



2025

# TEACHING MEDICINE IN ACTION

A Guide for GIMSPP Preceptors



**GIMSPP**  
General Internal Medicine  
Statewide Preceptorship Program

Texas Chapter  
of the ACP

# GIMSPP OVERVIEW

Texas currently faces a shortage of physicians – especially in primary care. The General Internal Medicine Statewide Preceptorship Program (GIMSPP) was founded in 1992 in an effort to curtail this trend. GIMSPP preceptorships are mentoring experiences in which a practicing internist volunteers to give personal training to a first- or second-year Texas medical student who is interested in learning more about the field of internal medicine. Together with physician mentors, students learn to build healthier communities through the practice of internal medicine.

Although the preceptorship experience differs for every student, the objectives are designed so that each student receives a well-rounded experience. The program's emphasis is to familiarize medical students with the operation of a clinical practice and allow them to experience the full range of activities in the life of a General Internist. Preceptorship exposes the student to many of your activities as a physician and member of the community. Although the central goal is student participation in the physician's office activities, participation in hospital rounds, meetings, and professional activities is encouraged. Everything you do is part of being an Internist!

This guide is an introduction to GIMSPP for preceptors. It is intended to provide a general overview of the program to implement a successful rotation. For detailed instruction and guidance on office-based teaching, the chapter recommends ACP's Teaching Medicine Series, a reliable resource for physicians interested in improving office-based teaching techniques while maintaining the efficiency of practice.

# PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

At the end of the program, the students should be able to:

1. Develop rapport with patients, develop history-taking skills
2. Conduct a physical examination and confirm findings
3. Recognize medical procedures and techniques performed by the preceptor and describe the common indications for these
4. Explain the rationale used in making a diagnosis and developing a management plan
5. Conduct a focused patient interview for a single complaint
6. Be familiar with single organ system examination
7. Understand the roles of allied health professionals in the practice and be familiar with their professional responsibilities and the procedures they perform
8. Be able to describe the basics of the business side of the practice (staffing, billing procedures, scheduling, record keeping, and personnel policies)
9. Be able to describe the potential benefits of participating in medical organizations in the professional role of a physician
10. Appreciate the role of the physician in the community and the importance of participating in community events.

# TEACHING METHODS

## Not all teaching styles are equal.

Not all teaching styles are equal. Some are better suited to certain tasks. Telling a student about the benefits of a drug is effective, but telling the student how to perform a pelvic exam does not necessarily prepare them to perform one. There are 3 common teaching styles you can use during the preceptorship.



- **Expert Style:** An expert style teacher speaks about a pre-assigned topic while the student takes notes and memorizes information.
- **Delegator Style:** Encourages autonomy in the student's learning process. The teacher explains what is expected, provides the necessary resources, and spends the remaining time acting as reference.
- **Facilitator Style:** Promotes understanding through discovery and works with the student to problem solve or accomplish a task.

## Example Teaching Techniques

- **Direct Instruction:** Teacher provides instruction or demonstrations without hands-on experience for the student.
  - **Example:** Tell the student how to hold a scope properly.
  - **Style:** Expert
- **Flipped Classroom:** In a flipped classroom, students watch online lectures, collaborate with other students or coworkers, or carry out research at home with the guidance of a mentor.
  - **Example:** Have the student research a topic related to a patient you saw together that day, have them give you a 10-minute presentation on it the following day.
  - **Style:** Delegator
- **Collaboration:** Teacher works with the student on activities to promote self-discovery and develop problem-solving skills.
  - **Example:** Guide the student as they perform a pelvic exam.
  - **Style:** Facilitator

# FEEDBACK AND EVALUATIONS

## Students commonly report they wish they received more feedback during the preceptorship

Feedback is an essential part of effective learning. It helps students understand the subject at hand and gives them clear guidance on how to improve. Students commonly report that they wish they received more feedback during their preceptorship. This manual provides a few characteristics of effective feedback and provides a few feedback methods for you to use.

Effective feedback needs to be unbiased and factual. To accomplish this, feedback should use I-Statements and needs to be specific, neutral, and timely. An I-Statement is a style of communication that focuses on the feelings or beliefs of the speaker rather than thoughts the speaker attributes to the recipient. When feedback is specific and neutral, it acts as a reflection of their action rather than an accusation. A feedback statement such as “You are always late. You have to be on time!” puts the recipient on the defense and will stop communication. The recipient will justify their actions (“It was raining and you know how Houston streets get!”) and the desired behavioral change won’t occur.

