

# CHAMBERLAIN UNIVERSITY

## Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Practicum Handbook for Specialty Tracks (Non-NP) & Accelerated Options



### WELCOME TO YOUR MSN PRACTICUM HANDBOOK FOR SPECIALTY TRACKS (NON-NP) & ACCELERATED OPTIONS

All your previous graduate courses have led you to this moment – the application of your knowledge and skills in real-life situations and events and the demonstration of your achievement of the program outcomes. The practicum courses are very different from your previous courses because they place the responsibility on you, the learner.

#### Practicum courses covered in this handbook, include:

- Concluding Graduating Experiences (CGE)
- Nursing Role Immersion I, II, III
- Nursing Role Synthesis

It is critical for you to identify and formalize arrangements for the on-site practice component (practicum) as early as possible. The information within this document will help you finalize those practicum arrangements. Please read and implement the information carefully and completely.

In the practicum, you will produce a professional portfolio which provides evidence of your progress and development toward your professional goal. Review your syllabus carefully and discuss milestones with your practicum mentor and faculty to avoid missing a deadline. The experiential learning specialist will include a link to this handbook in an email sent to each mentor.

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

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## PRACTICUM GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

### I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The culmination of your Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) coursework is the practicum experience. Each course has didactic and on-site practice (practicum) components. The practicum component is related to your specialty. The didactic component includes demonstration of your achievement of the MSN program outcomes.

The practicum component offers you the opportunity to apply newly developed skills and relate theoretical content, as presented in core and specialty courses, to real practice situations. Prior to the practicum experience, you will have demonstrated an understanding of the theoretical foundations of your nursing specialty track. This final, concentrated professional experience helps to further prepare you for an advanced practice role. On a larger scale, it allows you to enhance skills in communication, teamwork, critical thinking and professionalism.

All practicum projects focus on quality improvement, require interprofessional communication, use of evidence-based practice and coordination to achieve clinical or academic outcomes. You will implement a comprehensive plan and disseminate the evaluation findings.

You are responsible for identifying an appropriate location and mentor for the practicum component that will meet the expectations for the project. You must secure an acceptable site a minimum of 120 days prior to the beginning of the first practicum course. Students are assisted in this effort by a experiential learning specialist. A master's-in-nursing-prepared nurse mentor with experience in the selected specialty track/accelerated options is required to provide guidance and direction for attainment of your learning goals.

Graduate students in the MSN Specialty tracks of Executive, Healthcare Policy, Population Health and Informatics Specialty Tracks, as well as the Accelerated MSN non-CL Option courses, may not be given direct patient care assignments to supplement or replace nursing staff in any practicum setting. Students must have an active and unrestricted license in the state where the practicum will be completed. In the event a student is completing the practicum in a non-resident state, proof of current RN licensure will be required.

In concurrence with your assigned faculty member and practicum mentor, a learning agreement including expectations, student learning outcomes and means of measuring success will be executed. During the practicum, you must advise your mentor of course requirements and student learning objectives. You are also responsible for developing a portfolio of the clinical experience including accurate reflections on activities and attainment of course outcomes and specialty competencies. Each assigned faculty member is responsible for evaluating their student's performance and all associated assignments completed during the practicum. You are responsible for making travel arrangements and incurring all related expenses.

You must be scheduled for and are responsible for completing a minimum of 72 hours of practicum experience in an approved and supervised setting for each of your two practicum courses in the Educator, Executive, Healthcare Policy and Population Health Tracks (for a total of 144 practicum hours).

- **Educator Track:** 48 of 144 hours, in a clinical setting with a focus on client outcomes in a clinical practice setting
- **Nursing Informatics (NI) Specialty Track:** 216 total practicum hours, over three courses – NR-640: Informatics Nurse Specialist Practicum and the two practicum courses
- **Accelerated MSN Option:** 144 additional practicum hours, based on completing one course
- **Accelerated MSN Clinical Nursing Leadership (CL) Option:** 504 total hours based on completing the three practicum courses

These hours are required for the CL option in order to qualify to sit for the CNL<sup>®</sup> Board Certification Exam. Your scheduled hours are 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 practicum mentor. Your Student Activities Log must be submitted to the faculty and included in your professional portfolio. Documentation must demonstrate activities related to course outcomes, specialty competencies and your learning agreement.

