



NAVAJEEVANA REHABILITATION- TANGALLE

POLICY ON INTERNSHIPS

Navajeevana Rehabilitation – Tangalla, Sri Lanka since 1987 provides a holistic service for persons with disability – from early identification and intervention, to rehabilitation and support for livelihood development. Navajeevana which provides a range of paramedical services following the approach - Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) of persons with disability, is also committed to supporting internships/volunteer placements in collaboration with National and International Universities/ Non-government Organisations and Corporate Institutions working with and/or with the interest in disability inclusion.

Navajeevana history of offering internships to international and local students of Universities and colleges started in 2008 especially in the fields of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy. Since, then Navajeevana encourages internships as a practice to share the experience and expertise to serve persons with disability, better.

We regard interns as a valuable resource and encourage them to get involved at all levels of the organisation and within all appropriate activities. We aim to train, support and supervise them to the best of our abilities, and to act quickly and fairly if difficulties arise.

Procedural Guidelines

1. General principles

1.1 Purpose of document

The purpose of this internal document is to provide guidance on all aspects of internships at Navajeevana. It does not constitute a binding contract. It supplements other Navajeevana policies and procedures, as well as our definition of internship, our mission statement and our value base.

These procedures apply to all interns who undertake tasks on behalf and at the direction of the Navajeevana.

1.2 Responsibility

The Navajeevana Management is responsible for ensuring that the policy and the procedures in this document are implemented efficiently and effectively. All interns are expected to follow this guidelines and procedures related to this policy.

1.3 Eligibility

Internships are offered to the undergraduates/students with the requirement to complete internships based on the request made through an academic institution, with the registration as a proof for eligibility under the rule of the land, where the said institution operates. The qualified professionals at Navajeevana will offer supervision and guidance throughout the spell of the internship, and students required to use efficiently and effectively their time spent with Navajeevana team and the clients, i.e. persons with disability.

1.4 Relationship with Navajeevana team

Interns are appointed to learn and share knowledge and experiences with Navajeevana team (including Community Employment workers), with clear roles established to foster mutually beneficial and complementary relationships.

1.5 Working conditions

Interns are treated as equally and fairly as Navajeevana team members and are included in the organisations, functions and review processes wherever practical. They are provided with appropriate work sites/field and have access to the space, equipment and facilities necessary to complete assigned tasks, effectively and comfortably.

1.6 Working times

Navajeevana working times lies between 8:30AM – 5:00PM. Working times for interns depend on the type of work assigned, and can be negotiated with their supervisor assigned by the Management of Navajeevana. When expecting to be absent, interns should inform their supervisor as soon as possible, so that alternative arrangements can be made.

1.7 Appropriate behaviour

Interns are expected to work within the policies and procedures of the Navajeevana and adhere to its ethos. As representatives of the organisation, they are responsible for presenting a positive image of the Navajeevana to the outside world. The foreign interns are advised to study a little about the cultural expectations of Sri Lanka before applying for assignments at Navajeevana

1.8 Representation of Navajeevana

Interns must seek prior approval from the Navajeevana Management before undertaking anything that might affect the organisation. This includes, but is not limited to, statements to the press, joint initiatives with other bodies, and agreements involving contractual or financial obligations and work related photography.

1.9 Confidentiality

The Navajeevana respects the interns' right to privacy and confidentiality. In turn, interns are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all privileged information to which they are exposed while serving for Navajeevana.

1.10 Records

A system of records is maintained on all interns, including dates and times of service, duties performed, evaluation of work, etc. Intern records are accorded the same confidentiality as staff records and are maintained by the Administration Department of Navajeevana.

1.11 Service at the discretion of the Navajeevana

Any voluntary service is at the discretion of the Navajeevana. Navajeevana may, at any time, and for whatever reason, decide to terminate volunteer's relationships with the organisation. Similarly, volunteers may at any time, and for whatever reason, decide to terminate their relationships with Navajeevana. Notice of such decisions should be communicated at the earliest opportunity, preferably in writing.

2. Placement

2.1 Checks for suitability

Interns apply independently required to submit their Curriculum Vitae, certified by their Organisational Head/Department Head. References are always taken up. If the role requires it, health (mental and physical) is

also undertaken. Other checks may also be completed (for example, ascertaining professional qualifications). Independent interns are always warned in advance of the intention to make these checks. If they refuse permission and cannot provide an acceptable reason, they will not be placed.

