AMBULATORY CARE INFORMATION FOR GP SUPERVISORS

Who are the students doing Ambulatory Care?
The students doing their Ambulatory Care (AC) term are in Year 2 of a four year, post graduate, Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree. Students come from a variety of educational backgrounds and many have biomedical or allied health experience.

What other tasks do the students undertake during this rotation?
During the AC term, students spend 4 single days in a General Practice, in addition to rostered shifts in an emergency department, a session at a rehabilitation facility and time in hospital outpatient clinics.

At what level are these students expected to perform?
The clinical focus in first year of the MD is on bioscience but students have had weekly clinical skills tutorials where they learn communication, medical interviewing and physical examination skills. At the end of first year they are confident with interviewing about simple symptoms and can perform key physical examinations. They will not have seen any abnormal signs.
In first year, students also spend two 3 hour sessions in a General Practice and meet with patients in small groups to learn about patient’s perspectives on illness and their health care experiences.
Year two is the first clinical year of the MD program. For students in the early AC rotations, April and May, this will be one of their first concentrated clinical experiences. This may be reflected in their applied clinical performance and interaction with patients. These students will require more supervision and guidance from the General Practitioner.
In the latter part of the year, students will have had more patient contact via the hospital setting and should have more advanced skills and be more confident with patients.

What is the purpose of the General Practice 4 days in their First Clinical Year
- To appreciate the place of primary health care setting in the context of the health care system
- To understand the diversity of health care provision within general practice
- To be exposed to and appreciate the amazing diversity of primary health care
- To be introduced to the role of the general practitioner

What activities can the students undertake while on rotation to my practice?
Students may be involved in any practice-based activities including sitting in with the GP, practice nurse, allied health and administration/reception. If the GP feels comfortable with the student(s), they may see patients independently for focused tasks such as taking a history or examination. Students will not be expected to counsel patient on results or devise a management plan.
Patient consent must always be obtained prior to any consultation involving medical students. The University recommends written consent for all patients having contact with students.
Learning activities during this term may include:

- **Interviewing a patient to ascertain: patients understanding of illness and its management, patient input into decisions about care and their experiences of the primary health care system**
  Activities may include:
  - Interviewing patients after observing a GP consultation to ascertain the patient understanding of the management plan
  - Interviewing patients about their experience of illness and their opinions about the health care system

- **Analysing examples of communication between the GP and hospital and/or specialist**
  Activities for students may include:
  - Observing phone calls between GP and specialists
  - Reading and reviewing referral letters between GP, specialists and/or hospital outpatient departments
  - Reviewing hospital discharge summaries
  - Involvement in the preparation of GP management plans and health assessments with GP or practice nursing staff
  - Discussing examples of good vs poor communication with the GP, including how this impacts on patient care

- **Determining how the GP mobilises a care team for a chronic illness or condition**
  Activities may include:
  - Finding out local resources the GP is using – private and public systems
  - Observing and understanding how the GP makes decisions about referrals to other providers
  - Spending time with allied health professionals and their patients – especially patients with chronic illnesses/diseases

- **Describing a “day in the life” of a general practice**
  Activities may include:
  - Taking a history and / or examining a patient under supervision
  - Observing a variety of clinical cases in the primary care setting
  - Spending time with practice nurses – giving immunisations, wound care, assisting in procedures, giving patient results, patient follow-up and recall procedures.
  - Spending time with reception/ practice managers – triaging patients, arranging appointments, understanding the basics of the medicare system
  - Learning where GPs obtain information and clinical guidelines for practice
  - Other practice activities – attending practice meetings, learning how GPs keep up-to-date