Students will also participate in an online class that will include weekly assignments and discussions in addition to their practicum hours. For the Educator, Executive, Healthcare Policy, Population Health Tracks, as well as the Accelerated MSN Options, practicum student activities can include:

- Completing approved research and evidence-based practice or quality improvement project, associated with the practicum experience or practicum project
- Completing an evidence-based practice or quality improvement project, requested by the practicum mentor or agency, that supports practicum goals
- Preparing for/and attending a professional meeting
- Meeting with mentor and/or a site orientation, prior to course opening
- For the Informatics Track, similar activities to those above, may be considered for inclusion as practicum hours with a focus on the Informaticist in a Project Manager (PM) role. Experiences are representative of active engagement, for example: lead, facilitate, collaborate, develop, implement vs. observational experiences

All hours must be documented on the Student Activity Log and signed and dated by the mentor. Your travel time to and from the practicum site and time spent working on the practicum portfolio requirements cannot be included in your practicum hours.

## II. ELIGIBILITY FOR PRACTICUM

### 1. PREREQUISITE REQUIREMENTS

- Completion of all core, specialty track and accelerated prerequisite courses

### 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 learning goals. After identifying these goals, in collaboration with your mentor, initiate the process of selecting a site that provides the best opportunity to promote learning. Consultation with course faculty is recommended.

#### Practicum Experience Location

- You may have working relationships in the field and may use these networks to determine a location for completing the practicum.
- Identify a learning need in consultation with course faculty that is outside of your network. You may need assistance in learning about a potential practicum site. Your experiential learning specialists will assist in exploring opportunities in your area. The experiential learning specialists can be reached at [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu).
- It is important to remember the practicum gives facilities the opportunity to observe you as a potential employee. Therefore, you may consider employment goals in selecting a site.

#### Criteria for Site Selection

Sites that participate in the practicum experience are selected because of the potential opportunities for student learning, unique program focus, close geographical locations and provides the direct application knowledge.

Carefully selecting sites that can provide the practicum experiences for the specific course objectives is critical to student outcomes and learning.

Here is a list of site selection criteria that you should keep in mind when searching for your practicum site.

- Enables students to integrate new knowledge.
- Allows students to engage in information technology and analyze patient data.
- Encourages the develop of professional competencies among the healthcare team.
- Fosters interprofessional collaborative practice.
- Demonstrates cultural humility, social justice, equity and inclusion when working with learners and colleagues.
- Employs masters level nurses that are competent and specialized in their field that can mentor students.

- Provides an environment conducive to opinion sharing, exploration of ideas and achievement of professional outcomes.
- Promotes nursing as both a science and an art.
- Fosters activities that support a culture of lifelong learning.
- Provides students with a variety of learning opportunities to foster interprofessional team practice and to provide care within the four spheres of care and with care recipients from diverse backgrounds and cultures, from different genders and age groups and with different religious and spiritual practices, including those who may be considered most vulnerable. (AACNE Essentials, 2021). The four spheres of care are:
  - Chronic disease management
  - Hospice/Palliative Care
  - Wellness, Disease Prevention
  - Regenerative/Restorative care
- Your site must be a healthcare-related organization or nursing institution in accordance with the needs of the specialty (e.g., hospital, outpatient clinic, long-term care facility, home-care services, school or college of nursing). Please note, correctional facilities will not be accepted. Nursing Informatics students might seek a practicum experience with a vendor of information systems or an information-systems consulting firm. Healthcare Policy students may seek a nursing organization, agency or legislative office.
- The site may be in the institution where you are currently employed but must be outside of your normal work area (e.g., if you are a hospital staff nurse in the cardiac unit, then you may select a mentor who is the director of staff development in the same hospital).
- For Executive, Healthcare Policy, Informatics and Population Health Specialty Track and the Accelerated MSN non-CL Option courses, you cannot engage in direct patient care as part of your practicum experience. You are not to be given patient-care assignments. You must also meet the institution's HIPAA compliance requirements prior to start of the practicum experience.
- You must have an active and unrestricted registered-nursing license in the state where they wish to complete the practicum. If you are completing your practicum in a different state from where you reside, then proof of proper RN licensure will be required prior to practicum registration.

