

## CHAMBERLAIN UNIVERSITY

# RN to BSN Degree Completion Option Practicum Handbook NR-435: Community, Public & Population Health Nursing



### WELCOME TO THE NR-435: COMMUNITY, PUBLIC & POPULATION HEALTH NURSE PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

As you begin preparing for your practicum experience, I want you to be aware that the required assignments have been developed to facilitate learning and the expansion of your knowledge base, providing evidence of development toward your professional goal. Review your syllabus very carefully and discuss course requirements with your practicum preceptor and instructor to avoid missing a deadline.

Enjoy your practicum experience and take advantage of every opportunity to apply your new knowledge and skills.

Sincerely,

**Amy Sherer, DNP, MSN, RN**

*Dean, RN to BSN Degree Completion Option*  
Chamberlain University  
College of Nursing

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**CHAMBERLAIN**  
UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE of NURSING

## PRACTICUM GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

### I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The NR-435: Community, Public and/or Population Health Nursing course offers you an opportunity to apply and to relate theoretical content to real practice situations. Prior to this unique practicum course, you have mastered an understanding of theoretical foundations of community, public and/or population health nursing. This concentrated professional experience will help to further prepare you for a role in community health nursing. On a larger scale, it allows you to enhance your skills in communication, teamwork, critical thinking and professionalism.

You are responsible for identifying a potential location and preceptor a minimum of 120 days prior to the beginning of the course. Students are assisted in this effort by a experiential learning specialist. You must select a bachelor's-prepared nurse preceptor with experience in community, public and/or population health nursing to provide guidance and direction for attainment of your learning outcomes and goals. Additionally, you must have an active and unrestricted license in the state where the practicum will be completed. In the event you are completing the practicum in a non-resident state, proof of current RN licensure will be required.

During the practicum, you must advise your preceptor of course requirements and personal learning objectives. Each assigned faculty member is responsible for evaluating your performance and all associated assignments completed during the practicum experience. You are responsible for making travel arrangements and incurring all related expenses.

You are responsible for scheduling and completing a minimum of 96 hours of practical experience in an approved and supervised setting for community, public and/or population health nursing. The scheduled hours will be arranged in conjunction with the practicum site to satisfy the practice experience requirement. Chamberlain allows flexibility in scheduling these hours. The requirement may be met with full days, partial days or consecutive days as agreed upon with the preceptor. The Practicum Log must be submitted to the instructor. Documentation must demonstrate activities related to course outcomes, specialty competencies and your learning agreement.

You will also participate in the theory portion of the online course class that will include weekly assignments and discussion threads in addition to their practicum hours. The majority of the practicum experience should include direct, non-direct and indirect care practice interactions. A marginal amount of time should be spent gathering evidence for graded assignments. Time completing (writing) cannot be included in the 96 hours of practicum.

NR-435 requirements include scheduling, completing, and documenting 96 hours of practicum experience at the pre-approved practicum site. All hours must be completed, documented, and submitted by 11:59 p.m. MT on Wednesday of Week 8. Documenting each encounter demonstrates cumulative practicum-related experiences in a single report. This report provides evidence of practicum experience and is required by state boards of nursing and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

#### Direct Client Care Hours

Of the 96 required hours of practicum experience, a minimum of 60 hours must be spent in direct client care under the guidance of the approved preceptor.

Direct client care includes:

- Research and preparation for practicum experience
- Care/case preparation (chart review)
- Assessments
- Discussions and plan development with preceptor
- Client and family teaching
- Documentation
- iHuman Virtual Patient Encounters and Debriefings

#### What is not considered direct client care?

Non-direct care includes:

- Total "scheduled time" at a site (i.e., "8 hours" for 9-5 pm)
- Downtime in between clients
- In-services, site orientation, training, and "shadowing"

Time spent outside an encounter (while your preceptor sees other clients where you are not directly involved in their care)

Contact course faculty early if you anticipate that you cannot obtain the required number of direct client care hours successfully.

