Near Peer Teaching Guide for Preceptors

Near Peer Teaching is an instructional method in which senior students temporarily assume the role of coach or instructor. It has been referred to as tiered or pyramidal or hierarchical learning.   This model assumes a high level of student independence and accountability for learning and patient care, and is frequently utilized in medical teaching teams. It encourages lifelong learning and fosters a culture of precepting. In this model, both students are completing clinical placements, and the primary focus is providing patient care. Junior students better identify with their senior peers as they share a familiarity with their place in the program. Senior students can fulfill precepting roles such as direct instruction, modeling, coaching and facilitating for junior students (Table 3). Senior learners solidify learning & develop additional skills by teaching peers.

When defining the Near Peer Teacher role, it is important to consider the senior learners previous experience and the complexity of the practice setting. If the senior learner is new to the area or early in the program, the role and expectations may need to be modified.
 When the senior learner is a UofA Pharm D student, the student
- does not assume the role of the primary preceptor.
- is not responsible to complete the junior student's performance assessment.
- is expected to contribute to the junior student learning experience and provide feedback under the attending primary preceptor's guidance.

Other programs such as Residency have 'precepting' as a required placement experience and have different expectations. Sites interested in having a Pharm D student as the 'primary preceptor' are encouraged to develop a 'precepting' specialty placement.

Activities that may be done with a group of students	Activities that should be done with an individual student
- Orientation & introduction to learning environment - Setting expectations for Near Peer Teaching - Learning activities such as patient discussion, therapeutic discussions, journal clubs, patient care presentations (Senior peers can lead these activities or mentor a junior peer to provide this activity) - Interprofessional experiences - Patient care rounds - Informal constructive feedback & peer feedback	- Review learning objectives, expectations (knowledge, patient care process development, supervision) - Review learning goals or plans - Formal assessment and evaluation

Keys for Success
Purposeful planning, organization, clear communication and setting expectations are key components of using this model successfully. Ensuring all students and the precepting team understand workflow and their roles is critical. Listed below are points to consider when planning your placement and setting expectations with your students.   Table 1 provides a sample role description for the junior learner, senior learner & preceptor.

Planning & Scheduling
- Identify appropriate co-located spaces for working and meeting with students (pharmacy/library, meeting room, patient care floor/area).
- Be aware of all learners' objectives. Identify & plan/schedule activities that support all learners (each student's placement schedule may vary).

- Schedule all presentations & assignments. Post a placement calendar that is updated regularly. Consider spacing different major learning activities or presentations about 10 days apart of a given learner. Student presentations can be scheduled on the same day to decrease administrative burden.
- Engage key stakeholders (students, other pharmacists or allied health professionals). Ensure team members understand the expectations of learners at different levels.

Orientation & Workflow
- During the initial placement orientation session, start a dialogue of the learner and teacher roles the students will have within the placement. As this model may be new to your students, you may need to provide reassurance through the initial days of the placement until students are comfortable with their roles. See Table 2 for a sample of what a typical workday.

Communicating Expectations
- Distinguish junior/senior learner & preceptor responsibilities and expectations for all levels of learners (See Table 3).
- Orient the student team to the value of learning together.
- Review expected format to provide feedback. Determine what peer learners will provide feedback on and how it is to be delivered. Preceptor should provide feedback on this task. (See student formative feedback form sample).
- Determine the workflow for each student (See Table 4). Early on, review all patient work ups together & transition to the model of senior students seeing or reviewing patients with junior peers prior to joint meeting with preceptor.
- Communicate the expectations for implementing care plans and documentation.
- Describe how to present a patient and the format for patient and therapeutic discussions i.e. alternate which student answers questions.

Additional Preceptor Responsibilities
- Prepare for common issues associated with multiple learners such as having a struggling learner, interpersonal conflicts, learners are competing for preceptor time.
- Establish the level of independence and plan for determining amount and level of supervision (direct or indirect). Consider your role as a preceptor and when to apply which role for each level of learner (i.e. direct instruction, modeling, coaching or facilitation (see Table 1) throughout the placement.
  - Distinguish checkpoints or milestones after which learners will be granted additional independence & responsibility in either the learner or preceptor role. Predetermine how to select patients & choose appropriate scenarios by balancing student competency, situation complexity & patient safety.
- Debrief throughout the placement & at the end to determine strengths and areas for improvement.

