studies:

- Under supervision of an optometrist, performed all the clinical procedures associated with a comprehensive eye examination, including routine dilated fundus examination. Advanced clinical procedures including gonioscopy, lacrimal lavage and foreign body removal may have been performed upon indication and under supervision.
- Applied their dispensing skills, including recommendation of the most suitable lenses for a patient's visual correction. Development of the clinical skills needed to competently examine patients in optometric practice, and recommend appropriate treatment and strategies for patients presenting for primary eye care
- Guided practical experience in the therapeutic management of ocular disease

During the four week Stage 5 Preceptorship program placement, it is hoped that students:

1. will gain experience in:
 - a. Practice Management: record keeping, waiting room organisation, recall/reminder systems.
 - b. Handling patients: in the waiting room, in the consulting room and over the telephone.
 - c. Dispensing: ordering and checking jobs, minor frame repairs and adjustments.
 - d. Contact Lenses: fitting, delivery and aftercare
 - e. Disease management.
2. will observe, and where possible participate under the supervision of an optometrist, in the examination of at least 50 patients, including the following areas on indication:
 - slitlamp biomicroscopy
 - ophthalmoscopy, direct and indirect
 - retinoscopy
 - refraction
 - gonioscopy
 - funduscopy
 - visual field analysis
 - binocular vision analysis
 - tonometry
 - contact lenses, fitting, delivery and aftercare
3. will undertake frame and lens selection for their patients as well as the delivery of optical appliances if required.

It is understood that the experience will vary depending on the individual practice and location.

The supervising optometrist or ophthalmologist is asked to take responsibility for each patient and discuss with the student critical aspects of the examination especially with regard to patient management.

The role of the supervising optometrist or ophthalmologist is to ensure the student under their care:

- * Records an accurate patient history.
- * Instructs the patient correctly.
- * Performs each examination procedure efficiently and accurately.
- * Understands the optometric techniques and uses a flexible approach.
- * Interprets the clinical findings correctly.
- * Understands the methods and logic of arriving at a diagnosis and treatment plan.
- * Completes the record thoroughly and legibly in accordance with the guidelines developed for record keeping by the Optometry Board of Australia
- * Completes an accurate prescription where necessary.
- * Refers as required and recognises the need for further examination.
- * Writes reports/referrals where necessary.

It is also hoped that the supervisor will be able to:

- * Ensure every patient examination is a learning experience for the student.
- * Allow the student to put previous knowledge into clinical experience.
- * Teach applied problem solving.
- * Encourage the student to make clinical decisions and judgements.
- * Discuss the case with the student with regards to procedures, diagnosis and management.
- * Assist both technical and communication skills.
- * Provide advice to the student if they have questions about work-related discomfort. To assist you with this, we have prepared resources which are available at <http://www.optometry.unsw.edu.au/whs/work-related-discomfort-program>.
- * Prepare for the consultation by reading through past records if appropriate.
- * Be friendly, helpful, honest, professional, available and consistent.

The student will complete a sheet for each patient consultation to help develop their patient record skills and to allow reflection of the cases encountered on placement. This sheet will not list the name or address of the patient.

In relation to Medicare issues, the Medicare Benefits Branch, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, drafted the following in November 2003:

“Medicare benefits are only paid for consultations rendered by participating optometrists. Where students are observing and participating in a consultation under the direct supervision of an optometrist, from the perspective of Medicare the presence of the student is incidental. The primary purpose of the consultation is for the optometrist to deliver a health care service to the patient, and that is the service for which Medicare benefits are payable.”

The students will be required to write a report on the experience in your practice, and a description of the program including guidelines for this report is enclosed.

We believe that the preceptorship program is a very important component of the education of our final year students.

We realise the imposition that the program makes upon your time and that of your staff and we are most appreciative of your assistance and support in this initiative.