Integrating the learner into a busy practice.

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5 Steps to integration

- Orient the student to your practice
- Encourage patient acceptance of the student and your role as a teacher
- Adapting your schedule
- Keeping the flow going
- Finding time to teach
If you are working harder than the student, there is a problem.
Orienting the learner

- Develop a checklist
- Include your staff
- Delegate responsibility to staff
- Review student information, or have student provide it (clerkships completed, interests, goals)
- Assign the student tasks to complete
- Schedule orientation when it is most achievable.
Patient acceptance

- Waiting or exam room notice
- Review your schedule ahead of time
  - Eliminate inappropriate patients
  - Pts with interesting physical findings
  - Pts who need a detailed or repeated exam (diabetic monofilament, MMSE)
  - Pts who need additional or detailed history taken
- Alert patient before encounter begins (front office/ nurse) that a student may be involved in their care
  - Written/posted notice
  - Verbal
Patient acceptance

- Use positive language
  - NOT “You don’t want to see a student today do you?”
  - “How would you like to be a teacher today”
  - “Dr. Smith’s medical student will be seeing you first to gather some history”

- Recognize and respect that not all pts want to be involved with teaching

- Consider having patients evaluate students
  - Friendliness, knowledge, interest in pt, listening

- Thank patients for their role in teaching
Scheduling

- **Number of pts**
  - Block out one or two appts for teaching/catch up time

- **Length of day**
  - Consider regular meeting schedules
  - Start early, order in lunch

- **Different kinds of appointments**
  - More walk in/Urgent care slots
  - Fewer full physicals
  - Out of office visits (home, NH visits)
Scheduling: alternative activities

“That’s an interesting question. Why don’t you look it up”

Have the student spend time with your office staff (billing, front office, lab, nursing)

Time with community agencies

Time with a partner

Time with a colleague (radiology, pathology, anesthesiology)
Scheduling: alternative activities

- Have the student accompany you to meetings or events
- Have the student make follow up phone calls to patients or colleagues
- Have the student do the legwork to get something done (get old records, schedule a referral)
- Develop patient ed materials
- Accompany a patient to get something done (xray)
Keeping the flow going

- Student doesn’t need to see every patient
- Student doesn’t need to see every patient independently (some observation is ok)
- Student doesn’t need to do everything on every patient they see
- Give the student time parameters ("you have 5 minutes to take a detailed family history")
Keeping the flow going

Use focused teaching techniques such as THE ONE MINUTE PRECEPTOR

- Get a commitment from the learner
- Probe for supportive evidence
- Reinforce what was correct
- Guidance about errors and omissions
- Teach a general principle
What to do when you get way behind

Slow learner:
- set time limits
- patient number limits
- give student time to prepare ahead (read the chart, look things up)
- go in and get them when you are ready
- Take away their pen and paper (or limit the size of the paper)
What to do when you are way behind

Badly scheduled day:

- Choose patients for student to see carefully
- Give the student fewer, but more in depth tasks
- Give the student alternate tasks to do, especially if they will help you get back on track
Finding time to teach

- Use THE ONE MINUTE PRECEPTOR
- Focus on one or two key points per patient
- Have student keep a small notebook of things to look up and discuss when there is a moment.
- Keep a folder or notebook of resources on the common topics that come up in your practice
Finding time to teach

Remember that everything you do and say models how to be a physician. You don’t have to be in “download mode” to teach.

Use “learning issues” to guide students to do more self-directed learning, and report back

Allow students to teach you
Summary

- Relax
- Enjoy
- Reflect
- Respect