Nursing and Midwifery Student Clinical Placement Orientation
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the South Australian nursing and midwifery student orientation package. It is a requirement of the Department for Health and Ageing that all students before commencing their clinical placement in a South Australian Health facility (now referred to as SA Health), complete the essential placement requirements section of this document before, sign the compulsory checklist and provide this to your education provider.

Why must I read this document?

The essential placement requirement document contains information which has medico legal and workplace health and safety implications for anyone working in a SA Health facility, which directly relates to your clinical placement. The document was created to provide student health professionals with information about policies, procedures and workplace expectations to guide your conduct during your clinical placement and it is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with this document.

By signing the Compulsory Checklist (see Attachment 1) you are certifying that you read and understood the content of this document. Much of the information is SA Health specific and will be new to anyone who has not worked within SA Health.

If you have more than one placement in a SA Health facility in a year, we recommend that you check the website to see if anything has been added or changed. Any content updates are shown on page two of this document. If you are coming to a SA Health facility in different years, it is a requirement to re-read the essentials section but you do not need to submit another signed checklist unless your placement occurs three years or after your initial placement.

Please note, if you have not completed the checklist prior to commencing your placement, you may find that your access to a SA Health facility is delayed or may be denied.

If you are undertaking your clinical placement in a rural or remote SA Health facility, please click here to find important information to assist you to prepare for your placement.

What is covered?

This document covers three areas which are:

1. Student Expectations
2. Workplace Health and Safety including manual handling; Cultural Diversity
3. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s).

As you navigate the document, you will notice extra links have been provided. These links are for students who are interested in further information and you are strongly encouraged to check out the additional information.
SECTION 1 - Expectations, Professional Behaviour and Responsibilities

During your clinical placement and throughout your future nursing or midwifery career, your professional conduct will be on display due to the nature of your work. Providing patient centred care based on kindness is a fundamental value required of all nursing and midwifery staff. It is expected that students who are placed within SA Health will demonstrate compassion, empathy and respect, and an appreciation of the vulnerability and concerns experienced by clients. Students will embrace and enact the following caring with kindness principles:

- Caring with kindness is about connecting with SA Health clients and putting their care and needs at the centre of nursing and midwifery care.
- Caring with kindness is about establishing a genuine and authentic relationship with the client, their relatives and friends and involving them in decisions that affect them.
- Caring with kindness is intrinsic to how student nurses and midwives deliver the fundamentals of care to clients, every minute of every day.

Below is a list of standard expectations whilst you are on clinical placement in a SA Health facility. You should carefully read and reflect on these expectations to ensure that you can apply them in combination with the theory you have learnt at your university, TAFE or Registered Training Organisation.

The nursing and midwifery student:

- Caring with kindness is intrinsic to how student nurses and midwives deliver the fundamentals of care to clients, every minute of every day
- Clearly wears student identification supplied by your education provider
- Maintains personal tidiness and dress in the clinical setting which meets the standards required by your education provider and health facility
- Introduces himself/herself as a student
- Always seeks permission from the patient/client and the responsible nursing and midwifery staff before proceeding with an intervention
- Maintains confidentiality of information given by or about patients/clients
- Acknowledges legal responsibilities for child protection, when appropriate
- Accepts responsibility for all relevant aspects of patient of client care within the limitations of the student role determine by the clinical supervisor/preceptor and education provider’s facilitator
- Attends relevant department, ward or clinic meetings, and contributes effectively when required
Behaves in a manner which is not disruptive to patients and staff, on and off duty
Behaves in a respectful manner to colleagues, supervisors, patients and their families
Acknowledges and responds to constructive criticism
Acknowledges and responds to individuals needs and respects the culture, age, state of health and authority of the health facility or clinical personnel and patients
Demonstrates an understanding of the particular facilities’ approach to patient/client care, and shows willingness to work within this framework
Demonstrates an awareness of individual health workers’ roles and refers to them appropriately
Is aware of and maintains appropriate professional boundaries.

As a nursing and midwifery student you are also required to follow the National Competency Standards for the Registered Nurse, Registered Midwife or Enrolled Nurse as appropriate. Please ensure you are familiar with this document.

