



Rural Nursing Education Program (RNEP)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Nurse Preceptors

What is an RNEP Nursing Preceptor?

An RNEP Nursing Preceptor is an experienced registered nurse or advance practice nurse who provides direct supervision, teaching, and mentoring to nursing students during their clinical experiences. Preceptors help students apply academic learning to real-world patient care while modeling professional nursing practice.

Who can become an RNEP preceptor?

Registered nurses or advance practice nurses who are in good standing, have a minimum of at least 1-year relevant clinical experience, and work in participating rural clinical or hospital settings may be eligible to serve as RNEP preceptors. Additional eligibility requirements may apply depending on the academic partner and clinical site.

Do I need prior teaching experience to be a preceptor?

No. Prior teaching experience is not required. RNEP provides a basic preceptor training program to prepare nurses for the role, including guidance on bedside teaching, communication, and student evaluation.

What kind of support will I receive as a preceptor?

RNEP preceptors receive structured training, clear expectations, and ongoing support. Preceptors also collaborate closely with academic faculty, who are available to answer questions, provide guidance, and assist with student-related concerns.

How much time is required to be a preceptor?

Time commitment varies depending on the student's program and clinical schedule. Preceptors work with students during scheduled clinical hours and integrate teaching into routine patient care activities.

Am I responsible for evaluating or grading students?

Preceptors contribute to student evaluation by providing feedback and completing clinical assessment tools. Final grading decisions remain the responsibility of the academic program and faculty.

Why is precepting important for rural communities?

Training nursing students within rural communities strengthens the local healthcare workforce, supports retention of future nurses, and helps ensure that care remains accessible and responsive to community needs.