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# CLINICAL **HANDBOOK**

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## Overview

The Heartland Clerkship Group (HCG) is a USA based premium medical education service that provides students from local and international medical schools, placements into core and elective clinical rotations during their third and final year of medical school throughout the Midwestern United States as well as in Canada.

Apply. Reinforce. Demonstrate. Communicate. Develop. Discover.

HCG is unlike any other clinical clerkship facilitator. We place a strong emphasis on learning and actively engage our students during their time with us. We do this by working with our network of physicians through HCG's PhysicianX Community.

Being a medical student in today's generation can be both unimaginably overwhelming and undeniably satisfying. With more and more medical students being 'connected' through the internet, smartphones, iPads and the sort, the wealth of medical information is now easily accessible and yours for the taking. But medical education is not cheap. The cost for a medical degree in North America has been staggering.



Knowing all this, HCG has developed a program that complements most medical school curriculums. Our focus is primarily on medical students from foreign medical schools such as those in the Caribbean, Europe and Asia. We understand that many Americans and Canadians choose to study and earn a medical degree from outside North America for many reasons.

“My marks weren't high enough”

“There's too many people students applying”

“I can't afford the fees”

“I didn't want to waste time with an undergraduate degree”

...The comments are endless.

But what we do know is that every medical student has a heart to practice medicine and help people better their lives through their direct involvement.

HCG capitalizes on these strengths to produce quality clinical rotations with some of America's best doctors and greatest teaching facilities.

## Our Mission

We are a premium medical education service specially tailored to enriching the lives of medical students through superior clinical clerkship placements throughout the Midwest and Canada.

We are a group of medical professionals, healthcare executives, instructors and student advocates who share a common belief that sharing medical education with all students should be irrespective of what school or country they are from - for the ultimate goal is to provide an utmost professional and invaluable service to our patients and fellow citizens.



With a global physician shortage, there are many schools that are answering the call by opening their doors to larger student intakes. New medical schools are breaking ground throughout the world from Europe, Asia and the Caribbean.

But it has become extremely difficult for internationally trained physicians and international medical students to secure quality clinical rotations within the United States and Canada.

HCG works to solve this headache by bearing the burdens and provide services to navigate this process expeditiously and correctly. Our services offer the opportunity to gain valuable US/CAN clinical experience in order to prepare international medical graduates (IMG) and international medical students to enter US/CAN residencies familiar with the US/CAN healthcare system.

Our proven standardized clinical rotation program is specifically geared toward the international medical graduate (IMG) and the international medical student. We have a network of dedicated, hospital affiliated outpatient/inpatient clinicians eager to teach our next generation of physicians. Everyday our physician's network is growing.

## Our Expectations

As a student of HCG you will be expected to learn the following:

- Reinforce and apply the knowledge learned in the first two years, and will develop their clinical skills so they can diagnose and manage common clinical problems.
- Evaluate patients and manage their medical problems by conducting a comprehensive medical history and thorough physical examination; formulate accurate hypotheses as to the causes and solution of their clinical problems; and formulate and implement a management plan to effectively deal with the problems.
- Demonstrate the fundamental concepts of disease prevention and health promotion for individual patients and incorporate them into treatments plans as appropriate.
- Communicate and interact effectively with patients, families, medical staff and others involved in the delivery of health services. During this time students will accept increasing responsibility in patient care as the final year advances.
- Work with multi-disciplinary clinical teams of nurses, physiotherapists, residents and faculty.
- Develop and apply high ethical principles and standards in all aspects of medical practice and will exhibit appropriate personal and interpersonal professional behaviors.

In the clerkship, as in the whole of the curriculum, it will be clear that the physician can serve patients to the highest possible standards only if he/she continually acquires new knowledge and skills for as long as he/she practices medicine.



## Objectives

Through the academic and enrichment components of HCG, students will enhance communications skills essential for clinical clerkships and professional medical training and practice down the road. We do this through oral presentations, writing assignment and group discussions on medically related topics.

The Heartland Clerkship Group works with every student and every physician to fulfill many mandates set by our organization - mimicking the highest standards of various state medical boards throughout the United States:

- HCG provides a solid foundation in the fundamentals required for the study of medicine and integrates clinical science concepts into the basic sciences so as to provide exposure to the clinical skills and procedures that are necessary for routine medical practice.
- HCG ensures that students understand how patient deviation from good health should be diagnosed, appropriately managed and treated.
- HCG provides students with a means to educate their patients through a knowledge base of preventative medicine practices to care for themselves.
- HCG acquaints students with the current trends in medicine utilizing modern means of information and computer technology.
- HCG exposes students to the psychosocial and economic-legal aspects and implications of a career in medicine and medical practice.

