

## Websites Aid Preceptors

Precepting is a rewarding experience, but it also can be challenging. You have to work smarter and harder when you serve as a preceptor. You have so much you want to teach your preceptees while still caring for your own patients. There are multiple advantages to serving as a preceptor, including the opportunity to grow and learn with your preceptees.

The work you do and the many “hats” you wear is appreciated. These online resources can help with your role as an educator, a protector, a socializer, an evaluator and a role model. These sites may be beneficial to both you and your preceptees.

- [www.AlfaroTeachSmart.com](http://www.AlfaroTeachSmart.com) — critical thinking skills and critical thinking indicators
- [www.vnip.org](http://www.vnip.org) — articles on preceptor development and ways to support new nurses
- [www.allnurses.com](http://www.allnurses.com) — a forum for nurses to discuss nursing issues, such as precepting and being precepted

When challenges do arise during your work as a preceptor, consider this quote from actress Cicely Tyson.

“Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew. They’re what make the instrument stretch — what make you go beyond the norm.”

## ‘Hello, Preceptors! How May We Help You?’

As trained preceptors, you are the key person who orients new nurses to your units. It’s a big responsibility, but know that you are not alone. You have several resources available to help your preceptees become able-bodied members of your team.

### **Determine who is on your team and what you can do together to make the orientation process a success.**

- Talk with your colleagues about the entire staff’s role in the orientation process.
- Develop a plan with your co-workers before new employees arrive. If possible, negotiate a decreased patient load for at least your first day with your preceptees.
- Create a “care map” that is similar to a concept map. Identify what can be done to facilitate a successful orientation for new nurses.
- Know the clinical educator’s role in orienting new nurses. How accessible will the educator be?
- Know the role of your nurse manager. How frequently should you update your nurse manager? For what reasons? What does your manager expect of you as a preceptor?

### **Explore other resources that can assist you as a preceptor.**

- Review the Nurse Preceptor Academy’s resource manual and handouts. The bibliography list also may be helpful. Look at the Benner framework to identify how your preceptors may be viewing their roles as new or experienced nurses. Determine their level of expertise and how you can facilitate their growth.
- Review the way you teach, learn and make decisions so that you can better teach and communicate with your preceptees. Increasing your own self-awareness will enhance your partnership with new nurses.
- Familiarize yourself with the orientation checklists and evaluation forms that preceptees will use to track their orientation. Make sure they allow you to effectively evaluate your preceptees.
- Give your preceptees folders or notebooks to keep their paperwork. Tell them to keep the folder/notebook in a place where both of you can access it easily.
- Think about the resources available on your unit and in your institution.

### **Encourage preceptees to spend time with other health providers who can help them to understand the interdisciplinary nature of health care.**

- When preceptees understand the roles of the other team members, they will be better able to meet their patients’ needs. Schedule preceptees to meet with social workers, dietitians, physical therapists, occupational therapists and respiratory therapists, if appropriate.