Direct your questions about site selection to the Experiential Learning Services Office at [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu). Contact information for the Experiential Learning Services Office is located in the resource titled Practicum Orientation, in Student Resources.

### Site Requirements

The site may request various requirements of students. It is your responsibility to ensure all site requirements are understood and completed prior to the beginning of the first practicum course. This can include but is not limited to: background check, drug or urine screening, immunizations, proof of health insurance, etc. Because a student must be fully compliant with all site requirements before beginning the first practicum course, automatic registration for any of the practicum courses is not allowed. Once Academic Support Advising is notified that you are fully compliant, then you may complete manual course registration.

An agreement or contract between Chamberlain and the site is required. This process can take several weeks or longer to secure; therefore, it is important that you identify the proper point of contact at the site to assist in this matter. The Experiential Learning Services Office is available to assist with contractual agreements.

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

### 3. MENTORS MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Registered Nurse for five years
2. Master's degree in nursing; must have held for a minimum of two years
3. One year experience in their specialty area of nursing practice\*
4. Mentors must have a current, unrestricted nursing license in the state where the practicum will take place.

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

- \* For the Executive practicum courses, the mentor must have fiscal responsibility (e.g., annual budgetary planning, oversight and monitoring) over a nursing unit, department, service line and/or facility or organization the mentor must also have direct supervision of personnel (i.e., direct reports).
- For the Educator practicum students, there is a requirement of 48 clinical hours. This is to take place in a clinical setting and may require a second application and mentor. Please work closely with your faculty and coordinator. For Informatics practicum courses, the mentor must be in a project management role.
- For the Healthcare Policy practicum courses, the mentor must be actively engaged in external healthcare policy creation, advocacy or application within a professional community; mentors within agencies must be responsible for dissemination and compliance with policy required by accreditation, regulation or state boards.
- For the Informatics practicum courses, the primary mentor must have direct supervision of personnel in the informatics areas within the organization (i.e., manager, director, executive director, VP, CNIO, Assistant CNIO, CNIQO, innovation VP). In addition, the mentor should have organizational responsibility for assigning large scale organization wide projects
- For the Population Health practicum courses, mentors must be involved in population-focused practice in clinical healthcare systems, public health systems, public policy, school health, occupational health, acute care, long-term care, ambulatory care, disaster management or patient-centered medical homes.

### 4. PRACTICUM COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS

The practicum site may have various requirements for students. It is your responsibility to ensure all site requirements are understood and completed prior to registering for the Practicum course. This may include but is not limited to: Proof of liability insurance, HIPAA training, proof of licensure, proof of CPR certification or other requirements, background screening, physical examination, drug screening, proof of health insurance and current immunizations.

Because a student must be fully compliant with all site requirements before beginning the practicum course, automatic registration for any of the practicum courses is not allowed.

### 5. COMPLETED PRACTICUM APPLICATION

Once the site has been selected and mentor identified:

- Complete the **Practicum Application** in the **My Chamberlain** experience at least two sessions prior to the beginning of the practicum course
- Identify the mentor and include the mentor's qualifying information on the **Practicum Application** and attach the mentor's resume/Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Provide a copy of your current resume. This will be reviewed by faculty to meet the needs of their preparation for the upcoming practicum

If you need help submitting the **Practicum Application**, please review the **MSN Practicum Application Guide** on the **My Chamberlain** experience. 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.

### 6. SELF-ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

At the beginning of the first practicum course, complete a Self-Assessment of Professional Competencies. This assessment will help guide the development of goals for the practicum experience. The Self-Assessment of Professional Competencies may be found on the assignment page in Canvas of the practicum courses.