## Concepts of the basic clinical rotation

The clinical clerkship program at the Heartland Clerkship Group is conducted under the close supervision of trained and licensed physicians within our PhysicianX Community. Various broad concepts that are covered include the following:

- Basic clinical skills with patient contact
- Analytical and problem-solving skills
- Caring of patients of different ages and cultural backgrounds
- Interpersonal and communication relationships between physician, patient and hospital staff
- Development of very high ethical and professional standards
- Broad overview of basic medical practice so as to understand the inter-relationship between different levels of practice and various areas of specialization
- Opportunity to explore the various areas of medicine in which a student may wish to specialize on upon completion of their clerkships with HCG and their medical program from their respective medical school.

## HCG Program Structure

The various clerkship opportunities that exist with HCG are applicable to those students who have either successfully passed the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Step 1 and/or demonstrated outstanding academic performance during the Basic Science (years 1 and 2) of their medical program. As part of the application process, various supporting documents are required.

In order to enter a HCG clinical rotation, a student must:

- Have successfully completed all the Basic Science course requirements and provide a transcript of such credentials
- Fill out an application form from HCG
- Have submitted all required documentation
  - Proof of Malpractice Insurance
  - Immunization Form
- Receive a letter of clearance from their medical school care of the Dean of Clinical Science prior to matriculation



## HCG Core Clinical Rotations

All core clinical rotations are completed within the USA in the states of Ohio, Kentucky and Iowa. More states and physicians are added quarterly to offer more options and services to our students.

Here is a breakdown of the typical core rotation schedule

Clerkship	Duration
Internal Medicine	12 weeks
General Surgery	12 weeks
Obstetrics and Gynecology	6 weeks
Pediatrics	6 weeks
Psychiatry	6 weeks
Family Practice	6 weeks
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 weeks</b>

- Students are not expected to follow this schedule in the order that it appears. Based on personal preference, scheduling and/or availability, core clerkships may be done in any order



## Internal Medicine - 12 weeks

In this clerkship, students learn the steps necessary for proper diagnosis and treatment of patients. Students learn how to take complete medical, personal and family histories to do a diagnostic 'work-up' and to develop a plan for managing a patient's care. Students participate in clinical conferences where they learn to report their findings and logical conclusions.

This rotation enables a student to understand and perform the following:

- History and physical examination
- Evaluate, diagnose and treat patients for a variety of medical problems in hospital and ambulatory settings
- Develop increased ability in diagnostic problem solving of medical disorders
- Develop specific motor skills in techniques and procedures commonly related to the hospitalized medical patient
- Recognize the psychosocial needs of the patient

The following topics will be the minimal learning objectives during the Internal Medicine Clerkship. This may however, vary from institution to institution. The students will acquire knowledge in the treatment of the following problems/diagnoses and identification of these entities through history and physical examination:

### Cardiovascular System

- MI/Heart Attack
- Hypertension
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Aneurysm
- Angina
- Varicosities

- Hypothyroidism
- Diabetes mellitus
- Diabetes insipidus
- Adrenal Insufficiency
- Hyperaldosteronism

### Pulmonary Disorders

- Pneumonia
- TB
- Carcinoma
- Atelectasis
- Pneumo/Hemothorax
- Pulmonary embolism
- COPD
- Asthma

### Oncological Disorders

### Hematopoietic Disorders

- Anemia
- Hemophilia
- Hodgkin's disease
- Leukemia

### Endocrinology

- Hypertension

### Infectious Disease

- AIDS
- TB
- Endocarditis
- STD's

### Genitourinary Disorders

- UTI
- Pyelonephritis
- Cystitis
- Renal failure
- BHP
- Renal calculi

Musculoskeletal Disorders

- Herniated Nucleus Pulposus
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Osteoarthritis
- SLE
- Raynaud's phenomenon
- Scleroderma

Gastrointestinal Disorders

- Duodenal/Gastric Ulcers
- Crohn's Disease
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Parasites
- Obstruction
- Pancreatitis
- Hepatitis
- Cholecystitis
- Cirrhosis

- Portal Hypertension

Neurological Disorders

- CVA
- Neurosyphilis
- Ethanol Abuse
- Altered states of consciousness
- Meningitis

Psychiatric Disorders

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Personality Disorders

Clinical Knowledge of Common Medical Problems

Pharmaceutical Knowledge

Charting Skills

Diagnostic Procedures

Counseling



## General Surgery - 12 weeks

In the course of the surgery clerkship, students at HCG learn about conditions requiring surgical intervention and have opportunities to observe how surgical patients are managed. In the process, they become familiar with the policies and procedures followed in the operating room.

