

Medical Student Supervision Policy

Effective Date: August 1, 2021

Responsible Party: University of Alabama at Birmingham Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine Assistant Dean for Clinical Education

Contacts: [Winter Williams, MD](#), Assistant Dean for Clinical Education

POLICY ABSTRACT

The Medical Student Supervision Policy details the requirement and expectation for supervision, either direct or indirect, of all medical students on clinical services. Medical students should be delegated responsibility appropriate to their level of training and the relevant University of Alabama at Birmingham Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine course objectives, and all supervised activities must fall within the supervising health professional's scope of practice.

REASON FOR POLICY

This policy sets the expectation for all medical students on clinical services to be appropriately supervised and delegated responsibilities appropriate to student level of training. It also meets the requirements set forth by the Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME) accreditation requirements as follows:

Element 9.3: Clinical Supervision of Medical Students

“A medical school ensures that medical students in clinical learning situations involving patient care are appropriately supervised at all times in order to ensure patient and student safety, that the level of responsibility delegated to the student is appropriate to the student's level of training, and that the activities supervised are within the scope of practice of the supervising health professional.”

SCOPE

This policy applies to all UAB Heersink School of Medicine faculty and students and details the definition and expectation for medical student supervision.

POLICY

Medical students on clinical services at the Heersink School of Medicine must be supervised, either directly or indirectly, at all times. A supervising physician may be an attending physician with a faculty appointment, a community physician with a clinical or adjunct faculty appointment, a resident physician in an accredited ACGME program who is directly supervised by School of Medicine faculty attending physicians, or an advanced practice provider who is directly supervised by School of Medicine faculty attending physicians. Supervision is defined as direct when the supervisor is present in the same room as the learner providing them direction or oversight or immediately

available. Supervision is deemed indirect when the supervisor is available to the learner at the site of care to provide direct supervision or in the case of telemedicine, to join a telehealth visit to provide direct supervision. In both direct and indirect supervision, the supervisor is expected to take over patient care duties when necessary and with the expertise appropriate for the specific patient encounter.

Supervision of medical student activities by physicians and advanced practice providers must be within their respective scope of practice and the level of responsibility delegated to the student by the supervisor must be appropriate to the student's level of training. All supervisors are responsible for meeting the Heersink School of Medicine educational course objectives.

All medical students participating in clinical coursework must be assigned to Heersink School of Medicine faculty who have primary supervisory responsibility for their supervision. Clerkship directors are responsible for monitoring the quality of student supervision at all sites.

HISTORY

Policy Created: 2014

Last Approved: August 1, 2021 by UA System Office

Revised: March 24, 2025

University of Alabama at Birmingham Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine policies shall be reviewed periodically to determine whether revisions are appropriate to address the needs of the medical school community.