



SIU Guidelines for Medical Observerships

From time to time, clinical departments are asked to provide educational experiences for individuals who have completed their medical training but do not hold medical licensure. These individuals do not fall under the province of medical student or residency education. While it is recognized that the provision of such experiences are good for the individual participants and generate goodwill for the School of Medicine, there are costs to SIU in the form of competition with other learners and staff time involved in oversight. It is the expectation that the number of observers at SIU SOM will be limited and only occur when the benefits to the School of Medicine clearly outweigh the resources expended.

Examples of situations that would be considered appropriate would include:

- A practicing physician from another country who desires a focused experience for a skill to take back to his/her country of practice.
- An incoming resident who has matched with an SIU residency program, but whose start date is delayed and needs to keep up with didactics, etc.
- An incoming resident who has matched with an SIU residency program whose program director believes that a focused observership experience prior to the onset of residency would help him/her succeed in the program.

Examples of situations that would not be considered appropriate would include:

- A graduate of an international medical school who wishes to gain US experience prior to applying for a U.S. residency program
- A graduate of a US or international medical school who did not match in previous years and desires a clinical experience to strengthen his/her application next time.

Any request for observership experience must be approved by SIU Department of Human Resources.

Observer candidates must be hosted by an individual clinical department, with approval by the Department Chair. If the observer is not a US citizen, SIU School of Medicine is responsible for assuring they possess the appropriate visa during the period of the observership. Because of this, eligible observers must have their educational experience at SIU SOM in a single block of time.

If approved for participation,

The observership candidate must :

- Provide verification of medical school graduation with a diploma, dean's letter or transcript to the sponsoring clinical department.
- Sign a statement of confidentiality.
- Complete HIPAA training
- Agree in writing to comply with the parameters of participation listed below.

The hosting clinical department must:

- Obtain approval from SIU Department of Human Resources
- Ensure and document that the observership candidate has completed the requirements listed above.
- Notify the appropriate affiliated hospital(s)
- Designate a faculty person responsible for the observer's supervision and oversight.

Acceptable Observer Activities

A period of observation is not intended to be a formal training program and SIU School of Medicine will not provide any training certification for a period of observation. Observers are not licensed, are not covered by malpractice insurance and may not provide any clinical care to patients.

The following activities are permissible for observerships:

1. Participate in grand rounds, seminars or other didactic activities.
2. Participate in case conferences or chart rounds.
3. May observe walking rounds or procedures with the supervising attending or senior resident.
4. May view and discuss video tapes of patient evaluations or procedures if the patient has signed an authorization to permit observation and videotaping.
5. May participate in surgical skills lab activities.

The following activities are not permissible for observerships:

1. Observers may not see or interact with patients individually.
2. Observers may not examine patients in any way, write in/on charts or EHR, or provide medical or surgical care to patients.