**University of Oxford Clinical Medical School**

**GENERAL PRACTICE PLACEMENT FOR FOURTH YEAR STUDENTS**

**Information for GP Tutors**

**How the GP placement fits into the Oxford course**

This General Practice placement occurs at the beginning of the fourth year of the Oxford medical course. It forms part of the “Patient & Doctor II Course”, which is an introductory programme where students have training in basic clinical skills. This includes history-taking, examination and carrying out practical procedures.

*Previous Clinical Experience*

The first three years of the Oxford degree focus on the biomedical sciences. During this time, students do have some early patient contact, as part of the “Patient Doctor I Course”. This involves eight afternoon sessions with a general practitioner, talking to selected patients with a range of conditions, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and depression. The aim of these conversations is to appreciate the impact of the patient’s illness on their lifestyle and wellbeing, rather than be a vehicle for learning formal clinical skills.

*Impact of Covid-19*

In “normal” times, students have a few weeks of face-to-face teaching before the GP placement, comprising basic clinical and communication skills. Because of the pandemic, in 2020 they will have had a one-week intensive online course covering these areas, as well as topical issues such as correct use of PPE. This will be delivered centrally by the Medical School, commencing on 7th September.

As clinical opportunities in practice will be more limited during the pandemic, the Primary Care Teaching Team have prepared several supplementary online teaching modules to further support students’ time in practice. Students should complete these modules over the two-week placement, in their “self-directed learning time” (which does not have to be at the practice and can be undertaken by students at home). The modules cover clinical skills relevant to Primary Care and the Primary Care MDT. Please see the “example timetable” document for more details.

**Aims of the GP placement**

**Students should (as far as possible, given current Covid-19 limitations):**

1 Gain understanding of the work of a GP

2 Experience the role of different members of the primary health care team (PHCT), e.g. district, practice and specialist nurses. Understand how the PHCT interacts and works together

3 Practise clinical skills, particularly history-taking

4 Gain experience of the spectrum of illness in the community, with exposure to both acute & chronic cases, including emergencies if possible

5 Interact with patients in a variety of ways, including telephone, video and face-to-face consultations

6 Consider the impact of social, emotional and environmental factors on a patient and their illness

**Teaching & Learning Tasks**

Each GP tutor will draw up a timetable (in advance) for the student to meet these objectives. The activities available will vary from practice to practice, but will include three main areas:

1. *Working with general practitioners:*

Students should sit in on consultations (telephone/video, or face-to-face if feasible) and observe other activities of GP work. This time will be more rewarding if the GP encourages the student to take an active part in the clinical encounters (e.g. by asking student to suggest questions in the history, getting student to interview and examine patients, asking their views on diagnosis and management).

*2. Working with other members of the primary health care team:*

It is essential that students spend time with other members of the practice team, e.g. practice nurses, community nurses, health visitors, midwives, management and reception staff. The aim should be for the team member to explain and/or demonstrate the role they play in the delivery of primary health care. It is important to be explicit with both your colleagues and the student about the aims of these sessions. This is the only opportunity in the Oxford medical course for students to gain such experience.

*3. Extended patient contact:*

The student will spend time interviewing a patient. Traditionally this has involved visiting a patient at home, but can also either be at the surgery or by telephone/video. The goal is for the student to take and write up the history (see below). They should gather biological, social and psychological details and be able to discuss the impact of the patient’s condition on their life. They should evaluate the role played by other health or care services. Ideally, they should interview other professionals (e.g. district nurses) involved with the patient, in order to compare the varying roles of the multi-disciplinary team. Students should discuss their findings with the GP tutor.

The GP tutor needs to identify a suitable patient in advance of the student placement, within the constraints of current working conditions.

**Assessment of Students:**

1. *Assessment by Tutor:* The GP tutor should write a brief online report on the attendance and participation of the student at the end of the attachment. This will be in the student’s e-portfolio. The tutor will be emailed an invitation or “ticket code” by the student - this gives access to the online form and enables the tutor to complete the report.
2. *Assessment by Primary Care Teaching Team:*The student must write up a report of their *Extended Patient Contact Case –* and submit this to Primary Care Department for assessment. Again, the submission is via the e-portfolio. Students will receive feedback on their report from the Teaching Team. The instructions given to the student for this report are reproduced below.

**Student Instructions for Writing the Extended Patient Contact Report**

Ensure patient details are anonymised by use of initials (e.g. “patient TH”). The report should be a maximum of 1500 words (minimum 1000) and cover the following four sections below. The deadline for submission of the report is two weeks after the last day of your GP placement.

**Section 1: Outline the case (150 - 250 words)**

Outline the case, including the relevant history of the problem. Students are encouraged to interview as many as possible of those involved in the patient’s care, to gain an understanding of their role(s).

**Section 2: Reflect on interactions of professionals involved   
(350 - 500 words)**

Discuss your personal reflections on the interactions of the wider multi-disciplinary team, and/or secondary care. Discuss how these impacted on the patient’s care, considering both good and less good interactions.

**Section 3: Discuss the impact of illness on the patient (350 - 500 words)**

Discuss the impact of their illness on the patient, from a social and psychological perspective. This should include how the illness affects their close relationships. Make suggestions about what could be done to improve the patient’s quality of life.

**Section 4: Formulate a plan for your future learning (150 - 250 words)**

Summarise how this case will affect your future approach to patients, considering the biopsychosocial perspective. Describe what has been learned about effective interactions within a multidisciplinary team. What further learning do you need to undertake and how will you do this?