

**PHYSICAL THERAPIST STUDENT  
EVALUATION:  
  
CLINICAL EXPERIENCE  
AND  
CLINICAL INSTRUCTION**

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Department of Physical Therapy Education  
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## PREAMBLE

The purpose of developing this tool was in response to academic and clinical educators' requests to provide a voluntary, consistent and uniform approach for students to evaluate clinical education as well as the overall clinical experience. Questions included in this draft tool were derived from the many existing tools already in use by physical therapy programs for students to evaluate the quality of the clinical learning experience and clinical instructors (CIs), as well as academic preparation for the specific learning experience. The development of this tool was based on key assumptions for the purpose, need for, and intent of this tool. These key assumptions are described in detail below. This tool consists of two sections that can be used together or separately: Section 1-Physical therapist student assessment of the clinical experience and Section 2-Physical therapist student assessment of clinical instruction. Central to the development of this tool was an assumption that students should actively engage in their learning experiences by providing candid feedback, both formative and summative, about the learning experience and with summative feedback offered at both midterm and final evaluations. One of the benefits of completing Section 2 at midterm is to provide the CI and the student with an opportunity to modify the learning experience by making midcourse corrections.

### Key Assumptions

- The tool is intended to provide the student's assessment of the quality of the clinical learning experience and the quality of clinical instruction for the specific learning experience.
- The tool allows students to objectively comment on the quality and richness of the learning experience and to provide information that would be helpful to other students, adequacy of their preparation for the specific learning experience, and effectiveness of the clinical educator(s).
- The tool is formatted in Section 2 to allow student feedback to be provided to the CI(s) at both midterm and final evaluations. This will encourage students to share their learning needs and expectations during the clinical experience, thereby allowing for program modification on the part of the CI and the student.
- Sections 1 and 2 are to be returned to the academic program for review at the conclusion of the clinical experience. Section 1 may be made available to future students to acquaint them with the learning experiences at the clinical facility. Section 2 will remain confidential and the academic program will not share this information with other students.
- The tools meet the needs of the physical therapist (PT) and physical therapist assistant (PTA) academic and clinical communities and where appropriate, distinctions are made in the tools to reflect differences in PT scope of practice and PTA scope of work.
- The student evaluation tool should not serve as the sole entity for making judgments about the quality of the clinical learning experience. This tool should be considered as part of a systematic collection of data that might include reflective student journals, self-assessments provided by clinical education sites, Center Coordinators of Clinical Education (CCCEs), and CIs based on the Guidelines for Clinical Education, ongoing communications and site visits, student performance evaluations, student planning worksheets, Clinical Site Information Form (CSIF), program outcomes, and other sources of information.

### Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the collaborative effort between the Clinical Education Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Education Section and APTA's Education Department in completing this project. We are especially indebted to those individuals from the Clinical Education SIG who willingly volunteered their time to develop and refine these tools. Comments and feedback provided by academic and clinical faculty, clinical educators, and students on several draft versions of this document were instrumental in developing, shaping, and refining the tools. Our gratitude goes out to all of those individuals and groups who willingly gave their time and expertise to work toward a common voluntary PT and PTA Student Evaluation Tool of the Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction.

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## SECTION 1: PT STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Information found in Section 1 may be available to program faculty and students to familiarize them with the learning experiences at this clinical facility.

1. Name of Clinical Education Site Flex Plus FYZICAL Therapy and Balance Center

Address 251 West Central St City Natick State MA

2. Clinical Experience Number III

3. Specify the number of weeks for each applicable clinical experience/rotation.

Acute Care/Inpatient Hospital Facility       Private Practice  
 Ambulatory Care/Outpatient       Rehabilitation/Sub-acute Rehabilitation  
 ECF/Nursing Home/SNF       School/Preschool Program  
 Federal/State/County Health       Wellness/Prevention/Fitness Program  
 Industrial/Occupational Health Facility       Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Orientation

4. Did you receive information from the clinical facility prior to your arrival?       Yes       No

5. Did the on-site orientation provide you with an awareness of the information and resources that you would need for the experience?       Yes       No

6. What else could have been provided during the orientation? \_\_\_\_\_

### Patient/Client Management and the Practice Environment

**For questions 7, 8, and 9, use the following 4-point rating scale:**

1 = Never      2 = Rarely      3 = Occasionally      4 = Often

7. During this clinical experience, describe the frequency of time spent in each of the following areas. Rate all items in the shaded columns using the above 4-point scale.

