Students as Patient Volunteers

Roles and Responsibilities

Policy Contact(s)	Assistant Dean for Longitudinal Undergraduate Medical Education
Responsible	Office of Medical Education
Accountable	Office of Medical Education, Course Faculty, and Medical Students
Consulted	Office of Student Affairs, PCC
Informed	Office of Medical Education, Office of Student Affairs, Course Faculty, and Medical Students

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the policy is to identify consistent, specific considerations for students who volunteer as a standardized patient or for a clinical correlation discussion or presentation while enrolled in the MD program. The goal is to protect the interests of the student as both a learner and an active participant in the learning process for their peers.

The policy applies to all students enrolled in the MD program.

Policy and Procedures

Students may be asked to consent to serve as patient volunteers for teaching purposes in a supervised environment. Students must not act as patient volunteers for sensitive portions of the physical exam (e.g., breast, genital, rectal or pelvic exam) and are not expected to reveal personal information about themselves or their health. Students may express their own parameters under which they will volunteer (e.g., gender, body parts examined and exposed, specific exams excluded).

Students may also consent to volunteer their experience as a patient in a clinical correlation. Students may express to the supervising faculty member their own parameters and topic under which they will volunteer. This should be discussed with the supervising faculty members in advance of the session. Students are not expected to reveal personal or medical information that they wish to remain private.

Any information revealed or disclosed in such a setting is strictly confidential. These activities must not be recorded unless prior arrangements have been made between the course director, student(s) being recorded, and the Office of Student Affairs.

Students may have abnormal physical findings that could be revealed during these experiences. If this happens, students will be directed to their personal physicians. Functioning as a patient volunteer is optional and not an expectation of any course or clerkship. Students must not be coerced into volunteering, tacitly or explicitly. Students who decline to act as patient volunteers will not be penalized in any way. Students may withdraw consent to volunteer at any time, even while the
activity is in progress.

Exceptions

There are no known exceptions to this policy. Any exceptions would need to be approved by the Office of Medical Education.

Sanctions

Requiring a student to serve as a patient simulator without giving consent to assume that role will lead to disciplinary action against the faculty member. Students who violate the confidentiality of another student who volunteers as a patient or for a clinical correlation patient simulation can be referred to the Judicial Board for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from school.

Forms

Student Consent Form

History

Revised: July 2024
Approved: CCC, May 19, 2020