

Observer Agreement

Welcome! We are glad that you are interested in observing the talented and committed professionals in a healthcare setting. The Southeast KY Area Health Education Center (SE AHEC) works to provide practical experience to recruit local students to healthcare professions. Because a healthcare setting is a carefully protected environment, it isn't always easy for a student (or a prospective student) to get to know what each professional does or how he or she interacts with other healthcare workers. The Southeast KY Area Health Education Center (SE AHEC) is pleased to be able to offer you such an opportunity.

The Observer's Role

The role of the observer is a passive one. You are invited to watch and to observe; and, when there's an appropriate opportunity, you are welcome to ask questions of the clinicians you come to watch. You are not given any direct patient care, or offer any patient or family teaching or advice. In addition, you are not to answer the unit's telephone, convey messages, or take verbal orders from physicians or any hospital personnel. Observers will not engage in any work activity nor will they be reimbursed. When you have been assigned to a unit, you should only stay on that unit. You may not go to another unit unless it is approved by a Southeast AHEC staff member.

Privacy

Every patient deserves privacy during interviews and evaluations. While the clinical staff has agreed to answer questions and help you learn; every patient has the right to refuse to be observed. Most patients are tolerant, but some may refuse to be observed and in those cases, the patient's wishes will be honored without question.

Confidentiality

While you are an observer, you will be expected to maintain the highest standard of confidentiality...that is, you must not discuss patient's names or their associated conditions or treatments outside of the hospital. Information in a patient's medical record and chart must be held in strictest confidence. You are responsible for adhering to these guidelines. You need to know that a breach of confidentiality may give rise to a private cause of action by a patient or his/her representative.

Before You Observe

At least two weeks before you want to observe, contact the AHEC office at (606) 487-0137 about scheduling an appointment. You will need to be scheduled both to observe, and to undergo an orientation to the hospital. Before your observation date, you will be expected to:

1. Sign the observer agreement
2. Fill out a data sheet
3. Provide proof of immunizations
 - basic series DPT
 - dT (depending on age)
 - basic series of Oral Polio virus
 - measles, mumps, rubella
4. Provide proof of current TB skin test (within one year)
5. Provide a driver's license (or picture id)

Orientation

For more than eight (8) hours of observation, the AHEC office will provide you with a brief orientation to the hospital, the policies and procedures that will apply during your visit. The AHEC office maintains a record of each scheduled observation.

On the day you are to observe

- Cover any of your cuts, scrapes, hangnails and rashes
- Eat a good, nutritious breakfast (This is not a frivolous request. It has been our experience that observers who have had no breakfast, or who have had an inadequate one are the observers most likely to faint in a clinical setting)
- Wash your hands with soap (And be sure to wash both before and after you have observed. The liquid soap in hospital restrooms contains an anti-bacterial agent)
- Be sure to **park in the lot on Roy Campbell Drive and ride the shuttle bus over to the ARH front entrance.**

Appropriate Dress

Student observers are to dress professionally and to maintain a neat, clean personal appearance. Jeans, shorts, belly shirts, tight t-shirts, sleeveless shirts/sweaters, or miniskirts are **NOT** to be worn. No open toed shoes are to be worn as well. Business casual is the accepted form of dress for all observers at the ARH Regional Medical Center. Do not wear scrubs or a lab coat. This is confusing for the patients, family members and others.

Name Badges

While you are in the hospital, the AHEC office will provide you with a name badge identifying you as an observer. You are required to wear the badge so that you will not be confused with hospital personnel.

Parking

Student Observers are asked to park in the lot on Roy Campbell Drive past the Hazard Fire Department. Observers need to ride the shuttle to the ARH Regional Medical Center front entrance. The hospital's administration is quite serious about restricting parking for patients and their families in other parking areas. We appreciate your cooperation in parking in this designated lot. If you have any questions on the location of this lot please call the AHEC office and we will give you directions.

After your paperwork is complete, you can begin your observation, please go to the AHEC Library office at the ARH Regional Medical Center. You will need to sign in. There is a log book that tells us you are in the hospital and that will help us locate you if an emergency arises. Before you leave the hospital, go back to the AHEC library to return your name badge and to sign out in the log book.

OBSERVER AGREEMENT

_____ has requested permission to spend time in the _____ department under the supervision of _____ to further his/her knowledge in that area. While the ARH Regional Medical Center is interested in providing learning opportunities, it must assure that an appropriate protocol is maintained for all hospital visitors and observers. To that end, the following understanding and agreement is set forth:

(1) The observer's role shall be limited of that of observer **ONLY**. The observer will **NOT** engage in any work activity nor will the observer be reimbursed by ARH Regional Medical Center for time spent in the hospital.

(2) The observer shall conform to all hospital departmental policies and procedures, and shall cooperate fully with the department head, supervisor, physician, or other hospital staff where observing.

(3) The observer understands that access to any and all patient medical records or other information shall be strictly limited to the purpose of the visit and must be within the scope of patient care. Observer agrees to hold any and all patient information acquired while in the ARH Regional Medical Center Complex strictly confidential. Observer is aware that **ANY** breach of confidentiality may give rise to a private cause of action by the patient or his/her representative.

(4) The observer has read and understood the material presented in the **Observer Agreement**, and agrees to follow the guidelines contained in it.

(5) The undersigned individual(s) agree to release and hold harmless the ARH Regional Medical Center and Appalachian Regional Healthcare, Inc. from any liability or accountability for any accident, illness or injury sustained during observational activities at the hospital from (date) _____ to (date) _____.

Student Signature Date

Hospital Official Signature Date

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

How many hours needed? _____

(If under 18 years of age)

Revised June 9, 2005