



# THE CENTER FOR PATIENT PARTNERSHIPS

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MADISON

*A CENTER OF THE SCHOOLS OF LAW, MEDICINE & PUBLIC HEALTH, NURSING, AND PHARMACY*

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## **The Center for Patient Partnerships' Clinical Education Guidelines**

We seek to maximize the educational opportunities of students who desire to gain competency in health advocacy. These guidelines underscore our educational expectations and opportunities for students enrolling in our direct service advocacy clinical.

### **Learner-Directed Learning Opportunity**

From the day students begin our advocacy orientation, we provide an opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge needed to advocate effectively for clients and to incorporate a client-centered (patient-centered) advocacy approach into future practice. This experience will be different for every student. Some have had previous experience serving clients, but know little about the health care system. Others know the ins and outs of health insurance, but are wary of searching for a clinical trial. Through our advocacy program, students will learn how to identify their learning styles, craft their own learner plan, and acquire affective and cognitive skills necessary to become powerful advocates. Program teachers include Center faculty and staff, patients/clients, providers, community professionals, and fellow students.

In addition to direct client advocacy, all students engage in systemic advocacy during their direct service advocacy semesters to reinforce the importance of “case-to-cause thinking” and introduce system-level problem-solving concepts. Thus, students are provided an introduction to macro-level advocacy concepts relevant to group, community, legislative, or media/communication advocacy.

### **Two Semesters of Direct Service Advocacy**

Our program begins with an introduction to patients' perspectives on the health care system; one-on-one direct service advocacy enables students to tangibly experience the positives and negatives of health care delivery as experienced by health care consumers. We believe that two semesters of direct individual client advocacy is optimal time to steep students in this level of advocacy education. Two semesters allows students to see many advocacy interventions to fruition, and provides consistency to clients in crisis. It allows students to develop significant relationships with clients who are facing serious illness.

In contrast, one semester (12-15 weeks), if less than a fulltime commitment, is often too short to provide students with sufficient closure in a threshold of cases and to provide a breath of experiences. For example, “final decisions” regarding internal insurance appeals and social

security disability applications often require more time.

Some of our students, particularly future health care providers with overwhelming credit requirements, can only commit to one semester (or less) of advocacy education. In these cases where students demonstrate a keen desire to experience the health care system from patients' perspectives, and therefore limited advocacy education would be better than no education, we allow students to enroll for a single semester (of minimal credits) or craft an individualized educational plan. Through field placements and clerkship these health science students often spend fulltime at the Center for 8-15 weeks, and are able to have a significant experience in such a concentrated time. For information about field placement/clerkship opportunities, see <http://www.patientpartnerships.org/fieldExperience.php>.

Because there are exceptions to every guideline, we invite students to provide educational justification for continued direct service advocacy training, as described below. For example, if a student wishes to complete the Consumer Health Advocacy Certificate, and their future work will be primarily micro in focus, a third semester of direct service advocacy to fulfill the credit requirements of the certificate might be warranted.

### **Systemic Advocacy and Complementary Opportunities**

Students who wish to continue their advocacy education after two semesters of direct advocacy experience are encouraged to pursue the following opportunities:

- (1) **Complete the requirements for the Consumer Health Advocacy Certificate.** In addition to 6 credits of advocacy training (easily completed in two semesters), students take 3 credits in the health system, 3 credits in an elective (law, regulation, ethics, policy, management, public health, or economics) and complete a capstone paper to receive a graduate certificate in consumer health advocacy. For more information, see <http://www.patientpartnerships.org/certificate.php>
- (2) **Enroll in a systemic health advocacy experience, research or course** (via an identified graduate level course, directed research, field placement, or our advocacy clinical). Outside of identified courses, these opportunities will be individually crafted by student and supervisors and include the demonstration of learner goals through a learner plan. Systemic Advocacy experiences include –
  - (a) **Community Advocacy** – these experiences include advocacy in community-based settings, including at-risk communities, mobile medical clinics, health and benefits fairs, non-profit organizations, and other community events. It could also include providing advocacy education to various community group and organizations. Community Advocacy involves applied training in cultural competency and health literacy. It also includes coordination and outreach skills education.

- (b) **Media/Communication Advocacy** – Translating learning from individual cases into educational opportunities for consumers is one focus of communication advocacy. Another is to influence policy decision makers through powerful venues. A media experience could also entail identifying messages and engaging journalists to cover the story. Writing and policy analysis will be key to this systemic opportunity.
- (c) **Legislative Advocacy** – Work to make a bill become law. Identify a bill currently pending before the state legislature. Follow the bill, testifying for its passage at committee and legislative hearings. Produce patient-centered fact sheets, meet with law makers, coordinate with coalitions supporting the bill, and engage in any advocacy that will forward the legislation.

To learn about systemic advocacy in an existing course, we recommend you review the courses that meet elective criteria for the Consumer Health Advocacy Certificate (in the areas of law, regulation, and ethics, or policy, management, and public health.) See <http://www.patientpartnerships.org/certificate.php>. Since new courses are frequently developed, we also encourage you to review applicable timetables and discuss courses with Center supervisors.

- (3) **Justify continued direct service advocacy education.** In rare circumstances, students may be authorized to continue with a third (or more semesters) in micro-level advocacy. Such exceptions will require a student to demonstrate the need for additional one-on-one advocacy education and propose a compelling learner plan. For example, if a student wishes to complete the Consumer Health Advocacy Certificate, and their future work will be primarily micro in focus, a third semester of direct service advocacy to fulfill the credit requirements of the certificate might be warranted.
- (4) **Meet with Center Supervisors to discuss your general course of study and its relevance to future advocacy work.** The Center strives to be a resource for current students and alumni of our program. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with center staff/faculty to talk about how they plan to incorporate advocacy into career and life.