

Fieldwork in a Pandemic

Preceptor FAQ

Why should I be teaching/supervising in this new normal?

- **Contribute to the growth of the OT profession.** Reflect on your time with your own preceptors and how valuable that experience was.
- **Learn about the ways you practice more intentionally.**
- **Collaborate with the student.** Navigate the field together to apply new principles and practices.
- **Students can help us reflect on our own practice.** They are tech-savvy, in-tune with the latest and will ask questions to help critically appraise practice.

How do I encourage clients to accept students at this time?

- **Students are subject to the same privacy and confidentiality standards as the preceptors.** Data is encrypted, and the environment is conducive to maintaining privacy and confidentiality.
- **Students can be involved in as much or as little as the client is comfortable with.**
- **Students can help facilitate virtual meetings, allowing for flexibility.**
 - Access to services even if health is preventing in-person meeting
 - Change of meeting times to suit their needs
- **Students are interested in being part of a unique learning experience.**

How can I encourage my department to support student placements at this time?

- **Determine the limitations to having students (e.g. space, access to PPE, concern about transmission).**
 - Are you able to work with key individual(s) in the organization to come up with proposed solutions to these limitations?
- **If there are others participating in clinical learning, what lessons can be learned and/or how might their situation be similar to the OT students?**
- **Consider ways in which the students will be of value, how they will add to the organizational mission, or other staffing needs (including projects or program development work).**



What if my practice has moved to virtual care, how can I help my students make the most of their fieldwork?

- Coordinate between different time zones for work hours.
- Establish clear student learning objectives. Provide regular feedback on performance and consider tech options to facilitate on-the-spot observations.
- Encourage students to take control of their learning.



Plenty of remote learning opportunities to develop clinical skills:

- Following up with previously seen clients, and clients that may be lower priority on the wait list.
- Virtual shadowing of other team members.
- Development of resources for the practice or for clients.

What students say about virtual placements ...

- "This will be a unique learning opportunity and we can go into the workforce as stronger clinicians."
- "This will allow for flexibility in how I work and the hours I work."
- "I am hesitant about working in-person with clients, so virtual placements makes me feel safe."

How can I provide appropriate supervision if we are not in the same place? How can we have those "hallway conversations" in a virtual placement?

- Regular 1:1 meetings to develop rapport, address learning objectives, questions and concerns.
- Use multiple modalities for remote field instruction (email, text, video- and tele-conferencing)
- To simulate working alongside each other:
 - Running meetings in the background so questions/comments can be posed as they arise;
 - Simultaneous work opportunities through Google Drive or Microsoft Teams; and
 - Maintaining communication throughout the day through virtual means.

For more information:

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