This rotation enables a student to understand and perform the following:

- Pre-surgical history and physical examination
- Management and principles of the surgical patient
- General principles of neoplastic disease
- Surgical intervention on common organ systems



## Obstetrics and Gynecology - 6 weeks

During this clerkship, students learn about the changes that take place during pregnancy, labor, delivery and the postpartum period, both normal and pathologic. They also become familiar with diagnosis and treatment of major gynecological diseases and various methods of family planning.

The objective of this clerkship is to understand and/or perform the following:

- Examination of the female patient
- General obstetric care
- Management of labor and delivery
- High risk pregnancy
- Benign gynecological problems
- Family planning and control of fertility
- Reproductive endocrinology and infertility

## Pediatrics - 6 weeks

During the pediatrics clerkship, students acquire special skills and knowledge required for the examination, diagnosis and treatment of infants, children and adolescents.

This rotation enables students to understand and/or perform the following:

- History and physical examination
- Neonatology and infancy
- Pediatric cardiovascular diseases
- Pediatric respiratory diseases and otolaryngology
- Pediatric renal/urinal disease
- Gastrointestinal and hepatic diseases
- Pediatric hematological diseases
- Metabolic, genetic and endocrine diseases
- Infectious diseases
- Diagnosis and treatment of neurological disease
- Pediatric rheumatologic diseases
- Child and adolescent orthopedic problems
- Common childhood poisoning
- Common childhood dermatologic conditions
- Common childhood and adolescent behavioral disorders
- Adolescent gynecological/sexual problems



## Psychiatry - 6 weeks

In this clerkship, students become familiar with the major categories of mental disorders including diagnosis and some methods of therapy. In the process they learn how to take psychiatric history and to evaluate a person's mental status. Conducting a psychiatric interview, performing mental status examination and evaluation of the patient is considered the minimum-learning requirement.

This rotation enables a student to understand and perform the following:

- Mental status examination
- Common DSM IV disorders
- Psychopharmacology
- Therapeutic interventions

## Family Practice - 6 weeks

In this clerkship, students acquire an understanding of the principles of family medicine how these principles apply in community practice. Emphasis is placed on continuous and comprehensive health care for people of both sexes and of all ages within the context of their families, social groups and communities. Particular attention is paid to the diagnosis and treatment of common medical problems and to health maintenance, ambulatory care and the continuity of care.

## HCG Elective Clinical Rotations

Elective clerkships conducted through the Heartland Clerkship Group typically last 4 weeks. We have been growing our PhysicianX community with many specialists within the medical community. During these elective clinical clerkships, students spend their time directly with the physician, interacting with patients and learning about specific medical issues pertaining to that specialty.

Here is a partial list of some of the elective clinical clerkships that HCG presently offers:

- Neonatology
- Neurology
- Vascular Surgery
- Anesthesiology
- Emergency Medicine
- Diagnostic Imaging/Radiology
- Nephrology
- Gastroenterology
- Dermatology
- Electrocardiography
- Infertility
- Pulmonology
- Pain management
- Podiatry
- Neonatal ICU
- Sports Medicine



## HCG Clinical Clerkship Evaluation

Student performance in any clerkship is evaluated by clinical faculty members/preceptors and physicians who have had the opportunity for close and frequent observation and interaction with the student. Personal and professional attitudes, appearance, medical and clinical knowledge and overall performance are all listed on the evaluation form provided by HCG. Clinical Clerkship Evaluation Forms are sent to students 1 week before their clerkship finishes and is returned by the clinical faculty member/preceptor/physician within 10 days following the last day of the rotation.

Students may be evaluated by any or all of the following criteria:

- Direct observation
- Case presentations
- Case write-ups
- Participation in medical conferences, case discussions and hospital rounds
- Written examinations
- Oral examinations
- Clinical competency examinations
- Attendance

The Heartland Clerkship Group always maintains a superior level of integrity and high academic and professional standard for students rotating through our program. A student whose achievement/performance is not up to these standards is informed as early as possible during any given clerkship and given assistance and counseling to ensure progress. If our clinical faculty judges a student's performance to be marginal, the student may be required to spend extra time in the clerkship till the preceptor is satisfied. If a student is judged to have failed a particular clinical clerkship, the student may choose to retake that clerkship (additional fees incurred).

## HCG Grading Guidelines

60%	Significantly fails to meet the criteria
65%	Minimally fails to meet the criteria
70%	Below average performance
75%	Slightly below average performance
80%	Average performance
85%	Above average performance
90%	Well defined above average performance
>95%	Performance is significantly greater than expected

## HCG Student Clerkship Feedback

Part of your successful completion of any clerkship involves having your preceptor complete an HCG Student Evaluation. However, after completing a clerkship, we want the student to have their voice heard too. This is why we require every student to complete a Student Clerkship Feedback form at the end of every clerkship rotation. This invaluable information helps HCG better our program by providing positive criticism to our PhysicianX community. Remember, doctors are people too and not everyone is born to be a teacher. A great clinician and a superb physician may not make an awesome teacher. But with this kind of data, we can help make our clerkship group even better.