**Professional Appearance**

Dress standards while on placement should be appropriate to the functions being performed, occupational health and safety, cultural diversity and local community standards and climate. A uniform may or may not be required.

To promote good hand hygiene and reduce cross contamination, students should wear short sleeve shirts. If for cultural reasons your elbows must be covered, an optional white long sleeve t-shirt may be worn underneath shirts however, the sleeves must be pushed up during direct patient contact and to allow for hand hygiene to be attended as per Infection Prevention and Control Clinical Instructions. Additionally please ensure you follow up on the uniform and professional appearance requirements your clinical placement facility particularly in relation to finger nails, artificial nails, hair, head dress, jewellery, piercings and shoes.
A student identification badge must be worn and visible at all times.

**Professional Boundaries**

It is crucial to ensure that the relationship between a patient/client and a health professional is safe, supportive and therapeutic and always within professional boundaries. The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia provide codes and guidelines
to the professions and as a student, on the learning path of becoming a competent health professional, you need to be aware of the *Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council Code of Conduct* and abide by it when on clinical placement.

**Code of Ethics**

The code of Ethics are the principles guiding behaviour between colleagues, between staff and those receiving care through health services or those providing services for the Government of South Australian Department of Health. *The Code of Ethics for the SA Public Sector* and the *Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia Code of Ethics* governs professional boundaries. Broadly, the Code of Ethics outlines what nurses and midwives are expected to do which includes:

- Always conduct themselves personally and professionally in a way that will maintain public trust and confidence in the profession
- Practice in a safe and competent manner in accordance with the agreed standards of the profession
- Respect the dignity and culture, values and beliefs of an individual and any significant other person
- Support the health, wellbeing and informed decision making of an individual.

As a student on clinical placement in a SA Health facility you are expected to uphold the code of ethics and any breaches will result in the termination of the clinical placement.

**Confidentiality and Privacy**

The Department of Health places high importance on maintaining patient confidentiality and protecting privacy. Students will have access to a range of confidential information and need to be familiar and understand the relevant requirements of maintaining confidentially including:

- Sensitive documents such as patient’s case notes need to be stored in a safe and secure area
- No discussions of personal information about clients/patients
- Names and other personal details of people are not to be revealed in tutorials, conferences, workshops or seminars
• Be aware of the confidentiality implications in relation to the use of social media, for more information please click on the following links
  o SA Health Policy – Employee Use of Social Media
  o SA Health Social Media Communications Policy Directive
  o AHPRA Social Media Policy
• Behaves in a manner which is not disruptive to patients and staff, on and off duty
• Information concerning clients/patients is not accessed other than in the direct course of providing nursing and midwifery care
• All information concerning patients/clients is treated with the strictest confidence
• You are not permitted to release confidential information to the media, other hospitals, solicitors or any person not involved in the delivery of care to the patient/client
• Any information obtained for a case study or presentation must have permission of the patient. See Attachment 2 for a copy of the Consent Form
• Information obtained to provide information for a case study or presentation must have all identifiers removed
• You are not permitted to take photographs of the patient
• When carrying confidential information ensure these items are not left unsecured in an area for inappropriate lengths of time. Ensure all identifying details are not visible when carrying patient’s case notes or x-rays
• Remember also never to breach confidentiality of any health professional colleague’s details e.g. releasing personal telephone numbers.

**Documentation**

Documentation must be considered along with the issues around privacy and confidentiality and the [Government of South Australia Code of Ethics](https://www.sa.gov.au) and the [Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses and Midwives in Australia](https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au).  

Individual health units and facilities will also have a policy or standard of documentation that must be considered by students on clinical placement.

Clear, concise and accurate documentation is essential as it:
• Behaves in a manner which is not disruptive to patients and staff, on and off duty
• Facilitates the continuum of patient care
• Allows evaluation of care provided
• Provides information for research and epidemiology
• Assists in clinical unit management
  • Meets standard requirements of the health facility
  • Provides information for medico-legal processes.