Diversity Of Case Mix	Rating	Patient Lifespan	Rating	Continuum Of Care	Rating
Musculoskeletal	4	0-12 years	3	Critical care, ICU, Acute	1
Neuromuscular	3	13-21 years	4	SNF/ECF/Sub-acute	1
Cardiopulmonary	1	22-65 years	4	Rehabilitation	1
Integumentary	1	over 65 years	4	Ambulatory/Outpatient	4
Other (GI, GU, Renal, Metabolic, Endocrine)	2			Home Health/Hospice	1
				Wellness/Fitness/Industry	1

8. During this clinical experience, describe the frequency of time spent in providing the following components of care from the patient/client management model of the *Guide to Physical Therapist Practice*. Rate all items in the shaded columns using the above 4-point scale.

Components Of Care	Rating	Components Of Care	Rating
Examination		Diagnosis	4
• Screening	4	Prognosis	4
• History taking	4	Plan of Care	4
• Systems review	4	Interventions	4
• Tests and measures	4	Outcomes Assessment	4
Evaluation	4		

9. During this experience, how frequently did staff (ie, CI, CCCE, and clinicians) maintain an environment conducive to professional practice and growth? Rate all items in the shaded columns using the 4-point scale on page 4.

Environment	Rating
Providing a helpful and supportive attitude for your role as a PT student.	4
Providing effective role models for problem solving, communication, and teamwork.	4
Demonstrating high morale and harmonious working relationships.	4
Adhering to ethical codes and legal statutes and standards (eg, Medicare, HIPAA, informed consent, APTA Code of Ethics, etc).	4
Being sensitive to individual differences (ie, race, age, ethnicity, etc).	4
Using evidence to support clinical practice.	4
Being involved in professional development (eg, degree and non-degree continuing education, in-services, journal clubs, etc).	4
Being involved in district, state, regional, and/or national professional activities.	3

10. What suggestions, relative to the items in question #9, could you offer to improve the environment for professional practice and growth? This was a very supportive clinical and site. Each of the staff members at this site contributed to my growth as a clinician.

### Clinical Experience

11. Were there other students at this clinical facility during your clinical experience? (Check all that apply):

- Physical therapist students  
 Physical therapist assistant students  
 from other disciplines or service departments (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_)

12. Identify the ratio of students to CIs for your clinical experience:

- 1 student to 1 CI  
 1 student to greater than 1 CI  
 1 CI to greater than 1 student; Describe \_\_\_\_\_

13. How did the clinical supervision ratio in Question #12 influence your learning experience? My CI gave me as much of her time as I needed. She was always available for questions and I felt comfortable engaging in active discussions on my patient care. There were other physical therapists in the clinic I was also able to learn and exchange ideas with.

14. In addition to patient/client management, what other learning experiences did you participate in during this clinical experience? (Check all that apply)

- Attended in-services/educational programs  
 Presented an in-service  
 Attended special clinics  
 Attended team meetings/conferences/grand rounds  
 Directed and supervised physical therapist assistants and other support personnel  
 Observed surgery  
 Participated in administrative and business practice management  
 Participated in collaborative treatment with other disciplines to provide patient/client care (please specify disciplines) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Participated in opportunities to provide consultation  
 Participated in service learning  
 Participated in wellness/health promotion/screening programs  
 Performed systematic data collection as part of an investigative study  
 Other; Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

15. Please provide any logistical suggestions for this location that may be helpful to students in the future. Include costs, names of resources, housing, food, parking, etc. For this rotation I

commuted from home so I am unable to give any housing suggestions. There is plenty of free parking at this site and there is a subway and convenient store within walking distance. There are many other fast food options within driving distance. At the clinic there is a fridge/freezer, microwave and toaster oven.

