



Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) Clinical Placement Guidelines

Preceptor Requirements:

PMHNP students are highly recommended to have at least one clinical rotation with an NP preceptor during their program of study. While this is not required and students can complete the entirety of their clinical hours with an MD/DO psychiatrist, this is strongly recommended to give you experience and familiarity with the role of an NP in the behavioral health setting. Additionally, an active clinical agreement with the preceptors' employer, a minimum of one year of clinical practice, and a license without restrictions, are required for preceptors to be approved.

The following providers can serve as a preceptor for the PMHNP specialty:

- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (PMHNPs)
- Psychiatrists (MDs or DOs)

The following providers are **not** approved as preceptors for the PMHNP specialty:

- Family Nurse Practitioners (FNPs) who work in a behavioral health setting
- Physician Assistants (PAs) who work in a behavioral health setting

Preferred clinical sites:

- Outpatient behavioral health settings.
- Inpatient behavioral health settings (for later semesters only and require Specialty Coordinator and Clinical Placement Coordinator approval).

Clinical Hours:

Clinical rotations can be completed in a multitude of settings. A total of 720 hours are required for the entirety of the program. Please see below for a breakdown of specifics by semester.

- Spring Semester - 180 hours
 - Students must complete their Spring Semester clinical rotation in an outpatient setting.
- Summer Semester - 180 hours
 - Students can begin to branch out into more acute settings, such as crisis response and inpatient behavioral health settings.
- Fall Semester - 360 hours
 - This semester is designed to be the student's clinical residency, so students should focus their rotations on their goals for employment post-graduation.

PMHNP Specialty Specific Clinical Requirements:

- **Pediatric Hour Requirement**
 - This specialty is an across the lifespan certification, so students are required to complete a minimum of 100 hours with pediatrics patients, who are individuals between the ages of 5 and 21.
 - Hours with geriatric patients are also strongly recommended, however, this is not a program requirement at this time.
- **Rotations Where a Student is Employed**
 - Students are not permitted to care for patients on a unit which they currently work.
- **Clinical Hours with a therapist or psychologist**
 - Students can complete a maximum of 90 hours for the program with a therapist or psychologist.
 - These hours will require Specialty Coordinator and Clinical Placement Coordinator approval.

- There must be an approved, primary preceptor at the clinical site who can oversee these hours.
- **Telehealth Clinical Hours**
 - Completing clinical hours via telehealth can be a viable option, however, these types of rotations will be evaluated on an individual student basis, and will require Specialty Coordinator and Clinical Placement Coordinator approval.
 - Items of consideration for these types of rotations include, but are not merely limited to, the best learning interests of the student, the platform being used, and the preceptor's qualifications.

Additional Clinical Placement Information:

- **Searching for a preceptor:**
 - Professional Networking
Join your local Nurse Practitioner organization to network with potential preceptors.
 - Ask physicians and coworkers you work with
Recommendations from providers and colleagues are a great way to not only find a preceptor, but to also network.
 - Ask family and friends who work in healthcare
Family and friends may often times be able to assist with names and contact information of potential preceptors if they work or have a background in healthcare.
- **One clinical site for all of your clinical hours:**
 - Students may stay at the same clinical site for all 720 clinical hours.
 - We strongly recommend being with multiple preceptors if you go this route as it will provide you more experiences and approaches from different thought processes.
- **Clinical sites per semester:**
 - Students are eligible to have a maximum of 3 clinical sites each semester.
 - The number of preceptors at each clinical site is mostly up to the student, however, an exorbitant number of preceptors will not be allowed to ensure students complete enough hours with each provider so a meaningful clinical evaluation can be submitted.

Collaborating with the Clinical Placement Coordinator:

- **Preceptor Information Form**
Collaborate with the Clinical Placement Coordinator (CPC) to identify a preceptor that meets all the preceptor requirements. The CPC may ask you to send a potential preceptor the [Preceptor Information Form](#). You can also find this link on the College of Nursing (CON) website under Resources\Student Resources\DNP Program\DNP Clinical Placements. Let the potential preceptor know that the form should take less than 5 minutes to complete, and that it will require a resume or CV to upload.

Contracts:

1. If your Clinical Placement Coordinator states that a contract will be required in order for you to complete a clinical rotation, students must submit a [Contract Request Form](#), or work directly with their Clinical Placement Coordinator to provide the necessary information.
2. Once your Clinical Placement Coordinator has received a Contract Request Form, or has all the necessary information about the site, and has a completed Preceptor Information Form, they will work directly with the clinical site in an attempt to execute an agreement for your rotation.
 - a. This is a confidential process between the clinical site, Clinical Placement Coordinator, and University of Arizona Health Sciences Contracting Department.
 - b. This process takes on average 60 – 90 days, however, it can take longer for larger healthcare organizations.
 - c. Unfortunately, just because the university and clinical site engage in discussions surrounding an agreement for student rotations, this does not in any way guarantee that a rotation will be possible.
 - d. If an agreement in your general geographic area cannot be established for your rotations, you may be required to travel for your rotations if you would like to stay on track with your proposed graduation date.

Tips for a Successful Clinical Placement Experience

CastleBranch

1. Keep CastleBranch updated.
2. You will be removed from your clinical rotation(s) if you do not maintain compliance with CastleBranch.
3. Enter the dates your immunizations/certifications will expire in your calendar so that this will not stop you from beginning or remaining at your clinical site throughout the year.
4. The Clinical Compliance Coordinators and Clinical Placement Coordinators will send frequent communication about your upcoming and currently expired items; however, it is the student's responsibility to ensure these requirements are compliant throughout their clinical year.

Track Your Placement Status

1. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all onboarding items have been completed and submitted to the clinical site.
2. Students must check in with their Clinical Placement Coordinator on the status of any business related to clinical placement in a timely matter.
3. It is preferred that students check in with their Clinical Placement Coordinator on a monthly basis from the start of the program.

Keep Communication Efficient

1. If you plan on working at multiple sites and having multiple preceptors, please include the information below when emailing your coordinator an update.
2. Try to keep the same thread for tracking purposes. Subject line should be the semester (Spring Placement, Summer Placement, Fall Placement).
3. Items to include in your email:
 - a. Site Name & Specific locations (if there are multiple locations)
 - b. Preceptor Name & Credentials
 - c. Number of hours you plan to work
 - d. Which semester these hours will be completed in

Monitor your clinical hours

1. You will have the ability to monitor your hours in EXXAT. Schedule bi-Monthly reminders to review your hours to ensure that you are on track to meet your goal.
2. Be proactive; let your Clinical Supervising Faculty (CSF) and your Clinical Placement Coordinator know when you are concerned about your hours as soon as possible.
3. An average of 11 hours per week during the Spring semester, 14 hours per week during the Summer semester, and 22 hours per week during the Fall semester, should keep you on track with completing program clinical hour requirements.
4. Extra hours each semester are strongly encouraged, however, these extra hours will not roll over to the next semester.