

Congratulations on passing your finals! Now you've got those out of the way, you can turn your attention to developing skills as interns rather than preparing for examinations. So, welcome to your PRINT term.

In PRINT, you will complete 2 three week periods, typically in medical and surgical departments. You will work alongside the very people who know most about the change that you are about to experience – junior postgraduate doctors: interns (PGY1) and RMOs (PGY2). You will need to work closely with these soon-to-be colleagues, taking on part of their work, but also relying on them for assistance, guidance and to complete and sign-off on various paperwork.

The PRINT term completes your transition from medical student to doctor. Very soon you will be an intern on the wards and whilst you will still be supported by your senior colleagues, the responsibility level expected of you will increase considerably. Take the opportunity that the PRINT term presents to learn about those new responsibilities. Make sure you are comfortable with the common practical skills that you will need on your first day as an intern. Consider some of the issues that will be in your remit from day 1 as an intern (which you may not have even heard of or thought about as a student). Finally, but importantly, *enjoy* your last teaching period as a student!

Broad expectations of PRINT

You are not expected to demonstrate proficiency as an intern. PRINT is a *learning* experience and you are still students so use this as an opportunity for feedback to prepare yourself for internship.

PRINT is still part of the medical program and you are expected to attend and meet the responsibilities that your supervisor expects of you. Supervisors have been asked to notify the clinical school early if a student is not attending. Be aware that any absences must be notified to your supervisor and, if applicable, have prior approval from senior staff in the clinical unit.

You should meet with your supervisor early in the term so as you are clear about the expectations that they have of you. It is essential that you are given responsibility for the care of some patients. There needs to be a clear understanding of which patients are assigned to you.

Your supervisors will provide feedback to you if they believe you are not fulfilling your responsibilities. Students who continue to show an unwillingness to engage with the clinical service will be notified to the clinical school.

Students who fail to meet these expectations will fail PRINT.

PRINT skills

This document provides information to indicate what skills you should aim to develop. However, it should not be seen as a checklist and nor is it exhaustive.

These skills have been broken down into three areas:

- Professional or work-related skills
- Procedural skills
- Clinical skills

The latter two skill sets are likely to be areas with which you have most familiarity to date. PRINT now provides an opportunity for you to tackle some of the other issues that may have escaped your attention until now.

You should actively seek feedback from the intern/RMO/registrar and consultants about how you completed specific tasks. The emphasis should be on your skills not your knowledge - *how could I have done this better?*

Professional/work-related skills

You can only develop work-related skills if you work in the role as an intern. Make sure that there is a clear understanding between you and the intern/RMO which patients you will manage. You should aim to clarify the expectations that your PRINT term supervisor and other members of the team have of you, using this document to guide you.

There may be 5th year students also allocated to clinical units at the same time as you. The expectations of these students are quite different from the expectations we have of you. Make sure that your supervisor and team are aware that you are a PRINT student.

Care of assigned patients

You should aim to fulfill the same responsibilities as the intern/RMO for your assigned patients. Understandably you will need the support and supervision of the intern/RMO but it is essential that you are responsible and you do not simply observe the intern/RMO.

Your responsibilities should include:

- Admitting and reviewing, on a daily basis, the patients that have been assigned to you.
- Being prepared to report on your patients during ward rounds and recording the outcome of patient reviews.
- Writing up medication charts and IV fluid orders (to be signed off by intern/RMO or other team member). See Appendix for information about the NPS training module on prescribing.

- Ordering and arranging for investigations (to be signed off by intern/RMO or other team member).
- Writing discharge summaries (to be countersigned by intern/RMO or other team member) and contacting GP's where appropriate.
- Discussing patient issues with family members where appropriate.
- Performing procedures under supervision.

You need to learn what is required of you before you sign-off for the day:

- Have all high-priority tasks been completed?
- Have you reviewed and acted on the day's pathology and radiology results?
- Have any new problems emerged during the day? (check with the nursing staff)
- Are IV orders sufficient to cover the night?
- Have variable dose orders for the night been prescribed?