#### Indirect Client Care Hours

The remaining 36 hours can be spent on indirect client care.

Indirect client care includes:

- Research or preparation for Preceptorship experience
- Research or preparation for Practicum Project assignments or meetings
- Attendance and participation in committee meetings

### II. ELIGIBILITY FOR PRACTICUM

#### 1. Prerequisite Requirements

- Completion of:
  - Prerequisites: NR-305, NR-351 & NR-361

#### 2. Practicum Site Selection

- You must take a proactive role in this process to assure that an acceptable site is found. Begin the process by identifying your own learning goals then after identifying these goals initiate the process of selecting a site that provides the best opportunity.

## Site Requirements

Criteria for sites:

- Provides experiences to achieve specified course outcomes, key concepts, and program outcomes
- Demonstrates cultural humility, social justice, equity, and inclusion when working with learners and colleagues
- Employs baccalaureate-level nurses who are competent and specialized in community, public and/or population health nursing that can precept students
- Provides policies and procedures specific to the setting
- Fosters interprofessional collaborative practice
- Provides an environment conducive to opinion sharing, exploration of ideas, and the achievement of professional outcomes
- Promotes nursing as both a science and an art

The site may request various requirements from you. It is your responsibility to ensure you understand all site requirements and complete them prior to the beginning of the practicum. The site may require various healthcare compliance requirements such as background check, etc. You will receive this information from your experiential learning specialist as soon as they are able. A contract may also be required by your practicum site. Your Experiential Learning Specialist will facilitate this and let you know if any additional assistance is needed. Once your site contract and compliance, if needed, are complete, your Experiential Learning Specialist will register you.

The site may also require an agreement or contract between Chamberlain University and the site. This process can take several weeks to secure; therefore, it is important that you identify any contractual requirements as well as assist in securing the correct information in a timely manner. The experiential learning specialist is available to assist with contractual agreements.

All agreements must be completed prior to the beginning of the practicum course and course registration. In the event an agreement is not completed, a delay in starting the practicum will occur.

## 3. Completed Practicum Application

Once the site has been selected and the preceptor identified:

- Complete the Practicum Application at least 120 days prior to the beginning of the practicum course
- Identify the preceptor and include the preceptor's CV and licensure in the application

NOTE: The preceptor's resume is to be submitted along with the Practicum Application.

The Practicum Application should be sent to the experiential learning specialist, along with the preceptor's resume. The online application is located on the [My Chamberlain](https://community.chamberlain.edu) experience at [community.chamberlain.edu](https://community.chamberlain.edu). If the preceptor, mentor and/or field instructor you are submitting for Chamberlain University's review and approval was found using a student-arranged third-party preceptor matching service, please be advised that Chamberlain University will not reimburse any fees you may have incurred.

## 4. Ethical Behavior

You are expected to demonstrate professional demeanor, behavior, appearance and communication at all times. You are bound by the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics and must agree to abide by all the rules and regulations of the state in which you are practicing.

## III. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. Faculty Role

During the course, the instructor should be available via email or telephone to provide support to you and the preceptor. It is incumbent upon the instructor to assure that the site is not misappropriating your time and/or utilizing you as it would a full-time employee but instead is facilitating learning. Given the nature of the practicum, the role of the instructor becomes a combination of facilitator, organizer, professional relations coordinator, role model, coach and counselor. The instructor's role is to maintain ongoing and effective communication throughout the practicum experience. The instructor is responsible for the final evaluation of your learning. Upon completion of the practicum, the faculty will complete a preceptor evaluation.

