

**HOMERTON COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,  
SCHOOL OF HEALTH STUDIES**



**SECTION ONE  
TEACHING LEARNERS IN CLINICAL PRACTICE**

**UNIT 4  
MENTORSHIP AND  
PRECEPTORSHIP**

**A SELF STUDY RESOURCE PACK SUITABLE FOR  
ENGLISH NATIONAL BOARD AWARD 997 AND 998  
EDUCATIONAL STUDIES FOR THE ENB HIGHER AWARD  
AND RELATED PROGRAMMES**

## **UNIT 4 - MENTORSHIP AND PRECEPTORSHIP**

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Sample page

## MENTORSHIP AND PRECEPTORSHIP

### AIM OF THIS UNIT

To analyse the role function of the mentor and preceptor.

### OBJECTIVES

To enable you to develop facilitation skills which encompass the roles of mentor and preceptor and evaluate personal effectiveness.

In this unit we:

- Explore the responsibilities involved in undertaking the role of the Mentor and Preceptor, especially in terms of your own work
- Enable you to distinguish between the terms Mentor and Preceptor
- Enable you to identify what is required of you for effective Preceptorship

### *MENTOR/PRECEPTOR - WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?*

*The student should be encouraged to choose a mentor and may relate to more than one during the programme according to individual need. "A **mentor** is an appropriately qualified and experienced first level nurse/midwife/health visitor who, by example and facilitation, guides, assists and supports the student in learning new skills, adopting new behaviour and acquiring new attitudes. An individual must not function as a mentor and an assessor to the same student during the same placement".*

(ENB (1995))

*"Consideration of the term 'mentor' led to the conclusion that it is not a role which can be imposed and that a student will select an individual in whom trust can be placed and with whom rapport is established. The person chosen may not be present in all the practice placements in which the student gains experience. Some students may select a mentor in each placement; others may select one individual to whom they can relate throughout the entire programme."*

(ENB (1995))

## Teaching Learners in Clinical Practice

The preceptor concept was introduced in the UKCC PREP Practice Project consultation document (UKCC 1990) as a period of support (about four months) for **newly registered practitioners** to consolidate the competencies of learning outcomes achieved at registration.

The UKCC (1993) states that:

*“the **preceptor** should be a first level nurse who has at least 12 months experience within the same or associated clinical field as the practitioner requiring support. The preceptor should be seen as guide and supporter and as a colleague who can act as a valuable source of help both professionally and personally.”*

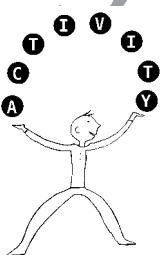
The council stressed the need for preceptors to be prepared for their role.

### *WHY MENTORS?*

All students need a system of quality support in the various work settings in which they will gain experience.

Mentors play a key role in supporting the student and helping them to learn from the work environment. The main purpose of mentoring is to assist with the student's learning and development, and to help them integrate into the world of health care, in a way which benefits the student, the health care sector and the patient/client.

Since this role is so important, mentors will be appropriately qualified and experienced professionals. It is expected that the mentor's professional knowledge base is already sufficiently secure and that the mentor has a general awareness and understanding of the rationale and structure of the particular course on which the student is embarked.



guide time  
15 mins

List the various benefits which you can think of for yourself, your student and your service arising out of the use of mentors.

Use a separate worksheet of your own for this.

You can check your lists with those we have produced when you have finished.

### *WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU, THE MENTOR?*

The benefits for the professional carer in becoming a mentor are numerous. They include:

- Mentors have additional qualities which add a completely new dimension to their work.
- Increased professional satisfaction. This comes from helping someone else to grow and develop.
- Increased participation in the organisation. It helps them to feel more a part of the service.
- Involvement in the education process. Because they are a key part of that process, their influence will have an impact.
- They learn a lot from it. They will be able to update and increase their learning from contact with others.
- It often leads them to go on and develop other skills which prove beneficial for future roles.

### *WHAT'S IN IT FOR THE STUDENT?*

Students who have had mentors (properly proficient and sympathetic!) would not have done without them.

They identified the following benefits:

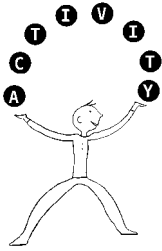
- Their personal growth and individual learning was increased
- They got to know the ropes more quickly
- There was a greater sense of direction to their learning
- The motivation to learn was increased
- Learning took place more efficiently and effectively
- Where learning involved elements of risk, there was less anxiety and more security about decision making.
- There was a greater sense of belonging and integrating into an organisation

### *MENTORING - WHAT'S INVOLVED?*

Mentoring is defined by some as the giving of support, assistance and guidance to a student in learning new skills, adopting new behaviours and acquiring new attitudes.

So a mentor in these programmes may be considered as someone (who is appropriately qualified) to whom a student can turn for advice and guidance about their learning and development. In effect, the mentor will act as a friend, supporter and facilitator.

Teaching Learners in Clinical Practice



guide time  
15 mins

To clarify your thinking, look at the list and pick out those items you think are **central to the role** of a mentor.

You may want to distinguish between things which are particularly important *to the student*, those which appear to be particularly important *to the care sector* generally, and those which are *not really important* at this stage.

