



GUIDELINES FOR PRECEPTORS

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What is a Preceptor?

The College, through its committees, may determine that an individual physician has minor educational needs that could be addressed in order to maximize the quality of the physician's practice and individual patient care. In such cases, the physician may agree to undergo self-directed education. Part of that education could involve the physician recruiting a colleague to assist them with their education. The College would refer to that colleague as a Preceptor.

When committees determine that a physician's learning needs are more significant, a physician may be required to undergo [Clinical Supervision](#). Whereas in Clinical Supervision¹ the College specifies the terms of the Supervision (including reporting requirements), in a Preceptorship any arrangements are solely between the Preceptor and the physician.

A Preceptor's role is to provide guidance to the physician, including how to access educational resources, as well as to assist the physician in acquiring or improving their knowledge and/or clinical skills, i.e. to address the educational needs identified by the College. The Preceptor would normally also take an important role in assisting the physician to incorporate change to their practice. The onus is on the physician to retain and compensate a Preceptor.

Preceptor Activities

A Preceptor's activities may include, among other things:

- Discussion/understanding of the physician's scope of practice;
- Discussion/understanding of the physician's patient population;
- Reviewing best practices and current clinical practice guidelines;
- Promoting the practice of evidence-based medicine;
- Recommending relevant CPD.

Responsibilities

A Preceptor's responsibility is to the physician who is seeking educational assistance, and agreements about time commitment and any financial reimbursement are between the preceptor and physician.

There are no reporting obligations to the CPSO regarding the progress of the educational endeavors. However, if in the preceptor's professional opinion, the care provided by the physician has direct and significant risk to patient safety, the preceptor would be expected to immediately notify the CPSO. This obligation is set out in the College's "[Mandatory and Permissive Reporting](#)" policy that applies to all physicians.

¹ Note that a physician can choose to recruit a preceptor to assist them in their education even when involved in Clinical Supervision that has been specified by the College.