### 2. Responsibilities of Chamberlain University

- Ensure you have met all eligibility requirements prior to beginning the practicum
- Define competencies to be addressed during practicum assignment
- Suggest activities to enhance the educational experience
- Provide a faculty member to act as instructor and facilitator
- Ensure you to abide by practicum facility policies and procedures, rules and regulations
- Consider promptly any complaints by you, your preceptor or representatives of the facility
- Maintain communication with you and your preceptor during the assignment
- Agree not to discriminate by race, creed, color, religion, sex or national origin
- Evaluate your academic performance in the course

### 3. Responsibilities of the Experiential Learning Specialist

- Assist in student efforts to secure a practicum site and preceptor
- Make contact with the site and confirm all required compliance forms
- Partner Development coordinator will confirm agreement and verify all needed requirements are in place with the site prior to practicum registration
- Be a conduit if preceptor changes are requested by you
- Follow up with you, preceptors and faculty about the overall practicum experience upon the completion of the course

### 4. Responsibilities of the Practicum Preceptor

- Cooperate with Chamberlain faculty to promote your success in the practicum
- Orient you to the facility environment and policies
- Design suitable experience situations as described in the course outcomes and student learning agreement
- Serve as mentor for your professional development
- Participate in initial conference call with you and practicum course instructor during the first two weeks of the course
- Refuse to pay students for practicum or use students to replace paid staff
- Provide constructive feedback about your performance in the practicum setting
- Not disclose any personal, student-identifying information or records of your participation except as set forth by an agreement or required by law
- Agree to not discriminate by race, creed, color, religion, sex or national origin
  - Complete student evaluations during Weeks 4 and 8
  - Provide feedback to Chamberlain as requested
  - Verification of student hours on Practicum Log and Learning Agreement (preceptor signature required)

### 5. Your Responsibilities as a Student

- Meet eligibility and course requirements
- Be familiar with all procedures and content for practicum experience
- Meet deadline dates for all practicum coursework and activities
- Assist in the facilitation of an initial meeting between you, the practicum course instructor and preceptor during the first week of your practicum
- Demonstrate competence in practicum assignments
- Abide by facility rules and regulations
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner during the practicum assignment
- Accept instruction from facility personnel as a learning opportunities

- Maintain communication with course faculty
- Comply with all facility requirements (e.g., liability insurance, background screening, physical examination, drug screening and current immunizations)
- Evaluate the practicum experience
- Fund all travel arrangements and any associated expenses
- Provide proof of active and unrestricted licensure if requested
- You may engage in patient care as part of the practicum experience as permitted by the facility. You may teach patients; you may observe the preceptor doing practicum teaching or patient care and may participate in pre-practicum conferences and post-practicum debriefings.

### 6. Preceptor Receipt of Handbook

You should email a copy of this handbook to your preceptor to ensure that they understand course requirements.

You may direct all questions about the practicum to the experiential learning specialist at [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu).

## IV. COURSE OUTCOMES

1. Apply principles of nursing to the public health system (PO1).
2. Assess the health of populations, aggregates and communities (PO4).
3. Apply the nursing process to vulnerable populations with professional clinical judgment and evidence-based practice (PO4 & 8).
4. Analyze the professional nursing roles in a variety of community settings (PO7).
5. Utilize a collaborative approach to address factors that influence population health (PO2).
6. Examine collaborative trends in community health nursing (PO2).

## V. PROGRAM OUTCOMES

1. Provides individualized comprehensive care based on theories and principles of nursing and related disciplines to individuals, families, aggregates and communities, from entry to the healthcare system through long-term planning.
2. Demonstrates leadership and collaboration with consumers and other healthcare providers in providing care and/or delegating responsibilities for health promotion, illness prevention, health restoration, health maintenance and rehabilitative activities.
3. Communicates effectively with patient populations and other healthcare providers in managing the healthcare of individuals, families, aggregates and communities.



4. Integrates clinical judgment in professional decision making and implementation of the nursing process.
5. Demonstrates responsibility for continued personal and professional development through enrollment in graduate education, continuing education degree programs, professional reading and participation in professional organizations and community service.
6. Implements professional nursing standards by practicing within the legal definitions of nursing practice and acts in accordance with the nursing code of ethics and American Nurses Association (ANA) standards of practice.
7. Practices in established professional roles consistent with entry-level BSN graduates to provide cost-effective, quality healthcare to consumers in structured and unstructured settings.
8. Incorporates evidence-based practice in the provision of professional nursing care to individuals, families, aggregates and communities.