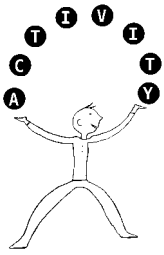
Mentorship in Care is about	Important to Student	Important to Service	Not Important
Assisting individuals and groups to work more effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening to people's personal problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping develop a student's potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inspiring and motivating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting the best return from the training investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helping individuals get the right training for their job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advising and supporting colleagues in their work role	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Modelling appropriate behaviours and attitudes at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tick Your Choice ✓

You might find it useful to look at these again before you next meet your student. They will remind you why your mentor role is so important.

Some students we asked were critical of their mentor:

- He's always getting at me
- I never saw her
- What's a mentor?
- She didn't seem to know what I was meant to be doing
- She didn't seem to know her job at all
- He didn't know the answers or where to go for assistance
- She really wasn't willing to share
- He doesn't seem to have time for me
- She was not prepared to tell me clearly whether I was doing well or badly
- He seemed threatened when I asked him anything
- I did not feel properly supported and advised



guide time  
20 mins

Using the above list, write down what **positive** remarks you hope your student might say about **you**.

*My mentor was really good because ...*

Check your list against what some students said about their mentors:

- He takes time to listen
- She understands and appreciates my problems which are real to me
- She always had time for me
- He made a point of being there to welcome me
- She gave me confidence and assurance when I needed it
- He knew what I was meant to be doing
- She made sure that I understood what I'd been doing correctly, where I'd been going wrong
- She treated me as an intelligent person
- She recognised when I needed more help and ensured I received it
- He provided a competent professional role model
- She negotiated with me some learning outcomes I wished to achieve
- She helped me identify my own strengths and weaknesses in clinical and interpersonal skills
- He allocated sufficient time for initial orientation, midway assessment and final assessment
- She could steer me in the direction of other relevant information and people
- He makes me think

## WHAT DO STUDENTS WANT IN A MENTOR?

Darling (1984) found that students look for the same things as other people who have mentors, whether nurses or chief executives. She produced her *Darling MMP (Measuring Mentoring Potential) Profile* based on her research. We produce an adapted version of it here for you to use to profile yourself, if you find it helpful.

Grade yourself by writing 1 - 5 in the box, using the following scale

low ————— high  
1      2      3      4      5

The following characteristics have been identified by nurses as significant in their guidance and growth. Use this questionnaire to assess your mentoring potential or to assess the mentoring potential of other nursing leaders.

	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Nurses' Comments</i>
Model	<input type="checkbox"/>	I'm impressed with her ability to ...; really respected her ...; admired her ...
Envisioner	<input type="checkbox"/>	gave me a picture of what nursing can be; enthusiastic about opportunities in ...; sparked my interest in ...; showed you possibilities
Energizer	<input type="checkbox"/>	enthusiastic and exciting; very dynamic; made it fascinating
Investor	<input type="checkbox"/>	invested a lot in me; saw my capabilities and pushed me; saw something in me
Supporter	<input type="checkbox"/>	willing to listen and help; warm and caring; extremely encouraging; available to me if I got discouraged
Standard-prodder	<input type="checkbox"/>	very clear what she wanted from me; pushed me to achieve high standards; kept prodding me
Teacher-Coach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	taught me how to set priorities; to develop interpersonal skills; guided me on patient problems
Feedback-Giver	<input type="checkbox"/>	gave me a lot of positive and negative feedback; let me know if I wasn't doing right and helped me examine it
Eye Opener	<input type="checkbox"/>	opened my eyes; got me interested in research; helped me understand the politics of the hospital
Door-Opener	<input type="checkbox"/>	made inservices available; included me in discussions; would delegate to you
Idea-Bouncer	<input type="checkbox"/>	bouncing things off her brings things into focus; we would discuss issues, problems, and goals
Problem-Solver	<input type="checkbox"/>	let us try new things and helped us figure it out; always had a pencil and calculator; we looked at my strengths and created a way to use them
Career Counsellor	<input type="checkbox"/>	got me started on a 5-year career plan; I went to her when I was trying to sort out where I wanted to go in my career
Challenger	<input type="checkbox"/>	made me really look at my decisions and grow up a little bit; she'd challenge me and I'd be forced to prove my point

*The Darling (1984) MMP; Measuring Mentoring Potential*

Unit 4 - Mentorship and Preceptorship

*WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU?*

The development group who have designed the programme have prepared a list of Standards of Competence for you, to help you be clear what is expected of you, and consider how well you are doing in your role as a mentor.

Rate your experience and previous training in these areas before going any further on a scale of **1 to 4** and make a broad comment. The scales are:

- 1** Have little or no training or experience in these areas.
- 2** Have some experience and/or training in these areas.
- 3** Have a fair measure of experience and training in these areas.
- 4** Have no need of further training in any of these areas.

Prepare for the student's learning and development programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Establish and maintain relationship with the student	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Create (as far as practical) a practice placement environment conducive to learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide support to student's progress in learning and development programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Contribute to changes to student's learning and development programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Review and report progress to motivate and encourage student	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide advice and support on career development to the student when required	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Assist in avoiding conflict problems in the student's learning and development	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Liaise with other members of teaching staff and significant others on the student's progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	
End formal mentor relationship with the student	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## REFERENCES

- DARLING, L. A. W. (1984) What do Nurses Want in a Mentor? The Journal of Nursing Administration, 14 (10), October 1994: 42 - 44
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