

Re-introduction of Nursing and Allied Health Learners

COVID-19 FAQs (Duke University Health System)

Duke is working on a **slow and measured re-introduction of learners** to the clinical environment to allow us to know what needs to be different in order for our patients, staff, and learners to remain safe. As we adjust to our “new” normal with the COVID-19 pandemic, we know there are many questions. The list below provides the responses to common questions. If you have additional questions, email clinicaleducation@duke.edu

When can I expect learners to return to my clinical area?

DUHS will be gradually returning learners for planned clinical experiences on June 1st. We have prioritized learners needing additional hours to meet graduation needs or to complete the requirements for the semester.

What does a “slow and measured” re-introduction mean?

With safety being the priority for our patients, staff and learners, along with our desire to continue to educate others, we are gradually bringing learners back to the clinical settings. Having smaller groups of learners will allow us to learn and adjust to the new norm. Learners are being re-introduced to the clinical areas based on area’s capacity to have learner’s onsite in phases.

- Phase 1: Learners needing clinical experiences to meet graduation requirements.
- Phase 2: Begins as early as June 1, 2020 for summer semester rotations from:
 - Duke School of Nursing, Watts and local community colleges pre-licensure nursing students
 - Nursing and Allied Health learners participating in a 1:1 preceptorship rotation

What restrictions will learners have while in the clinical setting?

Learners are restricted from participating in the care of COVID-19 patients and any patients on isolation, in order to conserve PPE.

Clinical rotations planned for what are now designated COVID-19 units are being reassigned.

There may be certain work areas or departments that are unable to accommodate learners at this time. In such cases, we will reassign the learner or clinical group to a different area.

What if I have concerns with the unit or clinical setting being able to accommodate a clinical rotation group?

There may be certain units or clinical settings that are unable to accommodate learners at this time. In such cases, we will attempt to reassign the clinical group to similar areas.

Who are the priority learners?

Graduate Level Learners requiring 1:1 clinical supervision in acute and ambulatory settings.

Allied Health roles which are specialized or of critical need for hiring, and involving 1:1 clinical supervision for training.

Selected Pre-licensure Nursing Learner Clinical Group Rotations

Will learners and/or faculty go through Duke Health's screening?

Yes, all learners and faculty will be screened as employees prior to entry to a building and will receive one facemask for the shift along with the specific daily colored dot. Learners, as well as staff, are encouraged to stay at home if they are sick even with mild symptoms.

Will learners be provided PPE?

Yes, learners and faculty will receive one facemask for the shift

What are the recommendations for social distancing in the clinical environment?



Learners should not gather in groups. This includes meals and post-conferences.

Post-conferences need to be conducted off-site or virtually.

All learners and faculty will be expected to minimize the spread of infection by following the DUHS guidelines for common areas such as shared spaces, eating in break rooms and similar situations.

- *Wear your mask at all times when not actively eating or drinking.*
- *Maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from others when possible.*
- *Clean your hands with soap and water before and after eating.*
- *Follow safe food handling practices.*
- *Limit the number of people at a table to maintain 6 feet of physical distance.*
- *Leave the break room or common area when you have finished eating.*
- *Limit the time spent unmasked while eating or drinking to 10 minutes.*
- *Clean shared surfaces and equipment frequently throughout the day.*

What are the strategies to promote social distancing on the unit?

Encourage strategies to promote social distancing of 6 feet apart, when possible, in the clinical area. Schools are encouraged to reduce the number of prelicensure nursing learners in clinical rotations. Consider spacing out the patient assignments to different halls or areas of the unit. If possible, have learners use computers in hallways or patient rooms to avoid crowding nursing stations. Talk with the Clinical Instructor for other measures being taken in your areas for maintaining social distancing. Schools have been provided the masking at work protocol.

What are other responsibilities for the clinical areas during this re-introduction to the clinical area?

- *Keep their student assignment sheets for a minimum of three weeks. [Student Assignment Template](#)*
- *Collaborate with the clinical instructor(s) to develop a plan for social distancing in the clinical setting.*
- *Limit learner's activities to their assigned patient, only.*

Who should learners contact if there is a suspected exposure?

Accidental exposures should be reported through the Employee Health Blood and Body Fluid Hotline at 919-684-8115

How many students does Duke traditionally have on the various campuses during a semester?

Traditionally we have around 1,000 learners per semester from all health professions, with the majority being nursing graduate and pre-licensure learners, on the various campuses

Where can I find other Duke COVID-19 resources?

Refer to the DUHS Covid-19 Management site at [Duke Coronavirus Response](#)

For any other questions, refer to the [DUHS Clinical Instructors resources](#); contact Melinda Loeffler, MSN, RN, Clinical Affiliations Clinical Nurse Educator at melinda.l.miller@duke.edu; or contact Margaret H. Sturdivant, MSN, RN, CPPS, Administrative Director for Patient Education and Clinical Affiliations at margaret.sturdivant@duke.edu