By framing feedback to include a neutral, specific observation of the behavior followed up with an I-Statement focusing on your perception, you are providing a chance for dialogue and are more likely to get your desired result. “I noticed you were more than 30 minutes late 3 times this week. To me, it appears you don’t realize the impact this has on your co-workers. Is that the case or is it something else?” This statement gives the student a specific, demonstrable fact presented in a neutral way, a reflection of the impact of their action, and an opportunity to discuss the behavior and address any underlying concerns. Combined, these create a powerful method of feedback that, when used with the techniques below, will help students improve quickly.

# EVALUATION METHODS

Still not sure how to provide feedback? Here are some types of feedback techniques to use:

## SITUATION – BEHAVIOR – IMPACT FEEDBACK

This tool allows the learner to reflect more on their actions and understand precisely what you are commenting on as well as what they need to change.

- **Example:** “During our 10:00am appointment, when you were explaining the medications to the patient, you were uncertain about the side effects the medication might have and why we were prescribing this specific one. I'm worried that this has affected the patient's confidence in the prescription.”

## WHAT WENT WELL, EVEN BETTER IF:

A technique starting with a praise and then room for improvement. This method works both for direct feedback to the student, and allows the student to evaluate their own performance. You can both write 1) what went well and 2) what would make the situation even better next time – then compare. This encourages self-reflection for the student and opens a space for discussion should there be any disagreements.

- **Example:** “When we were explaining the prescription to the patient, you explained potential side effects in a clear, confident, concise manner which was excellent. It would be even better if you could explain why we chose this medicine and spend a little more time on how it will interact with his other medications.”

**CONNECT  
MODEL\*1**

**C** – Commit to the relationship. Tell why you think this is worth doing and that you think the relationship is important enough to work on.

**O** – Optimize safety. Let the other person know that you will do your best not to put him on the defensive.

**N** – Narrow the discussion to one issue.

**N** – Neutralize defensiveness. Ask the person to let you know if you make them defensive.

**E** – Explain and echo each perspective. Tell what you notice and the effects that you perceive.

Have the person echo what you have said and then have them tell you their perspective.

**C** – Change one behavior each.

**T** – Track it. Pick a date to check back in with each other to see how things are going.

**5-WORD  
FEEDBACK**

Each person writes 5 words (2-3 positive, 2-3 negative) to describe the relationship or situation. Next, over the course of an informal meeting (lunch, off-site at a coffee shop), discuss each word to ensure you understand each other's perspective.



**ASK - TELL -  
ASK****Step 1: ASK**

- Ask for the student's self-assessment

**Step 2: TELL**

- Acknowledge and address the student's concerns
- State your own observations
- Provide feedback on at least one thing the student did well
- Address a maximum of two improvement areas
- Provide focused teaching

**Step 3: ASK**

- Check the student's understanding
- Discuss a plan for improvement with them





## PRO-TIPS:

- Focus the student on one area at a time. Work with them on data gathering, a specific examination, or presenting a differential diagnosis.
- Honor appointments. If you say you will discuss patients with your student at the end of the day, be sure to do so.
- When the student is given some direct patient care responsibilities, be educationally specific and time-limiting. For example, "Please go in and get as much history as you can in 10 minutes and then come out and present it to me."
- Listening as well as talking to the student is very important in the learning process. Learning can go both ways and you may occasionally learn something new from the student, or at least see something old in a new way. Try to make the student-teacher experience positive for both of you!
- Remember to expose the student to the management and administration of office practice. Patient scheduling, telephone interaction, record keeping, as well as information management, coding, and billing are important aspects of practice that students rarely have an opportunity to see.
- Having issues with your student? Contact the GIMSPP Manager! We are here to help!

