



College of Osteopathic Medicine  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

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**Element 5.4: Patient Care Supervision**

- **5.4-1 Supporting Documentation**
  - Policies Addressing Student Supervision During the Provision of Patient Care – [link](#)

## 1. GENERAL

The supervising physician is responsible for patient care and safety. Aspects of patient care may be delegated to the student in a manner appropriate to the level of training, such as history taking and physical exam skills. Other activities require an appropriately licensed and credentialed clinician to provide in-person, direct supervision of medical student activities.

The definitions used in this policy are as follows:

- Supervision: The oversight and monitoring of medical student clinical activities by an attending physician or resident/fellow.
- Health Record Entries: The entering of any patient information into an electronic, paper, or other information system.
- Countersigning: A supervising clinician's attestation to the accuracy and validity of a document already signed by another person not authorized as an independent practitioner.
- Medical Procedure: A medical treatment or operations, including osteopathic manipulative medicine.
- Clinical Site: Any medical or health related facility at which a student will have contact with patients or others seeking medical care.
- Community Clinician Faculty: A COM credentialed clinician at clinical partner institution.

## 2. MEDICAL STUDENT SUPERVISION

2.1. Medical students require supervision by a clinician properly credentialed to oversee any activities in which the student engages in the care of patients. These activities can be under the supervision of appropriate SHSU-COM or community clinician faculty. Students are not permitted to provide care to patients outside of their clerkships or other SHSU-COM sanctioned educational opportunities.

2.2. All students shall display badges that easily identify their student status. Student shall also verbally identify themselves as students when interacting with others at all clinical sites, including patients, staff members, administrators and vendors. For purposes of clarity, students may identify themselves as "student doctor" or "medical student," but shall not use abbreviated titles that may not be understood by patients such as "MS3" or "OMS3." It is the responsibility of students to ensure the patient understands their role on the health care team as a student.

- 2.3. As trainees, medical students may only make entries into patient health records that are appropriate for their level and role. If permitted by clinical site policy, students may enter patient orders into the health record only with the permission of, and immediate supervision by the attending physician. Such orders shall be countersigned prior to completion. With the attending clinician's approval and consistent with the policies of the clinical site, the student may take patient histories, examine patients (using chaperones as appropriate) and enter findings into the health record. These entries shall be countersigned by the attending clinician. Additionally, entries into the medical record by students fulfill the requirement for documentation by the attending clinician when verified by the attending clinician.
- 2.4. Medical students may be supervised by attending physicians, residents, fellows, or advanced healthcare providers in training as permitted by the policy of the clinical site. Medical students are not permitted to perform medical procedures without direct in-person supervision by a professional credentialed to perform the procedure independently. The student is to ensure that the patient has had the procedure thoroughly explained to the patient's satisfaction, including possible risks and benefits, possible complications and untoward effects. Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) is a required curricular element. Skills in OMM shall be maintained during clinical rotations. Although the opportunity to provide supervised treatment of patients may at times be difficult to accomplish, structural exams shall be performed whenever appropriate.
- 2.5. Medical students shall not provide care or perform procedures beyond their personal capabilities. Care provided shall be based on knowledge, skill level, manual dexterity, understanding of possible consequences, and familiarity with the patient. Students shall always follow the policies and procedures of the clinical site in the care of patients.

**Procedure Title: Student Supervision**

**Corresponding Policy: SHSU-COM Student Supervision Policy  
COCA Standard/Element: COCA 5.4 - Patient Care Supervision**

**Effective: Upon granting of  
Pre-Accreditation Status  
Revised: April 12, 2023**

**Approved by CEC - April 14, 2023**

**Description:**

SHSU-COM students and residents engaged in patient care at SHSU operated facilities or as participants in SHSU affiliated training programs shall do so under the supervision of a licensed health care provider who has been credentialed to provide that scope of care. Visiting students and residents working in SHSU facilities or with SHSU employed faculty shall be similarly supervised.

Procedure Step/Task	Responsible Party
1. SHSU-COM students and residents engaged in patient care activities shall at all times be under the supervision of a licensed member of the clinical faculty who retains privileges for the scope of care being provided. Faculty or a similarly credentialed designee (associate, resident, fellow, or advanced healthcare provider with approved privileges) shall be immediately available in the facility where the activity is taking place. Students who have demonstrated competence to the faculty, may perform patient histories and physical examinations without immediate supervision if directed to do so by faculty.	SHSU-COM Clinical Faculty, Preceptors, Residents and Fellows (when present at clinical site).
2. SHSU-COM students may perform such additional tasks as may be directed by supervising faculty upon demonstrating competence to perform those tasks. In most instances, the provision of patient care shall require the immediate presence of a credentialed supervising provider who has ascertained the trainee's level of proficiency.	SHSU-COM Clinical Faculty, Preceptors, Residents and Fellows (when present at clinical site)
3. SHSU-COM shall assure distribution of this procedure to students, residents and faculty as part of the orientation plan for clinical training.	SHSU-COM Clinical Education
4. Students who fail to follow procedures for clinical supervision may be removed from patient care activities at the discretion of the dean or her/his designee pending a disciplinary review.	SHSU-COM Dean or Designee
5. Faculty who fail to observe supervision procedures shall be removed from participation in SHSU-COM training programs and may be further subject to disciplinary action.	SHSU-COM Dean