Your responsibilities as a student are:
  • Always conduct themselves personally and professionally in a way that will maintain public trust and confidence in the profession
  • Write in black pen only
  • Ensure the records are accurate and concise
  • Entries should always be objective
  • Ensure writing is completely legible
  • Always accurately date and time entries
  • Always sign entries and print name and designation
  • Ensure entries are countersigned by a registered nurse or in the case of student enrolled nurse completing the documentation the notation must be countersigned by an enrolled nurse with a Diploma of Nursing qualification or a registered nurse
  • Do not add information retrospectively always commence a new notation
  • If you make an error rule a single line through the writing. Sign and date the change. Do not use correction fluid or an eraser.

Permission to Use a Patients'/Clients’ Medical Record to Assist In Training or Education

Any students using patients’ /clients' medical records to be included in a case study or other form of student assessment or training/education must complete the students

Consent to Undertake a Case Study form (refer Attachment 2). Ensure that the information referring to confidentiality is understood and that the confidentiality clause on the Student Orientation Checklist is signed (see Attachment 1). Failure to comply with the confidentially obligations may result in termination of your placement and/or further legal action being taken against you by South Australian Department of Health.
**SECTION 2 – Work Health and Safety & Patient Safety**

---

**Police Check**

As a student going on clinical placement you must meet the requirements of the Health Facility in regards to a Police Check and/or Criminal and Relevant History Screening.

It is compulsory for you to provide the relevant information to your education provider prior to commencing your clinical placement.

Further information regarding Criminal and Relevant History Screening is available through the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion DCSI - The screening and assessment process.

Please attach the evidence such as, the Police Check and/or Criminal and Relevant History Screening to the Student Orientation Checklist and Immunisation Declaration.

---

**Immunisation**

The SA Department of Health has developed and implemented Immunisation Guidelines for Health Care Workers in South Australia (in the ‘related resources’ section of the website). Please read these guidelines particularly:

- Section 1.2 Health Care Workers
- Section 1.3 Institutions educating Health Care Workers
- Section 2.4 Consent.

The immunisation guidelines state that ‘prior to the commencement of a clinical placement your education provider must provide a written statement/evidence confirming to the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Officer where the clinical placement is made, or delegate, confirming that you have a documented screening and vaccination history consistent with the provision of these guidelines’.

An immunisation statement is available in Attachment 1 or you may provide an appropriate immunisation statement from your education provider.

If you do not provide a written statement/evidence to your education provider you may not be able to undertake your clinical placement in a Department of Health facility.
Cultural Diversity

The State of South Australia has a diverse population who access SA Health facilities. It is important that you recognize and appreciate that different cultural groups have diverse cultural practices and traditions particularly in relation to:

- Write in black pen only
- Childbirth
- Blood transfusion
- Concepts of health and care
- Disability and rehabilitation
- Appropriate behaviour for a sick person
- Preferred practitioner gender
- Preparation of death and death rituals or sorry business or finishing up
- Attitudes to personal hygiene
- Dietary requirements

You will also be working alongside colleagues from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, therefore it is important that you embrace and respect the differences between colleagues and use this experience to broaden your abilities to work in a multicultural community and workplace. For more detailed information on multicultural clinical support resources please follow this link.

In relation to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, please familiarise yourself with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Respect Framework.

Interpreting services are available from the Interpreting and Translating Centre which is the Official SA Government Interpreting and Translating Service. This service should be accessed when you require assistance to deliver patient care particularly around consent and physical and mental assessments of patients/clients.

Your clinical preceptor will be able to assist you in accessing these services and the issue of using and accessing interpreters will also be covered in the specific workplace orientation provided in the facility providing your clinical placement.
**Safety and Quality Standards**

There are 10 National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and a system for accrediting health services against these and other relevant standards. These ensure that health services have systems in place to avoid the most common and harmful adverse events during the person’s health care. To access information in relation to the Standards, please click [here](#).

