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Appropriate Behavior and Appearance for Clinical Experiences:

The physical therapist's professionalism encompasses not only having specialized knowledge, but also being aware of the aspects of behavior and appearance that affect clinical practice. Although there are many variations in both of these latter areas, the requirements below will serve as a basis on which to form your own style of professionalism after graduation. Until then, you will be expected to adhere to these standards while participating in the clinical education phases of the Program in Physical Therapy or when in contact with patients during other phases of the curriculum.

I. Appropriate Appearance for Clinical Experiences:

Wearing the appropriate attire is important because you are a professional representative of Washington University. This also provides you with comfortable, non-restrictive clothing necessary in a physical therapist's clinical practice. You will be expected to wear the appropriate attire for all activities involving a clinical contact with patients unless specifically instructed otherwise. [You may be specifically requested or allowed, by a clinical supervisor, to change your dress requirements while at that facility. Adapting your style of dress and accessories (including piercings) to fit the standards set at any facility may be necessary.]

A. Appropriate Attire:

The appropriate attire consists of a short white jacket to be worn with professional clothing. This jacket will be provided to each student as a gift from the Program. The length of shirts/tops should be adequate to cover the entire trunk at rest and during all movements by the student. **That means that no skin should be visible on the abdomen, breasts, or between the shirt and pants when in the clinic.** Jeans and t-shirts must **never** be worn. Clothing should be in nice condition. A nametag, provided upon admission, is to be worn on the left side of the jacket below the collar.

Your shoes must be closed-toe style of a neutral color. No sandals, clogs, tennis shoes, hiking boots or other novelty shoes will be permitted. Nylons or socks should be worn. Accessories such as jewelry should be kept at a minimum and should not interfere with treatment or cause potential safety hazards. For example, large earrings or other body rings are inappropriate. Fingernails should be kept short and clean for sanitary and safety reasons. A watch that counts seconds is needed. Hairstyles must stay neat while you work and not interfere with your performance of patient care activities. Shoulder length (or longer) hair should be tied back with a simple clip, barrette or rubber band. Avoid obtrusive hairstyles, colors, and decorative accessories.

II. Appropriate Behavior for Clinical Experiences:

In addition to employing appropriate social courtesy, the following should be regarded as specific suggestions for professional behavior in the clinical setting:

1. It is your responsibility to seek all the information you need to be able to comply with the departmental policies in the clinical setting. The orientation given you by the clinical instructor should assist you in knowing policies, but it is also your responsibility to ask for additional information or seek clarification of information provided. Such policies will concern lunch, breaks, smoking regulations, dress code, fire and emergency procedures, departmental hours, and holidays.
2. Any gratuities offered to you by patients should be reported to your clinical instructor and handled in a manner appropriate to that specific situation.
3. Avoid chewing gum while treating patients.
4. Permission of the clinical instructor is required before visiting patients after departmental hours. In some

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facilities, this is an acceptable practice, in some it is not. Check beforehand, and comply with those procedures.

5. Asking questions of your clinical instructor will not only facilitate your learning, but will ensure patient safety and quality care. Be discrete about questions asked in front of the patient, and reserve all questions regarding prognosis for when the patient is not present. Be aware of your clinical instructor's time constraints in answering questions as well as your obligation to ask those questions.
6. Your strict adherence to the ethical standards, which protect the patients' confidence, is required. Do not discuss your patients' condition(s) outside the clinical setting. Patients may be discussed with classmates and faculty for educational purposes, but avoid identifying them by name.
7. Your attention to common courtesy is essential in the clinical setting. Communication of respect, your display of good listening skills and sensitive verbal communications will be helpful in promoting productive working relationships with your clinical supervisors and peers.
8. You are expected to strive toward achievement of the "Professional Behaviors/Generic Abilities" (see handout), displaying appropriate affective/professional behaviors.
9. Students are obligated to report back to the school any ethical or legal compromises noted at their clinical sites.
10. Cell phones may not be turned on during class or clinic times.
11. Students completing clinical internships are not allowed to also be employed by the institution/clinic during the time frame of the clinical internship.