# *OBJECTIVES*

# OBJECTIVE 1

**Subject:** Patient Visits

**Objective:** Develop rapport with patients, develop history-taking skills

1. Developing rapport with patients. Choose established patients who will consent to have a student present. Select patients with differing ages, ranging from adolescent to geriatric. Emphasize the need for using different greeting and interviewing mannerisms with each age group.
2. Prior to the patient visit:
  - a. Discuss relevant questions which should be asked and how they should be stated. Emphasize that history taking, too, is very important in setting the tone for examination of the patient.
  - b. Discuss with the student how to conduct the physical examination respectfully and explain the importance of the history and physical examination to the philosophy of Internal Medicine.
3. After student develops rapport with patient, permit student to proceed with history taking.

# OBJECTIVE 2

**Subject:** Patient Visits

**Objective:** Conduct a physical examination and confirm findings

1. Examination. With patient's permission, allow student to accompany you into the examining room during the physical exam.
2. Time permitting, allow student to view the area of the body that needs attention, such as sore throat.
3. Ask student to identify and describe the physical finding(s).
4. Outside of the patient room, ask the student to write out the physical exam maneuvers performed and to list the findings, stressing the importance of accurate and clear documentation.

# OBJECTIVE 3

**Subject:** Medical Procedures and Techniques

**Objective:** Recognize medical procedures and techniques performed by the preceptor and describe the common indications for these

1. Arrange for nurse to acquaint student with basic medical procedures that are conducted in the office, such as urine dip stick readings and glucose monitoring.
2. Allow student to observe procedures, such as endoscopy or skin biopsy, which may be performed in the office or an out-patient facility.
3. Assign reading. Recommend articles on widely used procedures for patients in your practice. (e.g.: coronary artery bypass, dialysis, colonoscopy, port placements etc.)
  - a. *General Recommendation: Short reading assignments should always be recommended when the physician is out of office or if patient does not give consent for student to be present during examination.*

# OBJECTIVE 4

**Subject:** Diagnosis/Treatment Plan/Clinical Decision Making

**Objective:** Explain the rationale used in making a diagnosis and developing a management plan

1. **Diagnosis.** Allow student to think through the necessary steps in making a diagnosis. Discuss with the student the pertinent information gathered from the patient during the medical interview and physical exam. Help the student sort through how the information contributes to developing a differential diagnosis or establishing the diagnosis.
2. **Treatment or management plan.** Using information from the differential diagnosis assist the student in forming a plan of care for the patient. This can be separated into three sections:
  - a. **Diagnostic:** If tests are going to be suggested, guide the student through a discussion of how the test will help to establish the diagnosis or will be used to monitor the patient. If time allows, consider the cost effectiveness of each test.
  - b. **Therapeutic:** With patient consent, let student observe any steps of the treatment that are performed in the office. When drugs are prescribed, briefly check the students familiarity with the medication/ drug class and discuss common indications / contraindications of the drug. Summarize the anticipated outcome of the prescribed treatment for the student. Encourage students to keep a notebook of medication encountered throughout the preceptorship.
  - c. **Patient Education:** Allow the student to observe your counseling of the patient and discuss the importance of patient understanding of care.

# OBJECTIVE 5

**Subject:** Interview (Single Complaint)

**Objective:** Conduct a focused patient interview for a single complaint

1. Allow student to independently conduct a focused encounter with a patient presenting with a single complaint (e.g.: sore throat). Ask student to complete the interview and then to organize the information into a short oral presentation. Allow the student to present the patient's story to you in the presence of the patient.
2. Discuss any additional information that is needed in the medical history.
3. Ask the student to identify the key physical examination maneuvers that will be helpful in establishing the diagnosis.

# OBJECTIVE 6

**Subject:** Physical Examination (Single Organ System)

**Objective:** To familiarize student with single organ system system, such as the heart. This activity should be completed as a follow-up to Objective 3.

1. While directly observing the student, ask them to conduct the physical examination of a single organ system or body area (eg: cardiovascular or abdomen).
2. Ask student to discuss their findings – confirm any abnormalities with the learner.
3. Have student confirm describe how the findings (positive or negative) contribute to the development of the differential diagnosis.



# OBJECTIVE 7

**Subject:** Health Care Professionals in the Practice

**Objective:** Understand the roles of allied health professionals in the practice and be familiar with their professional responsibilities and the procedures they perform

1. Acquaint medical student with the roles of other health care professionals who make up the health care team for your practice. The type and size of the practice influence the composition of the team, which may be made up of nurses, physician assistants, and medical assistants.
2. Arrange for interaction with all health care professionals in the practice.
3. Recommend that student observe procedures which nurses or medical assistants use in monitoring patient ailments, such as blood pressure check and glucose monitoring.
4. Schedule training with nurses or other office personnel regarding counseling patients on topics such as health maintenance and disease prevention.

