

## **ORIENTATION TO FIELDWORK SETTING**

"Student's arrival for the first day of fieldwork is more than a requirement; it is a MIRACLE... The student has left the safety and familiarity of the school environment and routine. Home life has undergone a significant disruption..." (Crist, 1993)

**The overall purpose of proving fieldwork students with a structured orientation is to:**

- BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE WORK ENVIRONMENT
- KNOW BASIC GROUND RULES OF THE FACILITY AND THE FIELDWORK
  - STAFF
- KNOW THE FIELDWORK SUPERVISOR'S EXPECTATIONS FOR THE STUDENT'S
  - PERFORMANCE

**In the Orientation, try to address each of the following:**

- Goals for the learning experience (OBJECTIVES)
- The setting (description of facility, philosophy, treatment approaches, OT service delivery, organizational structure, disciplines)
- Standard operating procedures (review of facility policies, including dress code, patient confidentiality; include documentation formats, evals)
- Oral and written communication guidelines
- Supervision expectations (include how often regular supervisory meetings will occur, how to initiate more supervision if needed; students should bring problem to sessions, be prepared to discuss observations and have pre-selected one approach in response)
- Safety procedures
- Introductions to essential team members
- Timelines, both for any assignments or deadlines of the facility, and for assignments the student may have to complete for a professor while at the fieldsite
- Specific learning opportunities (what they can and can not do)

While some level one fieldwork students may be able to deal with unstructured time during the fieldwork experience, most students need some degree of structured established for them, especially during the first three weeks of the fieldwork rotation. A good rule of thumb to follow is that probably no more than 20% of the time should be left unstructured in Level I.

Crist, P. (1993) "Issues in Fieldwork Education, Orientation Sets the Tone for Success in Fieldwork", *Advance for Occupational Therapists*, Dec.20, pg. 3

(\*Suggestions for orientation checklist)

Date presented to student: \_\_\_\_\_

(student places their initials on the line next to each number to indicate that this item has been presented to them)

### **Facility Orientation**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Type, philosophy, and purpose of facility
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Client census (diagnoses, ages, numbers/caseload)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Policies regarding safety precautions, reporting accidents and emergencies, fire procedures
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Introduction to key personnel and tour of facility
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Methods of communication with other disciplines or departments (conferences, team meetings, rounds, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Location and method for using client charts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Orientation to appropriate services (observing client in other treatment areas)

### **Department Orientation**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Physical layout - location of records, supplies, equipment
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Department organizational structure - lines of authority
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Objectives of services provided by OT (if present)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Method and types of records used
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Policies and procedures of department
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Discussion of referral system
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Discussion of types of treatment given
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Discussion of types of evaluation tools/tests used
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Discussion of amount and type of supervision given - who to refer questions to; time allocated to meet with supervisor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Discussion of role and responsibilities expected of student
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Schedule of special events - field trips, in-services, meetings

(\*adapted from Guide to Fieldwork Education Manual, AOTA, page 53)  
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