

MEDICAL STUDENT POLICY

Title: Medical Student Supervision and Level of Responsibility Policy	
Relevant LCME Element(s): 9.2 Faculty Appointments 9.3 Clinical Supervision of Medical Students	Last approved: 3/3/2021

I. **PURPOSE**

Define expected levels of supervision and responsibility of medical students on clerkships.

II. **PERSONS AFFECTED:**

Medical students, clerkship directors, clinical faculty

III. **POLICY STATEMENT**

Medical students may not provide care in an unsupervised fashion. Supervisors must either hold a faculty appointment or be supervised in their teaching and assessment role by an individual who has a faculty appointment. This may include residents, fellows, and other licensed health professional faculty supervising an activity within their scope of expertise or practice.

As defined below, students may be supervised at one of two broad levels: 1) Direct observation or 2) Immediately available indirect supervision.

Direct observation: The supervising physician is physically present (or continually on virtual telehealth visits) with the student and the patient.

Immediately available indirect supervision: The supervising physician is not physically (or continually on virtual telehealth visits) present with the student and the patient but is immediately available to provide direct supervision (or to join the telehealth visit) upon request, thus requiring that the supervising physician remain physically present within the hospital or other site of patient care.

Medical student education is progressively graduated in both experience and responsibility with primary attention to the benefit and safety of the patient. The level of responsibility delegated to a medical student should be appropriate to the student's level of training, the nature of a patient's condition, the complexity of care and the judgment of the supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for oversight and delineation of duties and graded responsibilities for care provided by the medical team. Students are responsible for being aware of their limitations, roles, and responsibilities and may not practice outside of that scope of service. Students who are asked to provide care outside of their scope of service should contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, the Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, the school's ombudsperson or their clerkship director if applicable.

This policy also applies to students on rural or global health rotations as outlined at <https://www.globalhealth.northwestern.edu/education/policies/TravelPolicies.html>.

IV. **REVISION HISTORY**

1/2/2020: Edited for clarity of language.

1/23/2021: Edited for clarity of language.

V. **APPROVING BODY:**

Curriculum Committee