

North York General Hospital Policy Manual

Student Observer Policy

NUMBER: VI-a-100

CROSS REFERENCE: Student Policy VI-a-90

ORIGINATOR: Director, Medical Education,

Director Interprofessional Practice Research & Education

APPROVED BY: Medical Advisory Committee

Operations Committee

ORIGINAL DATE APPROVED:

DATE REVIEWED/REVISED:

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INTRODUCTION

Student observers are those individuals seeking an opportunity to observe or “shadow” in a specific hospital environment for a defined learning purpose outside of an existing curriculum requirement. The nature of an observer’s experience is such that they are permitted access to the facilities of North York General Hospital (NYGH) but are neither permitted independent access to patients nor able to participate in direct patient care. Observerships are supervised by individual staff and physicians on a volunteer basis. Hospital department and programs may determine their own policy whether to accept observers or not (within the confines of this policy). The hospital does not organize a formal program for educational observers nor arranges supervisors for prospective observers.

The applicants do not require official sponsorship by an educational institution. Many of these learning activities are viewed as an adjunct to their regular program and are self-directed in nature. As such, observerships are not intended to count for academic credit and documentation will not be provided by the hospital. No informal or formal feedback/evaluation will be given by the supervisor as a result of the educational observership.

Student Observers are NOT “students” as defined by NYGH Student Policy. According to the Student Policy:

A student is:

1. Any person enrolled in an education program at an academic institution or organization with a current academic affiliation agreement with NYGH
OR
2. Any person enrolled in an accredited learning program at NYGH that is either an undergraduate, postgraduate or graduate learner
AND
3. not an active staff or physician at NYGH

Students require:

1. Defined learning objectives
AND
2. The provision of an evaluation of their educational experience by a teacher/supervisor

There are many different scenarios in which observational activities may occur within the hospital. The following observerships are NOT covered by this policy and are managed outside of the Centre for Education.

1. Health professionals visiting as observers.
2. High school students completing their volunteer hours in an area of interest.
3. Current or prospective vendors.
4. Researchers (students, staff or physicians).

CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE

Student observers must:

1. Be a post-secondary student or secondary school student/graduate who require an observational experience as part of the application process for a post-secondary health care program OR be

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enrolled in a post-secondary educational program seeking an observational experience to enhance their studies

2. Be a Canadian citizen or a Canadian Resident or in Canada on a student VISA (international observers will not be accepted).
3. Not interfere in any way with the learning experience of students from any of NYGH academic partners.
4. Have a primary supervisor for the observer who is a staff member (full or part-time) or physician (active staff) at NYGH.
5. Be approved by the supervisor's chief/manager.
6. Be approved by The Centre for Education.

PROCESS FOR ACCEPTING STUDENT OBSERVERS

1. Initial request for an educational observership is directed to any staff member (full or part time) or physician (active staff) at NYGH (note: The Centre for Education does not organize a formal program for student observers or arrange supervisors for prospective observers).
2. An observership application form is completed by the student and the supervisor.
3. The observership must be approved by the supervisor's manager (for staff supervisors) or the Physician Chief (for physician supervisors). The approver must sign the application. The supervisor should assist the applicant to obtain approval from the supervisor's Chief/Manager.
4. A completed application must be submitted a minimum 1 week prior to the start of the observership to the Centre for Education.
5. An individual may not be granted observer status if it interferes in any way with the learning experience of students from any of NYGH academic partners.
6. Final approval for the observership will be made by the Manager, Centre for Education.

LIMITATIONS OF OBSERVERSHIPS

Observerships:

1. Cannot exceed 4 weeks duration in a 12 month period.
2. Are strictly limited to the approved date(s).
3. Educational observers are not covered by NYGH insurance and the observer will be solely responsible for all risk and liability associated with the experience.

REGISTRATION OF OBSERVERS

Prior to initiation of a student observership, observers must:

1. Sign a privacy and confidentiality declaration.
2. Sign a waiver form.
3. Provide proof of current immunization:
 - a. For students observing in non-clinical setting there are no specific immunizations requirements
 - b. For students observing in a clinical setting 1 day or less there are no specific immunizations requirements.
 - c. For students observing in a clinical setting > 1 day, Immunization requirements are the same as for all students at NYGH
4. Obtain an ID badge.
5. Pay an administration fee
6. Present in person to the Centre for Education and show government issued photo identification.

DURING OBSERVERSHIP

Observer Expectations

Observers:

- Must wear an identification badge at all times while in the hospital.
- Are not allowed to participate in health information gathering or in any aspect of provision of patient care.
- Are not allowed to access patient records.

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- Must be accompanied at all times by the supervisor or their designate.
 - Are not allowed to observe situations in which personal protective equipment is required.
 - Must understand the confidential nature of information concerning patients, hospital personnel or other confidential types of hospital information and that all reasonable care and caution must be exercised in protecting printed or written confidential information from casual observation, unauthorized perusal, or other abuse.

Supervisor Expectations

Supervisors:

- Assume full responsibility for supervision of the observer for the duration of the observation period.
- Introduce the observer to all patients they observe and obtain permission from the patient (or substitute decision maker) for the individual to observe.
- Ensure the observer does not engage in any provision of patient care.
- Ensure the observer does not access the patient record.
- Ensures that the observer is not involved in situations in which personal protective equipment is required.
- No informal or formal feedback/evaluation will be given by the supervisor as a result of the educational observership.
- Make the observer aware of the confidential nature of information concerning patients, hospital personnel or other confidential types of hospital information and that all reasonable care and caution must be exercised in protecting printed or written confidential information from casual observation, unauthorized perusal, or other abuse.