

VA - Medical Student Supervision

VHA Handbook 1400.1 does not address medical student supervision or documentation of supervision of medical students or associated health trainees. Existing policy is contained in M-8, Part II. The Office of Academic Affiliations will be drafting updated guidelines for medical student (and associated health trainee) supervision in the future as part of a planned transition from the "Manuals" to Handbooks. *In the interim, please keep the following principles in mind.* Medical students are students and are neither licensed physicians nor resident physician trainees.

Medical student notes are not acceptable in lieu of a resident's note. If viewable, a student note should be clearly labeled as a "Student Note." It is **not** acceptable for a resident to simply cosign a medical student note without comment - although residents may be identified as "expected cosigners" of medical student notes.

- It is preferable for the resident to write a short addendum that signifies an independent evaluation of the patient and that comes to independent conclusions.
- Alternately, the resident may write something similar to "I have read and edited the above medical student note and I have independently performed my own examination of the patient. I agree with the assessment and plans as they now stand". If there is no resident note, the teaching physician must write a note that "stands by itself".

The supervising practitioner or attending is ultimately responsible for the evaluation and management of the patient and for the supervision of all trainees assigned to work with him/her. While some of the day-to-day supervision of medical students may be delegated to residents, the attending retains medical-legal responsibility for the patient's care.