For the Informatics practicum, the self-assessment is first taken in NR-541 and then re-taken during NR-642 (on the assignment page for the portfolio where reassessment is discussed, the student is directed back to their assessment from NR-541).

## 7. PORTFOLIO

Throughout the practicum courses, you will develop a Professional Portfolio. Requirements for the portfolio are delineated in the Practicum Portfolio Guidelines, for each specialty track located in the course resources section of the practicum courses.

Course-specific documents that had been housed in the course resources were moved to the assignment page for the respective most-applicable assignment. For the portfolio, the guidelines are found on the portfolio assignment page within the Canvas course.

## 8. ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to present professional demeanor, behavior, appearance and communication at all times. You are bound by the **American Nurses Association Code of Ethics**. You also must agree to abide by all the rules and regulations of the practicum site.

## III. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. FACULTY ROLE

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

### 2. MENTOR ROLE

A mentor is master's-prepared at a minimum (doctoral-prepared preferred) and maintains current, unrestricted licensure as an advanced practice nurse or nurse in an advanced role. The mentor is seen as an expert in the area of focus and serves as a resource for students during their practicum experience. Ongoing collaboration occurs with practicum faculty to evaluate student learning through mastery of course outcomes. Mentors are provided a copy of the **Master of Science in Nursing Practicum Handbook**, which outlines the responsibilities and expectations of their role inclusive of the criterion they will be evaluated on by practicum faculty. Mentors work one-on-one with students through experiential learning during the course. Ongoing collaboration occurs with clinical practicum faculty to evaluate student learning through mastery of course outcomes. The mentor maintains regular contact with the student during their practicum experience and with international students, can serve in a remote capacity as allowable by the practicum site organization.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAMBERLAIN UNIVERSITY

- Ensure students 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
- Instruct students to abide by practicum-facility policies and procedures, rules and regulations
- Consider promptly any complaints by facility, mentor or student
- Maintain communication with student and mentor during the assignment
- Agree to not discriminate by race, creed, color, religion, sex or national origin
- Evaluate academic performance of students in the course

### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SPECIALIST

- Sends communication containing instructions on practicum application process to the student approximately 120 days prior to eligibility for practicum start
- Assist in student efforts to secure a practicum site and mentor
- Contact the practicum site and identify required compliance documentation and initiate contractual development and agreement, for practicum site
- Confirm student compliance with site requirements prior to the start of each practicum course
- Electronically send the **MSN Practicum Handbook** to the mentor following student submission of online practicum application
- Sends DocuSign form seeking an electronic signature from the mentor confirming their receipt and review of the **MSN Practicum Handbook**
- Facilitate the process of changing mentors when requested by a student and approved by the MSN faculty

### 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRACTICUM MENTOR

- Collaborates with Chamberlain University faculty to promote student success
- Orients the student to the practicum site environment, policies and procedures
- Protects from disclosure all personal student identifying information or records of student's participation except as set forth by an agreement or required by law
- Adheres to all non-discrimination policies of Chamberlain University and the organization providing the practicum site
- Provides evaluation of the student as requested by Chamberlain

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE 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 the practicum course faculty, mentor and student during the first week of their practicum
- Demonstrate competence in practicum assignments
- Abide by facility rules and regulations
- Conduct oneself in a professional manner during the practicum assignment
- Accept instruction from facility personnel as a learning opportunity
- Maintain communication with the course faculty
- Comply with all facility requirements (e.g., liability insurance, background screening, physical examination, drug screening and current immunizations)

NOTE: If you completed any program previously at one of our campuses, your compliance for that program is no longer viable. New compliance will have to be completed and submitted per the instructions noted above.

- Evaluate the practicum experience
- Perform a self-evaluation on the practicum assignment
- Fund all travel arrangements and any associated expenses
- Provide proof of active and non-restricted RN licensure throughout the experience
- Graduate students in MSN specialty tracks and Accelerated MSN options may not be given direct patient care assignments to supplement or replace nursing staff in any practicum setting

## 7. EVALUATION PROCESS

Chamberlain University practicum faculty will perform a performance evaluation at the end of each session on the mentor. The mentor will have the ability to comment on the evaluation and collaborate with Chamberlain University leadership to ensure the expectations of the role are being met.

