

MICHAEL REESE HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CENTER
DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION MEDICINE

**ESSENTIAL PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS
for the STUDENT THERAPIST**

In addition to developing clinical competencies, an important part of the clinical education experience is the development of professional behaviors. The following qualities have been determined essential to the position of student therapist and reflect the expectations of acceptable performance.

1. Responsibility: demonstrates independent initiative and readily assumes responsibility in fulfilling responsibilities, demonstrating attention to routine responsibilities
 - a). ask questions when in doubt
 - b). punctual to work and to appointment, meetings and conferences throughout the day.
 - c). recognized and act on personal responsibility for learning during the clinical experience (e.g. finding answers to questions, providing feedback to CI, utilizing opportunities for observational learning experiences - i.e., other therapists, disciplines).
 - d). take initiative to utilize resources (physical and personnel).
 - e). read student manual/materials in the first week.
2. Organizational Skills: punctual in fulfilling responsibilities and requirements of the position, including adhering to schedules, meeting deadlines, etc. ability to establish realistic priorities and set appropriate limits
 - a). plan and organize daily schedule for self and for patient treatment, for short- and long-term projects
 - b). effectively manage time to complete direct patient care and indirect patient care duties as well as special projects and assignments
3. Flexibility: effectively adjusts to changes in schedules, policies and procedures, patient and student program; ability to adjust to priorities according to needs of the program and department and others.
 - a). develop an attitude of flexibility - expect changes to occur (e.g. changes in lecture schedule, supervision meetings, increase or decrease in patient load, early discharges, or patient's schedules).
 - b). utilize time effectively when a patient's treatment is canceled.
 - c). help out and fill in for other therapist.
 - d). offer assistance to others.
4. Interpersonal Skills - able to establish effective interpersonal relationships with patients and their families, staff members, students, and members of other disciplines, is sensitive to and considerate of others; able to work and relate effectively with a wide range of diagnoses and disabilities (patients), socio-economic, age and ethnic groups (patients, their families, and other personnel).
 - a). maintain professional relationships with CI and others.
 - b). regard feedback as a learning tool.
 - c). be aware of how your behavior affects others
 - d). consider timing of questions (e.g., when approaching staff).
 - e). respect personal space and time of others
 - f). explore situations before responding - informed interpretations and decisions.

5. Communication Skills: effective and appropriate (timing, content, method, open and direct) communication with intra and extra departmental personnel at all levels; oral and written communication should reflect the standards established for the department; independently initiate communication when necessary; maintain consistent feedback to appropriate personnel; discretion and confidentiality; open lines of communication
 - a). expect and respect differences in professional opinions. Open-mindedness allows opportunity to explore different theories and techniques of treatment. You are part of a team, consider the goals of other disciplines when planning your treatment program for the patient.
 - b). be aware of non-verbal behavior, tone of voice, etc., and the effect these can have upon your relationships with others.
 - c). take time to organize your thoughts and make notes before reporting in conferences or contacting other disciplines.
 - d). follow established guidelines and documentation standards for note writing.

6. Concern for Professional Development: receptive to guidance and regards constructive feedback as a learning tool; actively assesses, recognizes, and expresses personal needs for further professional development; demonstrates interest and actively participates in continuing education activities; willingness to share professional knowledge and experience with others.
 - a). assume responsibility for learning
 - b). be resourceful in finding answers to your questions.
 - c). actively seek learning experiences (e.g., vs. only using scheduled experiences).
 - d). realize that as a student therapist you have valuable information and experiences to share with others. Be willing to share information, offer suggestions for OT and student programs, procedures, equipment, etc.

7. Problem Solving Abilities: demonstrates effective problem solving skills in approach to patient treatment and overall functioning within the department; readily identifies and communicates problems impacting upon patient care and departmental functioning to appropriate individuals; maintains an open; appropriately acts upon decisions and maintains communication and effective feedback and follow-up.
 - a). be resourceful. Use common sense and think things through before asking someone else for the answer.
 - b). utilize resources to help find answers to questions and suggests for patient treatment.
 - c). utilize student materials.
 - d). recognize and act on need to contact other disciplines.
 - e). make self aware of material and resources available through the department and facility

8. Sense of Humor

9. Supervisory Skills: with experience, demonstrates those skills essential to the guidance of aides, volunteers and other ancillary staff (e.g., in patient treatment, group activities, clerical work request).
 - a). supervisory skills - give specific instructions to OT Aides when utilized in supervising patient treatment.
 - b). interpersonal skills - respectful approach when working with secretaries, aides, transporter.

10. Demonstrates a commitment to the growth and development of the department's programs and the support of its staff and students. Offers constructive, diplomatic suggestions for change beneficial to the department in all areas of its functioning.
11. Remember that you are a representative of the OT Department and the profession. Through personal demonstration of professional attitudes and appearance, support and contribute to the professional image of the department.