# OBJECTIVE 8

**Subject:** Practice Management

**Objective:** Describe the basics of the business side of the practice (staffing, billing procedures, scheduling, record keeping, and personnel policies)

1. Arrange for office manager to introduce student to staff.  
Emphasize that each staff member has an important role, beginning with the receptionist whose telephone skills and scheduling procedures impact the daily schedule.
2. Schedule time for billing staff to give a brief explanation on Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, and managed care plan(s) billing.
3. Familiarize student with your record keeping system of patient files.
4. Give a brief summary of personnel policies.

# OBJECTIVE 9

**Subject:** Participation in Local, County, or State Medical Society/Medical Staff Meetings

**Objective:** To encourage medical student to participate in organized medicine activities at all levels.

1. Encourage medical student to participate in medical organizations activities at all levels.
  - a. Discuss the advantages of association membership at the state and national levels.
  - b. Discuss student involvement in student organizations at his/her medical school including the internal medicine student interest group encourage student to participate in Internal Medicine student interest groups and activities at the medical school where he or she is enrolled.
2. Issue an invitation to your medical staff meeting.
3. Invite student to accompany you to a local medicine meeting, such as an ACP meeting, a county medical society meeting, or other specialty society meeting.

# OBJECTIVE 10

**Subject:** Participation in Community Events

**Objective:** Appreciate the role of the physician in the community and the importance of participating in community events.

1. To make medical student aware of the role of the physician in the community and his or her contributions to the community.
  - a. Invite student to accompany you to any activities that are being sponsored by service-related organizations in which you hold memberships, serve on boards, or volunteer.
  - b. Encourage student to attend community functions in which you are participating, such as school board or Chamber of Commerce meetings. Invite student to accompany you to any activities that are being sponsored by service-related organizations in which you hold memberships, serve on boards, or volunteer.
2. Encourage student to attend community functions in which you are participating, such as school board or Chamber of Commerce meetings.

*The extent of participation in community events depends on the desires of physician and student*

*THE  
LEARNING  
CONTRACT*

# THE LEARNING CONTRACT

Each student has different interests, needs, skill levels and background. So, too, does each preceptor, who exposes the student not only to the preceptor's own talents, philosophies, and clinical skills but also to the unique demographics and characteristics of their patients, practice, and community.

To help bring all these traits and circumstances together and fashion a valuable, educational experience for both student and preceptor, many use a tool called a "learning contract" that is negotiated between student and preceptor early in the match.

## What is a Learning Contract?

The following Learning Contract outlines the student expectations for the preceptorship and serves as a guideline for the preceptor's final evaluation of the student's skills and potential according to specified performance goals.

Simply put, a performance goal is a statement of intent or purpose that sets out in observable and measurable terms the:

- ✓ Performance expected of the student and/or preceptor
- ✓ Conditions necessary to perform as expected
- ✓ Realistic criteria for successful completion of the goal (what, how, where and when)
- ✓ Outcomes for successful performance or consequences for not doing so

# DEVELOPING A LEARNING CONTRACT

**The Learning Contract is a guide and, if used, should be developed and agreed upon as early as possible in the preceptorship**

- On the first day of the preceptorship, the student should set out their goals for the preceptorship on the attached form. Ideas and strategies to accomplish the goals should also be listed. Student and preceptor should discuss the Program Objectives (listed in Section I) as well as the student's expectations and suggestions.
- Following that discussion, the preceptor should list three goals or areas on which he/she believes the student should focus during the ambulatory learning experience. Specific strategies to address these areas should be included.
- The preceptor should discuss these goals with the student.
- After negotiating and clarification, the student should write a summary of the goals and expectations of the preceptorship. Following one last review together, both the student and the preceptor should sign the contract.

# THE LEARNING CONTRACT

## Student Goals

List 3 academic goals for the preceptorship (example: develop history-taking skills)

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Personal Goals (Observe and model effective communication skills)

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List specific strategies you suggest for accomplishing these goals (perform history and physicals under supervision)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Preceptor Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student Signature**