Interviewing  
Data Gathering  
Differential Diagnosis  
Problem Based Learning  
Therapeutics  
Chart Work  
Treatment and Implementation  
Doctor-Patient Rapport  
Pathophysiology

**Things you'll learn during your time at the Heartland Clerkship Group**

## Performance Tips from HCG

It is important that you function as a responsible team member.

Dress appropriately and maintain good hygiene.

Be punctual, reliable and courteous to all those you encounter (allied health personnel, floor nurses, patient's family, patients).

Being a physician is much more than wearing a white coat and a stethoscope. We are in the service industry. As much as a patient wants advice and help from their physician, a physician must be ready and willing to offer more than just a medication refill.

Remember that patients are the main source of your learning while you're at HCG and during your clinical years of medical school in general.

Do not limit yourself to just your assigned patients. Talk to your classmates and learn about other medical cases that will enrich your knowledge base.

Remember to always reassess the accuracy of your charts and notes.

When you're preparing cases reports and writing up SOAP notes/progress notes remember to:

- Use only abbreviations that are generally accepted
- Write all entries legibly
- Patient confidentiality is of absolute priority. Never discuss your cases in public.
- 100% attendance is expected during your clinical clerkship period. Failure to report absences or being tardy during your clerkship's assigned hours will be detrimental to your evaluation.

## HCG Student Advocates

The Heartland Clerkship Group works with physicians, medical students, educators and various other corporations on a daily basis. We work not only to ensure that our clerkship program creates lasting results with our students but we strive to make ourselves better as a premium medical education service.

The HCG Student advocates are 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year medical students who work on behalf of HCG to promote our services amongst their classmates and colleagues. Through positive reinforcement, various incentives and "swag" our student advocates provide much valued feedback from their present classmates and future colleagues.

If you're interested in becoming an HCG Student Advocate, please send us an email at [info@heartlandclerkship.com](mailto:info@heartlandclerkship.com) outlining your intentions.

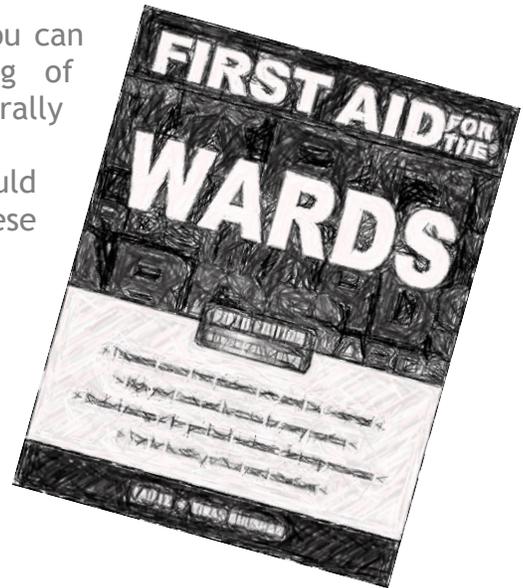


## HCG Recommended Textbooks

While there are hundreds of different textbooks that you can buy to increase your knowledge and understanding of medicine, we understand that medical students generally don't have money trees growing in their backyards.

So here is our list of some of the textbooks we feel would benefit your clinical experience with HCG (Note: All these books can be purchased on Amazon or Chapters/Indigo)

- First Aid for the Wards
- The Blueprints Series
- The Washington Manual of Medical Therapeutics
- Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine
- DSM-IV
- Rapid Interpretation of EKG's



## HCG Recommended Mobile APPs

Let's face it. Today's medical student is fully equipped with stethoscope in one hand and a smartphone in the other! To help you 'be in the know' and prepare you for a satisfying career in medicine, we've compiled a list of some mobile apps that we think will make your life a lot easier during medical school!

- Medscape
- Epocrates
- Skyscape Medical Resources
- Lexicomp
- Dynamed
- Calculate by QxMD or MEDcalc
- Radiology 2.0 or iRadiology
- Eponyms
- Diagnosaurus



## Contact Us

The Heartland Clerkship Group has offices in the USA and Canada. Our main office is located 15 minutes from Cleveland in Twinsburg, Ohio. Our Canadian office is located in Toronto.

If you ever have any questions you may reach us through email or by phone. At the Heartland Clerkship Group we work tirelessly to provide clinical clerkship opportunities for tomorrow's physicians. We are proud of the work we have done thus far and look forward to helping close the physician shortage gap by training more physicians for tomorrow's brave new world!

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