

Tips for Finding Preceptors

Who to consider

- Consider your personal doctors.
- Look up doctors in your area in the phone book/internet.
- Ask friends or family who may have contacts.
- ***Students who have personal contacts are the most successful in finding a preceptor in a timely manner.***
- Check with your State Board of Nursing to see if there are any NP Groups in the state.
- Check to see if your state has an Area Health Education Center (AHEC) at: <http://www.nationalahec.org/student/>. If they do, they may have Health Professions Student Coordinators that may assist you in locating a site and/or preceptor.
- Consider approaching smaller, private sites. It is usually a much smoother and easier process to get a contract in place than it is with a larger healthcare system
- Check the Typhon system for preceptors that have been used in the past.

How to approach a potential preceptor

- If possible, visit the site in person.
- Introduce yourself to the office personnel (office manager), and if possible, the nurse practitioner, physician assistant and/or physician. If you can only get in touch with the office manager, ask if they can provide you with the email address of the provider.
- Ask if they would be interested in serving as a clinical preceptor and if they have a few minutes to discuss this possibility.
- Explain that you are a SJC NP student and provide some background information about yourself and the college. Have a one-page copy of your resume or CV with you to show them.
- Ask physician/practitioner about their practice and background.
- Explain how many hours each clinical course consists of. The clinical days should be determined by the site/preceptor needs and availability.
- Provide them with the Clinical Preceptor Packet which is available in your current course. Print this out prior to your visit and give to them so they can review. The packet includes the roles and responsibilities of the preceptor and student.
- Follow up with them in a few days (this can be done by phone).
- Never try to answer questions that you are unsure of the answer. If you are unsure of the answer to a question they ask, defer to the Nursing Operations Administrator or Coordinator of Graduate Nursing.

Contacting a preceptor by phone

If you have been referred by someone:

- Call and ask to speak to the nurse practitioner/physician.

- If you are unable to speak with the potential preceptor, leave a message to include referral information by (name of friend/family/acquaintance).
- For example: “_____ said you are an excellent practitioner and would be a good preceptor. I am a student in the MSN program at SJC studying to be a FNP. Would you be interested in being a preceptor during the fall/spring/summer semester? I could come in and talk to you (or I could send you some information) about our program and what you would be required to do.”

If you are calling a potential preceptor without a referral:

- Utilize the same information above, but instead of talking about being referred by someone, mention that you are from that area, or are planning to work in that area and wanted an opportunity to meet them/discuss the possibility of doing your clinical placement under them.

If you are having trouble connecting to the NP/physician:

- Please do not give up or take it personally if they do not respond right away.
- You may try asking for the office manager to leave your message if the practitioner has not responded or is not available.
- If possible, it is best to leave a message or voice mail for the practitioner.
- You can also ask for an email address.

***If the provider you contact is not interested or not available to be your preceptor, try asking them if they know of any provider who might be interested.**