

# *Helpful tips for the Busy Preceptor*

By John Ridgway



## **Getting off to a good start:**

- Develop a written orientation list – facilities, introductions, forms or systems, policies – of what the student needs to be aware of the first day. Make a list of these so your orientation will be consistent and easy to update. It will help others to orient the students if you are unavailable on the first day.
- Provide a calendar of scheduled activities and deadlines. Students can do a better job of managing their time if they can see the big picture and have a sense of direction for the month.
- Be clear on how you want the student to participate – some activities are observational, while others require their hands-on involvement.
- Review the objectives that you have for your rotation and ask the student to write down 2 to 3 things that they want (or need) to learn from your rotation.

## **During the month:**

- Depending on the environment, you may have some scheduled times with the student for discussions or activities or may be working side by side and teaching as you are working together. Try to touch base with the student every day, even for just a few minutes and give feedback on the quality of performance.
- Obtain feedback from others that work with the student and incorporate this into your evaluation.
- Have a midpoint review on progress. If it is planned and scheduled, it is not overlooked when there is a time crunch. This is a time to let students know how they need to improve or if they are on target.

## **Others:**

- Expect the student to create or contribute something that will benefit your practice site.
- Keep a running list of potential projects that you can provide the student on the first day of the rotation.

## **Potential Student Projects**

*These suggestions are not for creating “busy work” but rather for the engaging of students in meaningful activity that allows them to contribute to the pharmacy, learn new things and grow and develop as pharmacists.*

- Present interesting or complicated patient cases
- Present a topic of current interest or a new drug to the pharmacists and/or technicians
- Provide in-services to the pharmacy and nursing staff on requested or targeted topics
- Prepare or find pamphlets on particular patient education topic
- Develop marketing materials for the pharmacy or a program in the pharmacy
- Revise or develop a website
- Develop a screening program for a particular group of patients
- Present a current article for the staff
- Do a math review for technicians
- Write progress notes and/or consultation notes as appropriate
- Answer drug information questions from patients or other health care professionals
- Get involved in inventory control, ordering drugs, checking for outdates and recalled products
- Obtain medication and allergy histories from patients and documenting them in the medical record
- Create a new Plan-O-Gram for an OTC section or for the prescription department