## 8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used by Chamberlain University when conducting performance evaluations of mentors (and mentees, if applicable):

- Demonstrates collaboration with Chamberlain University practicum faculty by attending and participating in start of session call by Sunday of week two and in ongoing calls as needed
- Provides student feedback and/or responds to student requests in timely manner
- Orients the student to the practicum site environment, policies and procedures

- If serving in a remote capacity (international students), collaborates with on-site mentor to ensure that students are oriented to the practicum site environment, policies and procedures
- Identifies suitable experiential opportunities to align with practicum course outcomes
- Protects student identifiable information in all communications
- Adheres to all non-discrimination policies of Chamberlain University and the organization providing the practicum site
- Provides feedback, including evaluation student performance, to Chamberlain University as requested/needed

## 9. ORIENTATION TO THE PRACTICUM

General information about the practicum is available in the MSN Student Resources. The site includes the description of the practicum, forms, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), grading rubrics and contact information.

## 10. MENTOR RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

Email a copy of this handbook to your mentor to ensure that both of you understand course requirements.

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

## IV. MSN PROGRAM OUTCOMES

1. Provide high quality, safe, patient-centered care grounded in holistic health principles
2. Create a caring environment for achieving quality health outcomes
3. Engage in lifelong personal and professional growth through reflective practice and appreciation of cultural diversity
4. Integrate professional values through scholarship and service in healthcare
5. Advocate for positive health outcomes through compassionate, evidence-based, collaborative advanced nursing practice

## PRACTICUM PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

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### I. ELEMENTS OF THE PORTFOLIO

All practicum projects are to focus on quality improvement, require interprofessional communication, use of evidence-based practice and coordination to achieve clinical or academic outcomes. You will implement a comprehensive plan and disseminate the evaluation findings.

### 1. SELF-ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Completed at the beginning and the end of the practicum (located in the course resources section of the practicum courses).

For the Informatics practicum course, the self-assessment is first taken in NR-541 and then re-taken in NR-642 (on the assignment page for the portfolio where reassessment is discussed, the student is directed back to their assessment from NR-541).

### 2. STUDENT'S CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)

### 3. LEARNING AGREEMENT

You are responsible for the construction of a learning agreement that includes the following elements:

- Name, credentials and contact information of mentor
- Student-defined practicum goals (as approved by the mentor and practicum faculty), methods planned to meet these goals and how each goal was met. Areas of concentration include:
  - Application of nursing-specialty knowledge and skills
  - Application of nursing science/theory
  - Application of nursing theory
  - Critical judgment
  - Professional development
  - Personal development
  - Human caring/diversity
  - Ethical/legal principles
  - Leadership
  - Evidence-based practice
  - Communication

**The Learning Agreement** should present a rich narrative, documenting the course outcomes achieved. The initial **Learning Agreement**, submitted in Week one of the first practicum course, forms the basis for the narrative. Each week, you will add further activities and document practicum hours and modifications to the plan to meet your self-identified, measurable practicum goals and show when and how those goals were met. Creation of a timeline with activities for each point on the timeline is required.

For the Nursing Informatics practicum courses, the practicum hours are documented on the practicum log, not the learning agreement.

### 4. PROJECT

A nursing specialty track project that directs activities to be conducted during the practicum experience.

**Required elements include:**

- Identification of an issue, problem or concern that aligns with the organization need and student learning need
- Target audience (e.g., learners); stakeholders
- Assessment of the needs of target audience; stakeholders
- Objectives for the experience

- Methods used
- Materials developed for the specialty activity (e.g., handouts, PowerPoint, etc.)
- Measurement, evaluation of the achievement of objectives and dissemination of the project outcomes

You will develop and implement an activity project that will benefit the organization and contribute to your ability to achieve your course outcomes. Your practicum activity should be chosen in conjunction with the mentor and approved by the course faculty and be based on a review of the needs of the nursing specialty and facility. You will assess the need for the activity, develop objectives for the project and identify strategies from the literature used in the development and implementation of the activity.