	Table 1: Roles & Responsibilities for a Near-Peer (NP) Teaching model (Sample)	
Pharm 315-2nd Yr	• Identify personal learning goals • Work-up patients and discuss with peer learners • Present patients and review care plans with senior learner daily • Provide defined aspects of care for assigned patients from admission through discharge with support • Assist with patient care (i.e. medication reconciliation, discharge medication counselling, drug information) for other patients, as assigned by preceptor or senior learner • Prepare for every topic discussion by reading guidelines, tertiary and primary literature. • Provide ongoing feedback to senior learner & preceptor about placement experience	
	Learner Role	Near Peer Teacher Role
Pharm 428-4th Year	• Identify personal learning goals • Work-up patients and discuss with peer learners • Review recommendations with senior learner /preceptor daily • Provide all aspects of care for all assigned patients on service from admission through discharge, with support • Prepare for every topic discussion • Provide ongoing feedback to Senior Learner & preceptor about placement experience • Attend rounds or meeting, learn from other patients on the service being followed by other learners	• Model, observe &/or coach patient interviews & assessments (history, interviews, chart review, med rec or teaching) • Coach the junior learner during patient assessments & care plans • Review patients with junior learner • Provide feedback on knowledge & skills
	Learner Role	Near Peer Teacher Role
Resident/Pharm D student	• Develop personal learning goals • Work-up patients • Review recommendations with preceptor before, during or after rounds, as determined by preceptor • Provide all aspects of care for all assigned patients on service from admission through discharge • Follow all patients assigned to junior learners in addition to own patient assignments throughout the duration of the rotation • Provide appropriate patient handover • Assist with patient care tasks for other patients, as assigned by preceptor • Prepare for every topic discussion • Provide ongoing feedback to attending pharmacist about placement experience	• Assist with orientation & clarifying expectations • Oversee daily junior learner activities (patient assignment, clinical work load) • Attend rounds or meetings with Junior learner • Model, observe, coach and/or debrief patient interviews, assessments & care plans with junior learners • Provide feedback to junior learner on knowledge & skills • Review patients with junior learners • Review & provide feedback on junior learner care plans & documentation • Lead teaching sessions, as determined • Review junior learner assignments such as journal club or case presentations
Preceptor	• Educate medical team on roles of Junior and Senior Learners • Determine where students will work & where meetings will occur • Determine patient assignment parameters & share strategy with senior learner (aim to transition this role) • Orient all learners to the placement including teaching style, objectives (learner specific) and expectations • Establish supervisory guidelines & reporting structure including milestones for structure change • Directly observe student team members provision of patient care activities when necessary • Discuss new admissions & existing patient issues with the student team daily • Review all junior and senior learner recommendations • Monitor teaching & mentoring done by senior learners • Be familiar with patients on assigned service to address questions from medical team (if required) • Be more hands on if the senior learner is absent • Provide ongoing feedback to all learners; review progress & workload making adjustments as required • Complete all student performance assessments with consideration of feedback from senior learners • Obtain and share feedback from patients, families, and other health care providers (indirect evaluation)	

Table 2: Sample Day Overview – based on Senior Learner's schedule

Early in placement
AM –   Preceptor assigns patients (i.e. by bed groupings on the unit, learning needs, or by level of complexity)   Preceptor reviews patients with student team prior to or during rounds or patient care meetings   Preceptor models clinical expectations and coaches student team as required   Students observe preceptor modeling various patient care activities.   Preceptor observes and coaches students doing pt interviews, assessments, IP collaboration   Senior/Junior students observe each other doing patient care activities and provide feedback to each other.
PM –   Junior and Senior learners meet to review their patients. Senior learner provides initial feedback/support during junior learner patient review.   Preceptor meets with each learner as needed individually to provide specific feedback and discuss expectations or assign responsibilities   Patient Care Discussion – all learners present to preceptor;   Clinical discussion lead by preceptor to model expectations for the placement
Later in placement (post assessment & validation of skills, knowledge & attitudes)
AM –   Senior Learner reviews the list & assigns patients as needed. All students work up their own patients before rounds or patient care meetings.   • 428 student works up patients & reviews with Senior Learner daily   • 315 student reviews patients & interviews the patient with 428 or Senior learner   • Senior Learner reviews patients with the preceptor as required   If the student team has demonstrated proficiency, students fulfill the pharmacist's role providing care for their patients with the preceptor functioning in the facilitator role   Preceptor is providing the level of supervision based on assessment of students' ability/confidence.
PM –   Students discuss patients as a student team & organize issues   Preceptor debriefs with PharmD student/resident and all students   Patient Care Discussion: lead by learners; supplemented & evaluated by preceptor &/or Senior learner   Students to review their Case Presentations, Journal Club, and Clinical Coffee with each other for feedback

Table 3: Preceptor Roles: Description & Implementation			
Preceptor Role & Type of Supervision	Description	Implementation	Comments
Direct Instruction Direct Supervision	Providing readings, lectures, discussions Refer students to relevant resources & check understanding	To teach and/or review foundational content required to perform a skill. (i.e.: performing BPMH, gathering medical history) Novice learners or beginning of a placement	Differs from classroom learning as preceptor can place responsibility for content on the student. Use to verify learning later in a placement
Modeling Direct Supervision	Demonstrating a process while thinking out loud	Used when learner has the appropriate background knowledge & is ready to begin learning to perform the skill	Student both observes behaviour & hears the thought process
Coaching Direct Supervision	Student performs the task while being observed & feedback is provided during the interaction. Student is encouraged to think out loud	Used when learner has knowledge & has observed the process. Fine tuning of a skill	Used until corrective feedback is not longer required Quality feedback is essential in this role Learner should be able to describe what to continue doing & how to improve
Facilitating Indirect Supervision	Learner performs the activity independently. The preceptor debriefs & is available if required	Learner has been coached Student & preceptor have confidence in ability	Preceptor can also use pre-brief to assess student's approach and preparedness

Student Formative Feedback Form

Name: **Observer:**   **Date:**

During what activity was the student observed??

Three things the student did well:
    1.

    2.

    3.

Three things on which the student can improve:
    1.

    2.

    3.

Additional Comments

☐ **Feedback discussed with the student**

Observer's Signature   **Student's Signature**