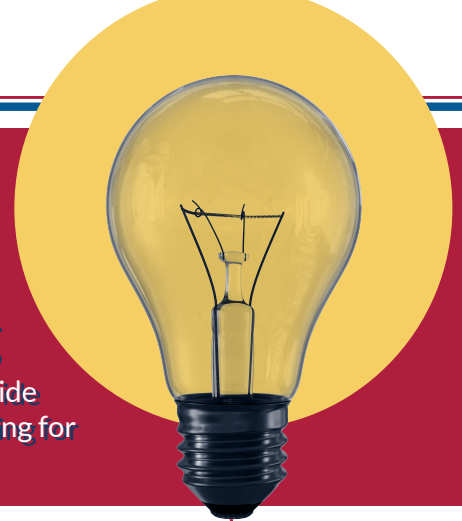


PRECEPTING 101:

A Quick Guide to Clinical Teaching

You've accepted the role, and now it's time to put it into practice. This guide highlights key responsibilities and the step-by-step flow of clinical teaching for the Nurse Practitioner (NP) preceptor.



PRECEPTOR ROLES

- **Educator:** Teach in real time and connect actions to evidence.
- **Coach:** Observe, question, and give specific feedback.
- **Role Model:** Demonstrate professionalism, empathy, and teamwork.
- **Evaluator:** Track competence and progress toward objectives.
- **Advocate:** Maintain safety, inclusivity, and support for learning.

PRECEPTING IN PRACTICE

Clinical teaching evolves as students gain experience. Move through each of the stages below as student readiness increases.

Stage 1: Direction Instruction



Build the foundation: explain, demonstrate, and think aloud to show your clinical reasoning and set clear expectations.

Stage 2: Modeling



Demonstrate best practices and decision-making in real time. Encourage observation and brief discussion during care.

Stage 3: Coaching



Guide student performance through observation and immediate feedback. Reinforce strengths and prompt reflection.

Stage 4: Facilitating

Support safe independence. Encourage sound judgment, self-assessment, and continued learning beyond the rotation.



PRACTICAL TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PRECEPTING EXPERIENCE



Set Expectations Early

Review objectives, workflow, and documentation standards on day one.



Promote Reflection

Ask what went well and what could be improved.



Give Frequent Feedback

Offer short, actionable comments after each encounter.



Start Small

Let the student observe first, then gradually increase responsibility.



Adjust Supervision

Match oversight to the student's growing competence.



Faculty Communication

Reach out early if challenges or concerns arise.

[Click Here to Check out AANP's Preceptor Website for More Information, Forms, & Resources!](#)



GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR STUDENT

- ✓ Confirm readiness and review rotation objectives.
- ✓ Discuss daily flow and expectations.
- ✓ Set shared learning goals.
- ✓ Decide how and when feedback will be given.
- ✓ Know your faculty contact and check-in schedule.

OVERCOMING COMMON PRECEPTING CHALLENGES

Even the most experienced preceptors encounter obstacles. These strategies can help maintain balance, effectiveness, and a positive learning environment.

Challenge	Strategy to Overcome Challenge
Limited Time for Teaching	Integrate teaching into clinical flow: narrate your reasoning during patient encounters (“thinking aloud”), have students summarize plans in real time, and use brief post-encounter debriefs instead of long sit-downs.
Varying Student Skill Levels	Gauge baseline skills early. Ask about prior experience and comfort levels, then adjust supervision intensity. More direction early on, more autonomy as competence grows.
Giving Difficult Feedback	Use the Ask-Tell-Ask or Feedback Sandwich model. Start with the student’s self-assessment, provide specific examples, and end with an actionable improvement plan. Focus on behaviors, not personality.
Student Disengagement or Overconfidence	Reconnect the student’s work to patient outcomes and professional accountability. Assign mini-goals that restore focus, such as “lead the next patient interview” or “find one new reference on this topic.”
Balancing Patient Care and Teaching	Prioritize patient safety and efficiency while giving students responsibility appropriate to their level. Encourage them to present concise assessments or handle defined portions of the visit.
Role Uncertainty	Clarify expectations early. Review rotation objectives and communicate your preferred workflow (e.g., how to present cases, when to ask questions, how to document, etc.). Early structure reduces confusion later.
Emotional or Professional Fatigue	Acknowledge that precepting adds to your workload. Schedule micro-reflection breaks, seek peer support, and celebrate small teaching wins. Your enthusiasm sets the tone for the rotation!

PRECEPTING FAQs

Do I need prior teaching experience?

No. Preceptors are chosen for their clinical expertise and professionalism, whereas teaching support is provided by the faculty team.

What if my schedule changes?

Notify the faculty as soon as possible so coverage or rescheduling can be arranged.

How do I evaluate my student?

Use the tools and forms provided by AANP or check with your affiliated school, incorporating examples of observed performance and progress over time.



Additional Questions? [Click Here to Check Out AANP's Preceptor Website!](#)