2.2 Appointment

Formal appointments are made only after the role description has been agreed and all necessary checks have proved acceptable. No placements are made unless the requirements of the intern and the intern's supervisor can be met.

3. Training

3.1 Induction

All interns receive induction when on placement at Navajeevana. This consists of a general introduction to the organisation, as well as a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of their role.

3.2 On-the-job training

Interns receive initial and ongoing on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their tasks well. Review sessions with the supervisor and written submissions on field assignments is a must, to help the intern assess against the baseline capacity statement. Interns are encouraged to conduct information sharing sessions with the field staff and the community volunteers, during their assignment period.

4. Supervision

4.1 Lines of communication

Lines of communication should operate in both directions and should exist formally and informally. Interns must have access to all appropriate information, memos, materials and meetings relevant to their assignments. Interns must be consulted on all decisions that would substantially affect their internship conditions.

4.2 Supervisors

Each intern must have a clearly identified supervisor who is responsible for the day-to-day management of that volunteer. Head of Physical Medicine Department normally takes on the supervisor's role, but all staff members receive training and guidance on how to involve interns effectively in the work of the organisation.

4.3 Supervision sessions

Interns receive regular appraisals of their work, based on their role descriptions. Evaluation sessions take place between the interns and the supervisor. These review the performance of the intern; suggest any changes in work style; seek suggestions from the intern on means of enhancing the interns' relationship with the Navajeevana; convey appreciation to the intern and ascertain the continued interest of the intern in serving in his or her role. The sessions also serve as an opportunity to plan future tasks.

4.5 Dismissal

Interns who do not adhere to the organisational procedures or who fail to perform their volunteer assignments satisfactorily may be subject to dismissal. No interns' involvement will be terminated in writing until the intern has had an opportunity to discuss the reasons for possible dismissal with their supervisor. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to, the following: gross misconduct, being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol), theft, misuse of equipment and materials, abuse of clients and co-workers, breaches of confidentiality, failure to abide by Navajeevana policies and procedures and failure to complete duties to a satisfactory standard.

4.6 Concerns and grievances

If interns are not satisfied that issues relating to their assignments are being handled appropriately, they are entitled to have their concerns reviewed by the management committee. The management committee will discuss the issue as soon as possible, after receiving a written complaint, and take appropriate action. The chair of the management committee makes the ultimate decision.

4.7 Exit interviews

Where possible, informal exit interviews are held with any interns who are leaving the organisation, either because they have reached the end of their project, or are leaving for some other reason. Interviews are usually conducted with the intern's ex-supervisor and written records are kept. The session should ascertain why the intern is leaving, how they found their experience at Navajeevana, and what suggestions they offer to improve the way the organisation operates. The offer of a personal reference for future placements etc. is made to each intern.

5. Support and recognition

5.1 Support

Navajeevana endeavours to provide the support necessary to encourage and empower interns to make a meaningful contribution and gain significant benefits from their assigned work. Support forms part of the regular supervision sessions and gives interns a safe setting in which to express themselves, let off steam and discuss how they feel about internships. The Navajeevana will always try to be available to interns who require support in other areas that are affecting their performance.

5.2 Recognition

Interns provide a unique service to Navajeevana, the benefits of which are difficult to quantify. It is essential that their efforts are recognized and rewarded. Navajeevana staff is responsible for thanking all interns informally on a regular basis for the valuable contribution that they make to the organisation. Navajeevana is responsible for ensuring that more formalized recognition takes place at key times.

6. Cost for Internship placement:

Navajeevana charges a fee of US\$300 for a recommended 3- internship (week (US\$20 per working day) to cover the costs pertaining to Field Assignments, Supervisory time and administrative costs. Meals and accommodation required to be borne by the student. If the person like to stay at Navajeevana premises with basic facilities, we charge Rs.500/- (app.US\$3.4) per day. There are also other accommodation options available near Navajeevana, and information can be provided on submission of the needs and requirements of the applicant for internship.

7. Feedback

Constructive feedback on this document is always welcome. It must be given to the Navajeevana management who will ensure that it is considered fully.