**Infection Control**

It is essential that you make yourself familiar with the infection control standards and guidelines that are implemented at your clinical placement site. Strict adherence to infection control policies is paramount to reduce the risks of cross contamination to patients, colleagues and yourself. Infection control information can be accessed from *The Australian Government Infection Control Guidelines for the Prevention of Transmission of Infectious Diseases in the Health Care Setting.*

The prevention and management of infections in health care is paramount for all SA Health facilities and it is mandatory for everyone working within SA Health to adhere to strict hand hygiene and aseptic techniques. The most common way that harmful organisms are spread between patients in health care settings is on the hands of health care workers, hence hand hygiene is one of the most effective measures to prevent the spread of infection. SA Health is supporting the National Hand Hygiene Initiative, please click [here](#) for more information. Another measure to prevent the spread of pathogenic organisms during procedures is the use of aseptic technique and this [link](#) will provide you with all relevant information.

It is also important for you to familiarise yourself with Occupational Health and Safety Regulations and the appropriate reporting mechanism and treatment pathways of the health facility you are attending for your clinical placement. **If you become exposed to body fluids or sustain a needle stick injury while you are on placement please inform your clinical placement supervisor immediately.**
Accidents, Injuries and Work Related Incidents

An incident is “Any event or circumstance that resulted, or could have resulted, in unintended and / or unnecessary harm to a person and / or a complaint, loss or damage”

Ensure before you commence your placement in a health facility that you have had manual handling and workplace safety training provided by your education provider. You must indicate on the Clinical Placement Checklist that you have attended Manual Handling training.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have had manual handling training and are competent at using no-lift techniques and manual handling equipment to protect yourself, your colleagues and patients from injury. You will be working under the supervision of a registered nurse/midwife, or if you are a first year student nurse or diploma of nursing student, under the supervision of an enrolled nurse. It is important that you always assess the patient/client prior to moving them to identify the correct manual handling technique.

Reporting of incidents where a consumer or patient was or potentially was harmed during their care is required by SA Health policy, and also the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards. If you identify an incident or near miss while you are on placement you must report this incident or near miss in detail immediately to your preceptor who will follow the relevant health facility safety and quality procedures.

Managing Challenging Behaviour

We all want health care to be both delivered and received without personal threat or risk. In a stressful situation, where there is challenging behaviour, consumers may not feel that their needs are being met, and staff can feel that their safety is compromised and that they are less able to provide good care. Clinicians providing direct care to consumers have professional, ethical and legal responsibility to provide best care to consumers.

Consumers also have rights and responsibilities, notably the SA Charter of Health Care Rights.

In line with its legal and policy obligations, SA Health has a responsibility to provide care to consumers, families, students, volunteers and staff:

- in a safe physical health care environment
- in a way that minimises the risk of physical or psychological harm to all people in that environment.
All SA Health facilities have procedures on prevention, and also on the action to be taken in the case of actual or threatened harm. Orientation at the specific health facility should include steps to take if you are feel threatened and require assistance. Conflict and aggression management workshops are offered by most facilities.

**Incident Reporting**

If you identify an incident or near miss while you are on placement you must report this incident or near miss in detail immediately to your preceptor who will follow the relevant health facility Work Health and Safety procedures. Reporting of incidents and near misses where other people such as staff and students were or potentially were harmed is required by SA Health policy under the Work Health and Safety Act (SA).

**Fire Safety**

Fire training is a very practical skill that cannot be fully covered in this package and must be further provided by the clinical placement site under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1995, which would be in most cases during your orientation program. It is important for you to know the emergency codes and phone numbers and please check with your clinical facilitator as different health facilities have different procedures. It is also essential that you familiarize yourself with the layout of the health facility, the disaster and fire evacuation plan and the placement of firefighting equipment in the unit/ward where you are undertaking your placement.

Things You Need To Know About Fire Safety and Your Clinical Placement Facility:
- The number of the switch board, fire station or code colour
- Identify in your ward/unit where fire extinguishers are placed and exit pathways including the appropriate marshalling area in case of evacuation
- Become familiar with how to move patient’s beds quickly and safely in the event of an evacuation
- Listen to the public announcement system and always follow the instructions of the fire warden in your area.

**Home Visits**

As part of your student placement you may work with a team, such as community or mental health or midwifery which undertakes home or community visits. Please note that you are required to follow the policies and procedures relevant to the different placements as well as the direction of the staff supervising your placement.
SECTION 3 - Frequently Asked Questions

This is my second placement with a Department of Health facility, do I have to read it all again?

