Extracurricular clinical work

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During the past decades the number of medical students increased disproportionally compared to the number of patients treated in the clinical departments. This puts a serious constrain on the student-patient interaction during the academic years. Medical students at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Szeged have to participate in a 4 week long “Nursing summer practice” after finishing the first year. After that the clinical education is organized into clinical practices where small groups of students learn the bed-side aspects of the medical profession. Later on there are courses where students may participate on simulation practices to get trained in doctor-patient interaction, but this training focuses more on the professional aspects of the clinical work (taking medical history, how to handle conflicts, etc.) than on everyday aspects of nursing care.

The Faculty of medicine announced the course “Voluntary clinical work” first time in the academic year of 2015/2016. Students can visit the clinical department and participate in patient care and nursing in their free time. The purpose was to gain practice and insight into nursing, to learn the tasks and responsibilities of other participants in the clinical work. Students who take the course are required to spend 28 hours /semester (worth 2 credit points). The feedback from both the students and the clinical departments is positive. We give a brief overview of the recent opinions and experiences of this course.