### 5. COMPLETED STUDENT ACTIVITIES LOG

Completed Student Activities Log identifies how the required practicum hours were met.

Informatics also has the student submit specific course assignments as artifacts to support the Project Manager (PM) knowledge, skills and abilities gained throughout the practicum courses.

## II. PRIOR TO COURSE OPENING

Due Date	Practicum Element
120 Days Prior to Course Opening	Practicum Application submitted; Plan bi-weekly communication with the experiential learning specialist to ensure the approval process is moving forward
Prior to Course Opening	Review course requirements with mentor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus</li> <li>• <b>Learning Agreement*</b></li> <li>• Portfolio Assignments*                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Practicum Project</li> <li>– Student Activities Log</li> <li>– Professional Competencies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

\* These requirements are initiated and completed during the practicum experience; see syllabus.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

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

### PRACTICUM HANDBOOK

All information, forms and contact information about the practicum are located in the [MSN Practicum Handbook](#).

### ELIGIBILITY FOR PRACTICUM

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

You may take the practicum course only after successful completion of all core, specialty-track and accelerated courses.

#### 2. Can I take the practicum courses at the same time?

No. All practicum courses, including NR-640 for the Nursing Informatics track, must be taken in sequential sessions as the content and assignments presented and completed in one course are the basis for the next course in the sequence.

### APPLYING FOR THE PRACTICUM

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

You will complete the *MSN Practicum Application* at least two sessions prior to your anticipated practicum start date. The deadline for applying for the practicum is two sessions before the practicum start date. Please do not expect the practicum processing to be completed more quickly than this time frame and if there are barriers based on compliance, such as ability to obtain a contract agreement between the university and the agency, there may be a longer time frame to be prepared to be registered for the practicum courses.

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

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

#### 5. Where do I find the *Practicum Application*?

Your *Practicum application* can be found and completed on [My Chamberlain](#) experience at [community.chamberlain.edu](http://community.chamberlain.edu). Please follow the steps provided in the [MSN Practicum Application Guide](#) on the [My Chamberlain](#) experience to complete the application.

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

The experiential learning specialist is available to answer most questions you have about the practicum and will help guide you in site and mentor selection as needed. Practicum faculty may assist you in mentor and site selection and appropriateness. Contact the experiential learning specialist at [elc@chamberlain.edu](mailto:elc@chamberlain.edu).

NOTE: 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 practicum registration.

### SITE SELECTION

#### 7. Can I do the practicum at the agency where I am employed?

Yes. You may complete the practicum at their place of employment; however, they must select a different department. Your mentor cannot be your supervisor at your place of employment.

#### 8. Do I have to do my practicum at a hospital or at a school of nursing?

No. While a hospital or school of nursing may provide a familiar opportunity for the practicum, there are many other potential sites from which a student may choose (e.g., an out-patient clinic, home care or community health agency, a rehabilitation center or surgery center). The site must offer the student the opportunity to work with a mentor to apply the specialty skills attained in the MSN program.

### MENTOR QUESTIONS

#### 9. Does my mentor have to have a master's degree?

Yes, the minimum requirement for a mentor is a master's degree in nursing, with a doctorate preferred. Mentor must hold a master's degree in nursing for a minimum of two years prior to your practicum course. Your mentor must have five years experience as a nurse, with one year in that specialty. The mentor must be currently employed in that specialty area.



## 10. What happens if my mentor gets sick or has to quit during my practicum?

In this event, students would notify their practicum faculty immediately. The student, faculty and experiential learning specialist would work together closely to find an alternative.

## 11. What are some suggestions for a practicum project?

**Some examples for practicum projects are:**

### For the Nurse Executive Specialty Track:

1. Throughput issues: designing optimal flow of patients from the emergency department to ICU and telemetry units.
2. Implementing various best practices related to nursing operations: purposeful rounding, bedside reporting, multidisciplinary rounding.
3. Implementing evidence-based practice council or shared leadership council for the purpose of the Magnet Designation journey.
4. Addressing key changes related to Joint Commission surveys (e.g., improving patient satisfaction scores through peace and quiet time), interdisciplinary rounding and communication for optimal coordination of patient-care; communication during hand-offs).