## PRECEPTOR INFORMATION

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Thank you for agreeing to precept a Chamberlain RN to BSN student. The information below provides details for a mutually productive experience for both you and the student.

### I. PRACTICUM SITE SELECTION

Students take a proactive role in this process to assure that an acceptable site is found. Students begin the process by identifying their own learning goals. By identifying these goals, students will then initiate the process of selecting a site that provides the best opportunity to promote learning.

#### Location for practicum experience

- RN to BSN students may have working relationships in the field and may use their networks to determine a location for completing the practicum.
- Students may identify a learning need that is outside of their network and may need assistance in learning about a potential practicum site. The experiential learning specialist will assist students in exploring opportunities in their area. The experiential learning specialist can be reached at [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu).
- It is important to remember the practicum gives facilities the opportunity to observe the student as a potential employee. Therefore, students may consider employment goals in selecting a site.

#### Criteria for site selection

- The site must offer the student a community, public and/or population health nursing opportunity. Some of the roles considered are home health nursing, parish nursing, working in various areas of the health department and school nursing. Please note, correctional facilities will not be accepted.
  - **Please note:** For California and Minnesota students seeking a certificate in public health nursing, the site criteria is limited to public health settings. Examples include but are not limited to health departments, parish nursing, governmental agencies, schools and non-profit organizations that provide services to vulnerable populations such as pregnant women and those who are homeless. These examples serve as a guide and are not all encompassing. Each application and site is reviewed on a case by case basis based on the public health scope of practice standards. Practicum requirements are set by each states board of nursing. Approvals are based on meeting of their criteria as well as Chamberlain University's.
- The site may be in the institution where the student is currently employed but must be outside of the normal work area (e.g., student may be a hospital staff nurse in the cardiac unit and may select a preceptor who is the director of the Home Health department in the same hospital).
- Students may engage in patient care as part of the practicum experience as permitted by the facility. Students may teach patients; students may observe the preceptor doing practicum teaching or patient care and may participate in pre-practicum conferences and post-practicum debriefings.
- Students must have an active and unrestricted nursing license in the state where they wish to complete the practicum. For students who are completing their practicum in a different state from where they reside, proof of proper nurse licensure will be required prior to their practicum registration.

### II. PRACTICUM HOURS REQUIREMENT

Students are responsible for scheduling and completing a minimum of 96 hours of practical experience in an approved and supervised setting for community, public and/or population health nursing. The scheduled hours will be arranged in conjunction with the practicum site as is reasonable to satisfy the practice experience requirement. Chamberlain allows flexibility in scheduling these hours. The requirement may be met with full days, partial days or consecutive days as agreed upon with the preceptor.

All hours must be documented on the Practicum Log. Travel time to and from the practicum site cannot be included in the 96 hours.

### III. PRECEPTOR QUALIFICATIONS

- Holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from an accredited school of nursing
- A minimum of two years of experience as a C/PHN
- Holds a position in community, public and/or population health nursing
- Certification in public or community health nursing recommended
- Strong communication skills
- Reliable internet connection

NOTE: Preceptor cannot be family member, relative or personal friend. Preceptors/mentors cannot be responsible for supervision of the student as an employee; the student cannot be responsible for supervising the preceptor/mentor in the work place. In addition, the preceptor cannot be a direct supervisor or any staff member who can impact the employee evaluation.

### IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRACTICUM PRECEPTOR

- Cooperate with Chamberlain faculty to promote student success in the practicum
- Orient the student to the facility environment and policies
- Design suitable experience situations as described in the course outcomes and student learning agreement
- Serve as preceptor for students in professional development
- Participate in initial conference call with student and practicum-course instructor by Week 2 of the course
- Refuse to pay students for practicum or use students to replace paid staff
- Provide constructive feedback to students about their performance in the practicum setting in a timely manner
- Not disclose any personal, identifying information or records of students' participation except as set forth by an agreement or required by law

- Agree to not discriminate by race, creed, color, religion, sex or national origin
- Complete student evaluations in Weeks 4 and 8
- Provide feedback to Chamberlain as requested
- Demonstrates professionalism in all interactions and communications between RN to BSN student and Chamberlain University faculty
- Serves as a professional role model for RN to BSN student

### V. EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

Each preceptor will be asked to complete a formal evaluation of the practicum experience; feedback is welcomed and highly valued. Preceptor comments and suggestions are a driving force to refine and improve the course. The survey will be emailed to each preceptor after the practicum completion. The survey results will then be compiled and reviewed. If you have specific items you would like to note, contact the experiential learning specialist.

### VI. COMMUNICATION WITH COURSE INSTRUCTOR

The course instructor will be available via email or telephone to provide support to the student and the preceptor. A conference call with the student, preceptor and course instructor is required by Friday of Week 2. Please direct any further questions during the course to the instructor.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

### CONTACT INFORMATION

You may direct all questions about the practicum experience to the experiential learning specialist at [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu).

### ELIGIBILITY FOR PRACTICUM

#### 1. When can I take the practicum?

- Completion of:
  - Prerequisites: NR-305, NR-351 & NR-361

### APPLYING FOR THE PRACTICUM

#### 2. When do I apply for the practicum?

You must complete the Practicum Application at least two sessions prior to the anticipated practicum start date. The deadline for applying for the practicum is 120 days before the practicum start date.

#### 3. Why do I have to apply so far ahead of the practicum start date?



This allows time for Chamberlain to communicate all expectations for the practicum to you, the preceptor and the agency and to complete any agency agreements. This also allows sufficient time for you to complete any site-specific requirements such as immunizations, safety orientation, drug screening, CPR, etc.

#### 4. Where do I find the Practicum Application?

1. Log in to the **My Chamberlain** experience at [community.chamberlain.edu](https://community.chamberlain.edu).
2. Click on the **Practicum** tab
3. Click on **CREATE APPLICATION**
4. Attach mentor credentials at the end of the application (CV and licensure)
5. Submit the application for review
6. Experiential learning specialist will be in touch for next steps

You may also follow the directions listed in the **RN-BSN Practicum Application Guide** on the My Chamberlain portal experience.

#### 5. How do I know if the site and preceptor I have selected will be appropriate for my practicum experience?

Check the practicum section on **My Chamberlain** for updates on the application, compliance and site contract status. You can email your Experiential Learning Specialist for updates by clicking on **Contact your Experiential Learning Specialist** from the **Practicum** tab on **My Chamberlain** or at [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu)

NOTE: You must have an active and unrestricted nursing license in the state where you wish to complete the practicum. If you are completing their practicum in a different state from where you reside, proof of proper nurse licensure will be required prior to practicum registration.

### SITE SELECTION

#### 6. Can I do the practicum at the site or facility where I am employed?

Yes. You may complete the practicum at your place of employment; however, your preceptor cannot be your supervisor nor can the practicum be completed in the same department.

### PRECEPTOR QUESTIONS

#### 7. Does my preceptor have to have a Master's degree?

No, the minimum requirement for a preceptor is a bachelor's degree in nursing. Your preceptor should have at least two years of experience as a community, public, and/or population health nurse. The preceptor should be currently employed in that specialty area.

#### 8. What happens if my preceptor gets sick or has to quit during my practicum?

In this event, you would notify their instructor immediately. You, the instructor and experiential learning specialist would work together to find an alternative.



## Mission:

To educate, empower and embolden diverse healthcare professionals who advance the health of people, families, communities and nations.



## THE RN TO BSN PRACTICUM TOOLKIT

### LITERATURE



Catalog



Viewbook

### FORMS & WORKSHEETS



RN to BSN Curriculum Grid



Academic Calendar



RN to BSN Practicum Application Guide

For more information, email [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu)



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