Overall Summary Appraisal

16. Overall, how would you assess this clinical experience? (Check only one)
- Excellent clinical learning experience; would not hesitate to recommend this clinical education site to another student.
  - Time well spent; would recommend this clinical education site to another student.
  - Some good learning experiences; student program needs further development.
  - Student clinical education program is not adequately developed at this time.
17. What specific qualities or skills do you believe a physical therapist student should have to function successfully at this clinical education site? At this site there are a lot of post op patients and general orthopedic conditions. Having a good background in vestibular and TMD would also be helpful if you wanted to gain more experience in this area.
18. If, during this clinical education experience, you were exposed to content not included in your previous physical therapist academic preparation, describe those subject areas not addressed. For the most part, everything I encountered was something I had been exposed to during academic preparation. There were a few cases that involved more of a psychological pathology rather than a physical therapy problem (PTSD, Trichotillomania) but this was rare.
19. What suggestions would you offer to future physical therapist students to improve this clinical education experience? Having a strong background in vestibular PT or TMD is not required at this site but if this is something you are trying to pursue I would review material and be ready for it prior to coming to this site.
20. What do you believe were the strengths of your physical therapist academic preparation and/or coursework for *this clinical experience*? I was very comfortable finding the evidence needed to support my interventions. If there was ever something I wasn't sure of I knew exactly what resources could help.
21. What curricular suggestions do you have that would have prepared you better for *this clinical experience*? Differential diagnosis, more time spent on TMD and more time spent on treating concussion patients (There were several patients here being treated for orthopedic conditions who were injured from falls who benefited from neuro treatments as well).

## SECTION 2: PT STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF CLINICAL INSTRUCTION

Information found in this section is to be shared between the student and the clinical instructor(s) at midterm and final evaluations. Additional copies of Section 2 should be made when there are multiple CIs supervising the student. Information contained in Section 2 is confidential and will not be shared by the academic program with other students.

### Assessment of Clinical Instruction

22. Using the scale (1 - 5) below, rate how clinical instruction was provided during this clinical experience at both midterm and final evaluations (shaded columns).

1=*Strongly Disagree*    2=*Disagree*    3=*Neutral*    4=*Agree*    5=*Strongly Agree*

Provision of Clinical Instruction	Midterm	Final
The clinical instructor (CI) was familiar with the academic program's objectives and expectations for this experience.	5	5
The clinical education site had written objectives for this learning experience.	5	4
The clinical education site's objectives for this learning experience were clearly communicated.	5	5
There was an opportunity for student input into the objectives for this learning experience.	5	4
The CI provided constructive feedback on student performance.	5	5
The CI provided timely feedback on student performance.	5	5
The CI demonstrated skill in active listening.	5	5
The CI provided clear and concise communication.	5	5
The CI communicated in an open and non-threatening manner.	5	5
The CI taught in an interactive manner that encouraged problem solving.	5	5
There was a clear understanding to whom you were directly responsible and accountable.	5	5
The supervising CI was accessible when needed.	5	5
The CI clearly explained your student responsibilities.	5	5
The CI provided responsibilities that were within your scope of knowledge and skills.	5	5
The CI facilitated patient-therapist and therapist-student relationships.	5	5
Time was available with the CI to discuss patient/client management.	5	5
The CI served as a positive role model in physical therapy practice.	5	5
The CI skillfully used the clinical environment for planned and unplanned learning experiences.	5	5
The CI integrated knowledge of various learning styles into student clinical teaching.	5	5
The CI made the formal evaluation process constructive.	5	5
The CI encouraged the student to self-assess.	5	5

23. Was your CI'(s) evaluation of your level of performance in agreement with your self-assessment?

Midterm Evaluation     Yes  No    Final Evaluation     Yes  No

24. If there were inconsistencies, how were they discussed and managed?

Midterm Evaluation There were inconsistencies in the grading on the CPI, however our comments about each criteria were on the exact same page.

Final Evaluation No inconsistencies at the final evaluation.

25. What did your CI(s) do well to contribute to your learning?

Midterm Comments During the first half of my rotation my CI gave me the time needed to work up to a full case load gradually in order to solidify my skills in time management and performing evaluation techniques. Each week we discussed goals and my progress.

Final Comments During the last half of my clinical my CI was able to give me the space I needed to begin functioning more independently with a full caseload. My CI was always available for questions or concerns. Each week throughout the clinical experience we discussed goals and what needed to be improved.

26. What, if anything, could your CI(s) and/or other staff have done differently to contribute to your learning?

Midterm Comments Opportunity to perform more evaluations

Final Comments More discussion on alternative treatment strategies or differential diagnosis.

**Thank you for sharing and discussing candid feedback with your CI(s) so that any necessary midcourse corrections can be made to modify and further enhance your learning experience.**