FAQ PNP primary care students:

*What is a Pediatric Primary Care Nurse Practitioner?*

A pediatric primary care nurse practitioner (PNP) is a master’s or doctorally prepared advanced practice nurse who provides advanced nursing care to children of all ages in primary care clinics, health departments, rural health clinics and other out-patient settings. PNPs work collaboratively with other health team members to provide holistic health care that includes health promotion, disease prevention, and diagnosis and management of episodic and chronic illnesses. See American Academy of Nurse Practitioners website: [http://www.aanp.org/all-about-nps/what-is-an-np](http://www.aanp.org/all-about-nps/what-is-an-np)

*Is there a “state board exam” for PNP’s?*

Rules and regulations for practicing PNPs are determined by state boards of nursing so they vary, somewhat, from state to state, but most states require that all PNPs pass one of two national certification examinations. PNP certification exams are offered by Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PCNB) and by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). Program graduates are eligible to sit for either of these exams although the majority of our students sit for (PCNB).

*What kind of employment opportunities are there for primary care PNP’s?*

Our PNP primary care graduates are employed in a variety of settings serving pediatric patients. These include but are not limited to health departments, school clinics, private clinics, rural health clinics, clinics in underserved area, clinics for military dependents, specialty clinics (pediatric endocrinology, pediatric hematology/oncology, pediatric GI, pediatric neurology ect.). We have even had students open their own clinics.

*When is on campus orientation? Fall 2014-September 5th and 6th.*

This date is different every year but it is usually sometime around the start of the Fall semester, all students are required to travel to Mobile, AL for about 2 days the year that they will be starting clinical. This is the only time you must come to campus. This is only for students who enrolled in the first clinical course (MCN 549).

*How do we obtain a preceptor?*

It is the students responsibility to obtain a preceptor. We suggest you use your connections and start asking preceptors that you have worked with or know from the community that you live in. The first step is to get them to verbally agree to precept you for 60 hours in the fall.

*Where do we do our 60 hours?*
The first semester you will be required to complete 60 hours. You can start these hours AFTER orientation and AFTER you have an approved contract. Most of you should plan on starting mid September or early October. These hours must be completed with an approved preceptor in a general pediatric primary care setting. This means no hospitals, and no specialty clinics. For this first semester there will also be no school clinics, or adolescent clinics allowed. We want you to get experience working with infants, toddlers, and children of all ages in a general pediatric primary care setting. We really need for you to get a thorough understanding of the well child visit including immunizations, and history taking.

**How are the clinical hours divided up for the program?**

- First Fall (MCN 549): 60 hours in general pediatric primary care clinic
- Spring (MCN 553): 180 hours in general pediatric primary care clinic
- Summer (MCN 555): 180 hours in a general pediatric primary care clinic
- Second Fall (MCN 556): 180 hours of which up to 100 can be in a pre-approved pediatric specialty clinic, the remainder needs to be completed in a pediatric primary care clinic.

**What kind of preceptor can we have?**

Your preceptor has to be practicing in a state where you have a license. Your preceptor needs to be working in a general pediatric clinic, this can be a private clinic, rural clinic, health department clinic etc. You need to do all 60 hours with the same preceptor. Your preceptor should be either a Pediatrician or a PNP.

**Can we use an FNP who only sees children in a pediatric clinic?**

Each NP specialty should ideally be trained under someone with the same specialty. So PNP students need a PNP or Pediatrician for their preceptor. Most FNP’s are working with a collaborating physician who in a pediatric setting is most likely a pediatrician so you should consider using them as your preceptor instead.

**There are 5 Pediatricians in the practice where I will be doing clinical, do I need to get all of them to sign a contract and be my preceptor?**

No, you need to pick one of these 5 to be your preceptor. You can not be in clinic if your preceptor is sick at home or at an emergency at the hospital. If however your preceptor is in another room with a patient you can discuss findings, and communicate with other health care providers in the clinic. Just remember the majority of your time should be spent seeing patients and discussing them with your actual preceptor.

**How do I get a contract signed?**
This is the most complicated question we get, and if you are patient, we will go over this in the September orientation. In addition, for students starting in the fall I will email a video that explains these steps. The majority of students in PNP primary care are able to get their contracts signed and approved within a few days or couple of weeks from start to finish. There are a couple of exceptions each year that take longer for various reasons.

**I can’t find my clinical site on the affiliation page, does that mean I can’t do clinical there?**

Not at all, it is complicated but if they are on our list it means that someone before you went through a lengthy process to get this site approved because they have special requirements, or paperwork that had to be completed by the student or our university. There are plenty of sites that we have used before that are not on this list. Your site is likely not on our affiliation list and that is ok. All that means is that they have to sign our 2 page contract, as long as they do this and the preceptor and site are appropriate then you will have no problem.

**What setting do I do my doctoral project in and how do I pick a topic?**

All DNP students will do their DNP project in the specialty area that they are either certified in or are getting certified in. This means that you will need to do your project in a pediatric primary care setting. It is best if your project is based on a topic and is a setting where you have experience and or professional contacts and connections. All PNP primary care DNP students will be enrolling in a project planning course that will be taught by faculty with the same specialty. During this time you will focus on the details of planning your project.