If you have more than one placement in a SA Health facility in a year, we recommend that you check the website to see if anything has been added or changed. An update section on the first page will show you the dates and content of recent site changes and additions.

If you are coming to a SA Health facility in different years, it is a requirement to re-read the essentials section. You do not need to submit another signed checklist unless your placement occurs three years or after your initial placement.

What do I do if I’m not happy on my placement in a South Australian Department of Health facility?

If you are not happy with your clinical placement, it is important to discuss this with your clinical facilitator. It may be easily resolved. If this is unsuccessful, please contact the student placement co-coordinator at your university, TAFE or Registered Training Organisation.

What do I do with the signed checklist and immunisation and criminal history check?

You must provide this evidence to your education provider prior to your first day of clinical placement.

If I get sick on my clinical placement who do I contact?

You must notify your education provider and/or clinical placement facilitator that you are sick before the commencement time of your scheduled shift and also notify the unit coordinator or clinical nurse consultant at the health facility of your clinical placement. You must also inform the clinical facilitator and the clinical nurse consultant of your expected date of return.

You must notify the unit coordinator/clinical nurse consultant and your education provider and/clinical placement facilitator coordinator when you are returning to clinical placement.
Thank you for completing the orientation package.

Your next step is to download the orientation checklist, sign and attach evidence of your immunisation status and a current criminal history check.

Please hand the checklist and documentation to your education provider prior to commencing your clinical placement.

The Department of Health Nursing and Midwifery Office wish you success in your clinical placement and welcome feedback about the orientation package or your placement by e-mail to nursing@health.sa.gov.au
Student Orientation Checklist and Immunisation Declaration

It is a requirement of the South Australian Department of Health that you review these topics on www.sahealth.sa.gov.au prior to your placement. Please ensure that you have read and understood them and completed the checklist below.

THE CHECKLIST MUST BE HANDED TO YOUR EDUCATION PROVIDER PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF YOUR PLACEMENT.

Please tick the boxes to indicate the areas that you have read and understood and complied with.

Expectations of Student:
- Professional behaviour
- Code of conduct
- Professional appearance
- Use of government vehicles
- Home visiting policy
- Criminal History check (please attach evidence to the front of this checklist)

Confidentiality Privacy and Documentation
- Confidentiality
- Privacy
- Documentation
- Consent for Case Study

Workplace Health and Safety
- Fire safety
- Manual handling
- Incident reporting
- Immunisation (please attach evidence to the front of this checklist)
- Infection control guidelines

Cultural Diversity
- Multicultural Awareness and Interpreting Services
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Respect Framework

I __________________________________________ certify that I have read and understood the essential information on the South Australian Department of Health orientation website in preparation of my placement.

IMMUNISATION DECLARATION FOR STUDENT NURSES AND MIDWIVES

- I agree I will/have complied with the Department of Health Immunisation requirements and declare that I have undertaken the required immunisation prior to commencement of my student placement with South Australian Department of Health facility.

The date of completion of immunisation was _____/_____/____.

Evidence of immunisation is attached to the front of this document.
PATIENT CONSENT

I (print name) give permission for information from my medical record to be included in a case study to assist in the training of the student identified below, on the condition that my privacy is protected at all times, as outlined in the following undertaking by the nursing/midwifery student.

I understand that I may revoke this consent at any time and that any information collected for the purposes of the case study will be destroyed.

Patient Signature: __________________________ Date: ________________

STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

I (print name)

A nursing/midwifery student of _____________________________ (University/TAFE/RTO)

Undertaking _____________________________ (course/year level)

I undertake that no information will be included in any case study that would identify any patient of any SA Department of Health facility.

I will not identify a patient in any document, note or communication by:

- Name
- Medical Record/Unit Record Number
- Address
- Suburb
- Date of Birth
- Specific Occupation
- Hospital, unit or ward
- Dates of Admission or Discharge
- I will not photocopy or scan any part of the patient’s medical record for any purpose whatsoever.

I undertake to destroy any notes after the completion of the case study.

I understand that the patient/client may revoke consent at any time, and that any information collected for the purposes of the case study will be destroyed.

Student Signature: __________________________ Date: ________________

The original copy of this consent is to be placed in the patient’s medical record