



Policy Name: Clinical Practicum Guidelines and Procedures for Dress Code
Originating/Responsible Department: School of Nursing
Approval Authority: Megan Manning
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Contact: Megan Manning

School of Nursing Clinical Practicum Guidelines and Procedures for Dress Code

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines the professional dress expectations for all Carleton University nursing students during clinical placements, simulation, and official representations of the nursing program.

Adhering to this policy ensures a safe, hygienic, and professional image consistent with regulatory and institutional standards.

This policy applies to all students enrolled in the Carleton University nursing program during all clinical placements, simulation, and academic activities requiring a professional appearance.

Nursing students are expected to model professional nursing attire and behaviour while representing the university in off-campus clinical environments.

2. Definitions

Clinical: the setting where the nursing students participate in their clinical practicum.

Clinical Partner: any organization, agency, or institution providing clinical placements for Carleton University nursing students.

Students: individuals enrolled in any nursing program at Carleton University.

School of Nursing (SON) Faculty: employees of Carleton University working within the SON (includes members such as faculty, staff, preceptors, facilitators).

The University: Carleton University.

3. Identification

- Carleton Student identification (ID) badge must be always worn at chest level and visible in clinical.
- Students are responsible for notifying the SON faculty immediately if their ID is lost.
- Students are accountable to identifying themselves as a nursing student in all clinical situations and bearing no false claim to any other status or professional designation including registered status in alignment with the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) professional standards.

4. Standard uniforms in clinical and simulation environments

4.1 Carleton logo scrub set

- Carleton logo scrub top (black) and scrub bottom (black) will be standard nursing student uniforms for clinical and lab unless otherwise indicated.
- Two (2) scrub sets will be provided at the start of the program (included in ancillary fees).
- Scrubs must be clean, neat, professional, and reserved for clinical use.
- Carleton logo scrubs may not be worn outside clinical and lab settings when travelling directly to and from clinical placements and lab, unless specified by SON faculty.
- Scrubs must fit properly to allow for the required mobility necessary to care for patients care and clinical activities without exposing undergarments or midriff during client/patient care activities.
- Clean scrubs must be worn for each shift, including any underlayers (e.g., long or ¾-length sleeves) or overlayers (e.g., warm-up jackets).
- In cases where the university's SON dress code differs from the clinical partner's uniform policy, the clinical partner's policy prevails.

4.2 Exception to standard uniform

In some clinical environments, scrubs may not be required. Any exceptions will be discussed at the start of placement. If exceptions are not discussed, students are to assume standard uniform scrubs are mandatory.

4.3 Footwear

- Closed-toe, closed-heel, non-slip shoes with no elevated heels are required in alignment with safety policies and procedures standard to the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- Shoes must be non-porous (e.g., no crocs with holes), clean, and reserved for clinical use only.

5. Grooming and Hygiene

5.1 Hair

Head and facial hair must be secured to ensure proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) including N95 masks and in alignment with infection prevention and control (IP&C) guidelines and requirements.

5.2 Nails

Fingernails must be kept short, clean, and free of nail polish or artificial enhancements. This is to maintain a sterile environment and minimize the risk of infection or pathogen transmission.

5.3 Fragrances

Clinical placements are generally scent-free environments. No strong body scents or heavily scented products (e.g., perfume, cologne, aftershave, shampoo) are allowed in clinical or simulation environments.

6. Jewelry and Accessories

- **Earrings/facial piercings:** Must be minimal (studs or small hoops) and well-secured.
- **Neck Jewelry:** Must be breakaway or loose-fitting and not tight. Necklaces are not recommended in clinical due to IP & C.
- **Wrist Jewelry:** Bracelets are not allowed unless medically necessary. Watches must be able to be disinfected.
- **Rings on fingers:** Must be smooth, without raised settings, or gemstones.

Students may be required to remove jewelry depending on safety requirements in specific clinical environments.

7. Eye Protection

Safety goggles will be provided and must be worn when required. Goggles must be sanitized between patient encounters.

8. Individual Use Items

Personal equipment (e.g., stethoscopes, pen lights, pens) must be cleaned between patient uses. Each student will receive an individual stethoscope and pen light in Nursing kit at program start. Students are responsible for the replacement and associated costs, if required.

9. Cultural and Religious Considerations

Carleton University respects cultural and religious diversity. The SON allows for modifications to the dress code for cultural or religious reasons, provided they do not compromise safety or IP & C, and meet requirements as outlined by the agency.

Students should communicate with SON faculty or clinical instructors in advance to arrange accommodations, as appropriate.

10. Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with the university's SON dress code may result in:

- Removal from clinical or simulation environment;
- Documentation of unprofessional conduct;
- Academic consequences as per Carleton University and SON policies.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with the university policy, regulatory bodies, public health guidance, and clinical partner expectations. For any questions or clarifications regarding this policy, please contact the School of Nursing at **nursingclinical@carleton.ca**.

References

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