

Medical Student Orientation

Emergency Medicine Rotation-Alta View Hospital

Contact Information

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Welcome

I welcome you to the Emergency Medicine rotation at Alta View Hospital. This month is meant to provide you with experience working in a community-based Emergency Department. Alta View Hospital Emergency Department serves approximately 38,000 patients/year. It is staffed with Board-certified physicians who by and large are EM residency-trained. One or more attending physicians will supervise you during every shift. You will be expected to evaluate and treat patients presenting with a variety of medical, surgical, and psychiatric conditions. You will present every patient you evaluate to an attending physician. The goal is to develop skills that enable you to efficiently interview and examine a patient, to develop an appropriate differential diagnosis for symptom-specific complaints, to understand the emergent/urgent conditions that need addressed, and to provide stabilizing/definitive treatment as needed.

I believe the experience gained from a month in a community ED is decidedly different from that in an academic ED. The month is essentially what you make of it. You will have exposure to EM physicians who have been in practice from just a couple years since residency to those who have been in practice for nearly three decades. I look forward to getting to know you and working with you. I encourage you to schedule yourself during various times of the day. I will complete your evaluation at the end of the month with input provided by my colleagues.

I wish you the best this month. I hope to provide you with challenges that are stimulating and fun. To that end, I encourage you to contact me at any time with questions or concerns. **-Isaac Bingham, MD**

Schedule

You will complete a schedule for the month during your orientation. Your schedule should be posted on the bulletin board in the physicians' area. You are expected to work at least **15 eight-hour shifts** during the month. Your shifts should run 7am-3pm, 2pm-11pm, 4:00pm-12:30am, or 11pm-7am. I encourage you to work a variety of times and days/weekends. I would like the majority of the shift to be 2pm or 4:00pm start times. You can choose two morning shifts, and two or three overnight shifts. Arrive early enough so that you are prepared to begin work at the assigned time. You are not expected to work past your assigned time. Any patients under your care at the end of your shift need to be discussed with the attending physician so that their care is not compromised.

Attire

First impressions are important, especially in the ED where the physician is expected to develop a rapport with the patient during a brief encounter. Importantly, you are expected to present yourself in a professional manner. Most of the physicians dress in scrubs. Scrubs are available in the physicians' changing room. You are certainly welcome to dress more formally if you would like. White coats are not required. You must wear your name badge at all times while working in the ED.

Conferences

You will receive a schedule of EM lectures provided at the University of Utah for the month. Medical student lectures occur from 8am-10am every Tuesday and Thursday. Resident lectures occur every Wednesday morning. Journal Club is held every month at a local restaurant. Your attendance is not required at any of these functions. But, I would strongly encourage you to take advantage of these educational opportunities.

Evaluations

The attending physicians who have worked with you will provide me feedback at the end of the month regarding your performance. I will complete the Fourth Year Elective Evaluation and provide a copy to the Med Student Academic Coordinator at the University of Utah. I also ask you to email me any feedback or critiques on your rotation so that we can continue improving this rotation for other medical students.

Computer Access

Students will be given access to the iCentra system via password. You will be assigned a login and password on the first day of the rotation. You are to use the Internet and iCentra to only access information that is relevant to patients under your care.

Meals

You are welcome to eat meals during your shift at the cafeteria. Notify the attending physician that you are leaving the department to eat.

Patient Flow

Triage

Nurses triage patients either in the triage area or in the room if the patient arrives via EMS.

Patients are assigned an acuity and chief complaint.

Acuity levels

Red-emergent

Yellow/orange-urgent

Blue-semi urgent

Green-nonurgent

Patients are seen in order of their arrival, unless they are urgent or emergent. Ask the attending physician about recommendations on whom to see. Oftentimes, they can direct you to the more interesting cases.

Before seeing the patient, review the nurse's notes, patient's medical history, and vital signs.

Evaluation

Introduce yourself as "the medical student working with Dr. _____".

Perform an appropriate H & P that is directed towards the patient's presenting problem.

Determine if the patient has a primary care provider.

Let the patient know that you will be presenting their case to the attending physician, who will meet with them as well.

Present the case to an attending physician immediately after you are done interviewing the patient. Keep the case concise and to the point. Develop a differential diagnosis. Explain your plan and what tests you think are appropriate. Order tests only after you have discussed the case with the attending physician. Standing orders are in place for the nurses to utilize with common presenting complaints. Do not be offended if they institute tests and treatment before you have a chance to discuss the case.

If you are not certain about a patient's diagnosis, work-up, or treatment, tell the patient that you will be discussing the case with the attending physician and that you will keep them informed.

Patients can understandably be confused and/or angry if given discordant information from the ED staff.

Charting

You are not required to perform any paper or electronic charting during this rotation. You can (and should) take notes during your evaluation of the patient so that you can be thorough and organized when later presenting the patient to the attending physician.

Disposition

Visit with your patients on a regular basis. Update them on the status of their results. Reassess any patient you have provided with some type of therapy.

Keep track of lab/x-ray results. Update the attending physician when all results are back.

In accord with the attending physician, determine the patient's disposition-discharge, consultation, admission.

Discharge

All patients being discharged are to receive a computer-generated set of instructions. The attending physician is to complete the instructions.

Efficiency

Efforts are made to evaluate and treat patients in a timely, caring manner.

When you sign up for a patient do not delay seeing them.

Do not let orders or tests go undone.

You are not expected to handle multiple patients at once. If you have never done an EM rotation, follow just one patient at a time. As you get more comfortable with the ED flow you may handle more than one patient. Again, seek advice from the attending physician about which patient to see next.

Part of what we do in the ED is providing a service. As such, patients have expectations. Most patients are reasonable and understandable about long waits, delayed results, etc.

Communicating with your patients on a regular basis goes a long way towards meeting patient's expectations.

Teamwork

Teamwork in the ED cannot be stressed enough.

You will be interacting with many other personnel, all of whom are important members of the team. Show due respect to everyone from the housekeeping staff, to clerical staff, to lab/radiology staff, to nursing staff. EMS and police regularly interact with the ED as well.

The person we are all advocates for is the patient. Do whatever you can to make their stay more comfortable. It is not beneath any of us to provide a warm blanket or urinal if asked.