You may be required to hand-over to night staff:

- Does a patient need to be reviewed during the night?
- Are there any outstanding pathology/radiology results to be checked?

Working as part of a team

You are expected to be one of the team, with an emphasis on the fact that you soon will be! Ensure that the Nursing Unit Manager, nursing staff and all allied health staff know who you are. Your supervisor will be seeking feedback on your performance from other staff during the PRIN term.

You should already understand the roles and contributions of different members of a clinical team. Now you need to develop skills in communicating and working with them. Listen to how staff communicate their concern about a patient's condition, communicate the need for urgency, delegate tasks, and repeat back an instruction to ensure that it is clearly understood.

You are also expected to participate in the department's activities such as departmental meetings, Xray and pathology meetings.

Developing good work practices

One of the major challenges for new interns is developing good work practices which ensures that they efficiently complete their tasks. Your experiences with feedback from team members should assist you in

- prioritising your tasks
- working efficiently and productively with other team members

- understanding your limits and practicing safely
- dealing with stress and conflict

There may also be opportunities for you to become familiar with other issues which may arise as an intern. You will not be expected to deal with these directly in PRINT but you should learn from the experience:

- Dealing with the death of a patient.
- Dealing with medical error.
- Dealing with difficult patients/relatives.
- Dealing with needlestick injuries and other occupational risks.

In addition to your daily responsibilities, you should also take the opportunity to experience work as an intern after-hours. Your supervisor may expect this of you. It would be preferable for you to stay after-hours at the same time as your PGY colleague with whom you should have a good working relationship.

Procedural skills

During your time as a medical student you should have had the opportunity to develop various practical skills on mannequins. Now, at the end of your training, you should be practicing these skills on patients under the supervision of your PGY colleague or another member of the team.

Ensure that you can comfortably perform basic procedures such as:

Venesection – also get familiar with the various tubes and forms required for different pathology tests. This will vary with each hospital and will be covered again in hospital orientations.

IV cannulation and setting up IV fluids/transfusion

Gown/glove/drape – and setting up a clean field with aseptic technique

Other procedures that it will be useful for you to practice under the close supervision of team members:

Urinary catheterisation – male and female

Placement of a nasogastric tube

Arterial puncture – taking an arterial blood gas sample

Simple suturing – and the removal of sutures

Clinical Skills

As you manage your patients, you should also seek to *improve* your knowledge. In particular:

- The immediate assessment and management of acute problems in hospitalised patients – you will be required to do this, especially after-hours. Be able to recognise conditions meeting the MET (Medical Emergency Team) criteria.
- Interpret test results, such as imaging and pathology, and form a view of their implications before discussing.
- Review the possible adverse effects and interactions of drugs that you are prescribing. In particular, as an intern, you will be responsible for prescribing sedatives and analgesics – ensure you are familiar with how these drugs should be used.
- Go and see any tests and procedures you have not already seen (you may be the one explaining these to patients and relatives next year).

Coursework

A series of case-method tutorials has been developed for PRINT in order to provide opportunities for you to explore some of the common clinical and work-related issues that you will encounter as interns. There will be a weekly tutorial except for the final week. The tutorials will cover common medical and surgical problems. Each tutorial will be approximately 2 hours duration. Attendance at the tutorials is compulsory and students failing to attend may fail the term.

You will be given a case description and pre-reading material prior to the tutorial. It is essential that you come to the tutorial prepared to discuss the case. The style of the tutorial will be very interactive and unprepared students will be readily identified.

Your clinical school may also provide some additional coursework.

Assessment

There will be no formal examination of PRINT.

You may fail PRINT because of

- Poor attendance in the clinical service or in the case-method tutorials.
- Failure to fulfill expectations of clinical service.

If you fail PRINT you will be required to repeat another clinical term. This will occur following completion of PRINT and prior to commencing internship (i.e. no holidays before the real work starts!).