### For the Nurse Educator Specialty Track:

#### NR-621: Nurse Educator Concluding Graduate Experience I

1. Implementation of a Flipped Classroom in teaching the cardiovascular unit to first year ADN students in the medical-surgical II course.
2. Implementation of high fidelity simulation to maternity staff nurses regarding postpartum hemorrhage.
3. Implementation of an audience response system in teaching legal and ethical aspects in a new graduate orientation course.
4. Implementation of a jeopardy game on patient safety in first year ADN nursing fundamental course.
5. Utilize nursing knowledge and skills in the assessment, planning, prioritization and evaluation specific to the needs of the given patient and/or population within the practicum setting.

#### Direct Care Practicum – NR-622: Nurse Educator Concluding Graduate Experience II

Mentors are required to have been prepared at an advanced level in the application of these sciences and must be engaged in delivering advanced patient care in a specialized field.

Advanced patient care is defined as the management of complex disease processes in a specialty beyond the basic bedside nursing care to a specific group of patients. For example, students might select to learn more about the pain management of oncology patients or the management of hypertensive patients. Other examples of student experiences may be learning the management of complex nursing care delivery involving the work of a clinical nurse specialist, experiences with a wound specialist or hospice care.

To achieve these learning experiences, students must propose a practicum site that allows them direct contact with patients. Acceptable mentor and site choices include the following:

- **Possible mentor choices:** (Clinician) clinical nurse specialist, nurse practitioner, any MSN prepared nurse who provides advanced direct care
- **Possible site choices:** Community clinic, emergent care clinic or hospital and/or nursing home or hospice that provides direct contact with patients

The focus of this course is not on educating patients, students or staff. A college, university or staff development department is not an appropriate site and will not help students achieve the outcomes of this course. Also, supervising nursing students in a clinical setting would not be an appropriate activity for this practicum. In addition, individuals in educator roles are not appropriate mentors for this practicum unless they have expertise as clinicians and can provide students with access to direct patient contact.

Students select their site and mentor for the direct care hours based on the NR-622 course outcomes and their professional goals, needs and interests. The student should identify an area of advanced nursing practice that will provide the opportunity to develop in-depth knowledge and expertise in a particular area of nursing. Students will be required to complete a Direct Care Learning Contract, Direct Care Weekly Activity Log and an Executive Summary of the learning experience. Students are required to complete forty-eight (48) supervised hours in a direct patient care role during each practicum. Hours are met by interacting with clients, patients or residents.

Hours are not met by teaching nurses or nursing students. The student will utilize their nursing knowledge and skills in the assessment, planning, prioritization and evaluation specific to the needs of the given patient and/or population within the practicum setting.

The purpose of the direct care experience is for the student to develop mastery of patient care delivery skills, as well as system assessment and intervention skills (AACN, Master's Essentials).

**Examples of direct care activities/experiences:**

- Attending Individual, Family, Population Assessments
- Individual, Family, Population Care Planning
- Discharge Planning
- Quality Improvement
- Leading Group Therapy
- Direct Care activities at the advanced level

**Examples of direct care specialty areas:**

- Oncology Unit
- Wound Care Department
- Infection Control Department
- Transplant Unit
- Cardiac Rehab Outpatient Unit
- Sub-Acute Agency
- Public Health Agency
- Nurse-Managed Center
- Trauma Unit/OR
- PACU Unit
- Critical Care Unit
- Hospice or Palliative Care Unit or Agency
- Psychiatric Unity or Agency
- Outpatient Clinic or Urgent Care
- Primary Care

**For the Nursing Informatics Specialty Track:**

1. Designing/planning a project to develop web applications, completing a SWOT analysis of HIT issues with recommendations/plans to mitigate issues, identify issues with an EHR implementation, define gaps, develop work flow and create plan to resolve issues.
2. Uses analytical models and tools to facilitate assessments, identify risks to healthcare consumer health and safety or barriers to health and security.
3. Plan/develop ways to utilize HIT to measure, record and retrieve healthcare data, develop and implement reporting processes.

