

Clinical Placement Guide for PNP-PC Students Outside the Middle TN Area

Welcome to the PNP-PC program at VUSN! VUSN is excited to work with you to secure clinical placement outside the Middle TN area. There are many advantages to placement outside of Middle TN such as staying in your hometown and/or making contacts in the area in which you hope to one day be employed. VUSN views clinical placement as a collaborative endeavor, and we are here to support you throughout the process of securing your site. Do not hesitate to contact Dr. Sharon Fleming, Dr. Jennifer Ridgway or Brooke Wilson (contact info at the end of this guide) with any questions or concerns.

PNP-PC students complete 2 clinical rotations:

Course	Start date	End date	Total hours	Days/week in clinical setting
NURS N7035	Early January	End of April	280	3-4
NURS N7085	Early May	End of July	350	4-5

Preceptors may be: (In Pediatric Outpatient Care Setting only)

- NP (PNP or FNP)
- MD
- DO
- PA

Clinical sites may be:

- Primary Care clinics
- Public Health Departments
- School Health Primary Care

We advise students to seek one clinical site at a time. We recommend switching sites each semester to get the best experience at a new site, but this isn't always possible due to availability. Occasionally a student is offered a hire after graduation and is asked to remain at a site both semesters. We will allow you to remain at site if they have more than one location, or if a preceptor agrees to precept you both semesters, or a different provider in the same practice agrees to precept you the second semester and it is meeting your educational needs. You may complete your total 630 clinical hours at the same approved group practice if approved by our placement faculty coordinator.

Prior to coming to Fall orientation we recommend you have your preceptor confirmed. If not, you should:

1. Think about personal contacts in your area. If you have not been working in healthcare, you can begin networking by asking friends and family members who their providers are, etc. Make a list of potential sites based on the list of sites used in the past (if applicable) and your connections in your chosen area.
2. Be sure you have an active, unencumbered RN license in the state where you intend to complete clinical prior to your preceptorship. Contact your state nursing board for specifics.

3. Assemble information including:
 - Preceptor recruitment packet including course objectives and updated student CV/resume/cover letter (see “Sample Preceptor Packet” online for more information)
 - Personalized script for phone calls or visits to offices

Action plan:

1. Begin calling offices; in most instances, the person you will want to talk to will be the office manager or administrator. Your objective for the phone call is to determine whether the office might be willing to take a student and if possible set up a time to meet the provider. The following is a script that you can personalize to your own needs according to the relationship you have with the office:

“Hello, my name is _____ and I am a nurse practitioner student from Vanderbilt University. (If you were referred by someone specific, you might address that here.) I am looking for clinical placement for _____ (e.g., Spring, 20--), and I have heard that this office could be a wonderful place to learn. Do any of your providers ever take students? Would there be a time that I could come by and introduce myself and provide you with some more specific information?” (Expect that that visit might work best with office flow first thing in the morning or right after lunch.)
2. When you visit the office, you should bring a folder with contents that include: course objectives/dates/hours, your CV, and a cover letter (see “Sample Preceptor Packet” online). You may also consider bringing some form of “goodies” for the office (if you do this, be sure it is labeled with your name or some other identifier so that folks know who it’s from). Dress professionally and wear your VUSN name tag. Be friendly to all office personnel. Introduce yourself to the Office Manager, and hopefully to any potential preceptors. When meeting preceptors, you might consider something like: “My name is _____, and I am a Pediatric Primary care NP student from Vanderbilt University. I have heard from _____ that you are a wonderful (NP/CNM/MD/DO/PA) and could be great to learn from.”

Other talking points for this conversation include:

- Ask provider about their clinical practice and background
- Discuss clinical needs/objectives (e.g., “I’m looking for clinical placement for 2-3 days/week from January through April.”)
- During conversations with both Office Manager and preceptors, you may want to mention that the contract is with the **site** and that you are open to splitting your time between multiple preceptors with one primary preceptor, if that would be a good fit for their office.
- It may also be useful to mention that you intend to stay in the local area after graduation.
- There are benefits to precepting, primarily that preceptors may be adjunct VUSN faculty which is accompanied by access to our digital library, workshops, etc.
- If you don’t know the answer to their question, tell them you or your faculty member will be happy to get back to them. If they have never been a preceptor before, let them know that your faculty will be happy to talk to them about the logistics of precepting.

3. Once an office says “yes,” you will gather information to upload it to our clinical placement portal (Exxat) with preceptors license number. This starts the process of the clinical contract. Clinical contracts with large health systems may take 3 months to secure. Contracts with independently owned/operated sites may be much quicker.
4. If you are having trouble finding a site, we are available to assist in any way that might be helpful. Email us a list of offices you have contacted, their contact info., result of the call and who you spoke to. Remember this is a team effort!

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Allow 48-72 hours for response due to clinic hours and academic responsibilities. Then feel free to contact us again.