4. Create NI solutions for feedback and evaluation on effectiveness of educational content associated with EHR applications.
5. Evaluate HIT resources for accuracy, readability and comprehension, to assist staff and others who need access to quality health information by developing a repository for EBP related to NI and HIT.
6. Assess and develop processes to improve utilization of telemedicine and devices.

**For the Healthcare Policy Specialty Track:**

1. Creation and/or dissemination of state legislative items; bills or new legislation (e.g., changes in policy for reporting nurses that have been terminated from organizations needing to be reported to board of nursing).
2. Implementation of new processes related to patient care that cover broadly over all organizations caring for this type of patient (e.g., using a set of standing orders for palliative care patients that travel with them from acute care to chronic care and how to implement acceptance of these orders by outside facilities).
3. State emergency response policies (e.g., students work to create work flows and decision trees that coordinate all types of responders in a coordinated effort to help).
4. Lead/participate with community health assessment/improvement process, including identification of needs, planning, implementation and evaluation of action plans to address identified needs.
5. Analysis of population-level health data to determine health disparity, followed by program planning, implementation and evaluation to promote health equity.
6. Identification of health risks/needs experienced by a selected vulnerable population, along with planning, implementation and evaluation of strategies to reduce risk and improve health outcomes.
7. Design, implement and evaluate a quality improvement initiative to improve aggregate-level health outcomes to meet external benchmarks.
8. Create and implement a strategic plan to improve health outcomes for an identified patient population.

**For the Population Health Specialty Track:**

1. Lead/participate with community health assessment/improvement process, including identification of needs, planning, implementation and evaluation of action plans to address identified needs.
2. Analysis of population-level health data to determine health disparity, followed by program planning, implementation and evaluation to promote health equity.
3. Identification of health risks/needs experienced by a selected vulnerable population, along with planning, implementation and evaluation of strategies to reduce risk and improve health outcomes.
4. Design, implement and evaluate a quality improvement initiative to improve aggregate-level health outcomes to meet external benchmarks.
5. Create and implement a strategic plan to improve health outcomes for an identified patient population.

**For the Accelerated MSN CL Option:**

The mentor in the Accelerated CNL option should be a clinical leader at the point of care. Point of care can be defined as care to individuals and cohorts of patients anywhere healthcare is delivered. Specific point of care activities include but are not limited to 1. Clinical leadership for patient-care practices and delivery, including the design, coordination, and evaluation of care for individuals, families, groups, and populations; 2. Participation in identification and collection of care outcomes; 3. Accountability for evaluation and improvement of point-of-care outcomes, including the synthesis of data and other evidence to evaluate and achieve optimal outcomes; 4. Risk anticipation for individuals and cohorts of patients; 5. Lateral integration of care for individuals and cohorts of patients 6. Design and implementation of evidence-based practice(s); 7. Team leadership, management and collaboration with other health professional team members; 8. Information management or the use of information systems and technologies to improve healthcare outcomes; 9. Stewardship and leveraging of human, environmental, and material resources; and 10. Advocacy for patients, communities, and the health professional team. If a CNL is not able to be found, a Clinical Nurse Specialist can also be used. A masters prepared nurse that provides point of care services and is a nurse leader/manager is also acceptable. The master's prepared mentor must provide 300 of the 504 hours in an immersion experience providing focus areas listed above as of January 2024 enrollment. The master's prepared mentor must provide 300 of the 432 hours in an immersion experience providing focus areas listed above prior to January 2024 enrollment.







## Our Mission:

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






## THE MSN PRACTICUM TOOLKIT

### LITERATURE

-  Catalog
-  Viewbook
-  MSN Curriculum Grid
-  Academic Calendar

### FORMS & WORKSHEETS

-  Graduate Learning Agreement
-  Graduate Practicum Checklist
-  MSN Practicum Application Guide

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



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