



# Gaining Clinical Experiences

## Different types of Clinical Experiences & How to Get Them

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# Outline

- Types of Clinical Experiences
- Why Gain Clinical Experiences?
- Certification Jobs
- Non-Certification Jobs
- Shadowing
- On-Campus Experiences
- COVID-19 Experiences
- Picking Experiences



# Types of Clinical Experiences

# Types of Clinical Experiences (PA)

## Patient Care Experience

- Hands-On Patient Interaction
- Playing a *direct* part in the treatment of a patient
- Usually paid, can be volunteer
- Many school require min. 1000 hours

## Health Care Experience

- Any other health-related experience
  - Not directly responsible for the treatment of patients
- Clerical work, healthcare volunteering, HRIs, etc
- Usually no min. hour requirement

# Hour Conversions

- 1 year working full time = ~2000 hours
- 1 year working part time = ~1000 hours
- 2 years working full time = ~4000 hours
- The more hours, the more competitive



# Why Should I Obtain Clinical Experiences?



# Benefits of Clinical Experiences

- Part of Physician Assistant School Prerequisites
- Career Exploration
- Networking
- Career Confirmation
- Developing useful skills

# Keep track of your hours!



# Certification Jobs

# Certification Jobs

- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
  - Emergency Department Technician (ED Tech)
- Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)
- Medical Assistant (MA)\*\*\*
- Phlebotomist
- EKG Technician\*\*\*

# Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

- Provide out of hospital emergency medical care and transportation for critical and emergent patients
- Stabilize patients, take vitals, administer certain medications, take medical history/assessments, practice BLS interventions, assist paramedic with treatments (IV, Ventilators, EKG, etc)
- Course: 4-16 weeks
  - UCDFD: EMT 110/111 over Fall/Winter/Spring/Summer
- Cost: \$800 - \$2000
- Test: National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT)



# Emergency Department Technician (ED Tech)



- EMT in Emergency Department: Taking vitals, splint/bandage wounds, run/read EKGs, assist MD/PA/RN with basic treatments, work traumas/codes
- Most ED jobs require either an EMT or CNA license (phlebotomy is a plus)

# Phlebotomist

- Perform blood draws, injections, and calms down patients
- Works in a hospital (inpatient/outpatient) or clinic setting
- Can work for companies such as Vitalant
- Course: 2-8 weeks
- Cost: \$1500 - \$3000
- Certification: Phlebotomy Technician Certification





# Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA)

- Feed/bathe patients, take vitals, distribute medications, assist RNs with basic procedures
- Can work in a hospital/clinic/nursing home/senior care center
- Course: 6-12 weeks
- Cost: \$800 - \$1500
- Certification Test: National Nurse Aide Assessment Program (NNAAP)



# EKG Technician\*\*\*



- Apply 12-Lead EKG, print and analyze EKG rhythms
- No national certification
- Usually people are EKG Technicians in addition to being a CNA/MA/EMT/etc
- Places to get certified:
  - <https://cci-online.org/>
  - <https://www.nhanow.com/certifications/ekg-technician>



# Medical Assistant\*\*\*



- Take vitals, get patient history, prep patients for procedures
  - May perform blood draws, injections, skin biopsies
- Complete administrative and clinical tasks in the offices of physicians, hospitals, and other healthcare facilities
- Course: 4-12 months
  - Employers may hire *without* certification
- Cost: varies

# Other Examples of Certification Jobs

- Dental assistants
- Hemodialysis technician
- Ophthalmic technician
- Paramedic
- Pharmacy Technician
- Respiratory Therapist

# Non-Certification Jobs

# Non-Certification Jobs

- Medical Assistant\*\*\*
- EKG Technician\*\*\*
- Physical Therapy Aide (PTA)
- Hospice Volunteer
- Medical Scribe
- Dialysis Patient Care Technician
- Behavioral Health Technician
- Home health/personal care aide

# Shadowing

# Shadowing Experience

- Officially following and observing a PA/MD/NP/etc.
- Purely observational, no hands-on experience
- Contact family/friends or ask PCP
- Cold call/email private practices/clinics/urgent cares
- Call & set up a time to chat about the \_\_\_\_ profession
  - Things to ask:
    - What made you choose the \_\_\_\_ profession?
    - What made you choose the \_\_\_\_ specialty?
    - Where do you/would you like to see the \_\_\_\_ field go?
  - At the end, ask them if they or anyone they know will take shadowing students

# On-Campus Experiences



# Student-Run Clinics

- Work with medical professionals (MD/DO/PA) and students to provide care to underserved communities
  - Take vitals, history, assist with procedures, run labs, etc.
- 11 SRC under UCDMC
- Applications: Fall/Spring
- Competitive
- Prior experience not required
- Can split into PCE/HCE\*\*

# Health-Related Internships

- Hospital Volunteer in different departments
  - Good for networking/Shadowing/seeing how a hospital is run
- 4-8 Hrs/Week for 1-2 quarters
- Mostly HCE

# Gaining Experiences During COVID-19

# COVID-19 Experiences

- Some hospitals may allow volunteering
- Tutoring students online
- Homeless shelters
- Food banks - [www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank](http://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank)
- Volunteer Match - [www.volunteermatch.org/](http://www.volunteermatch.org/)
  - Virtual & in-person volunteering opportunities
- Translators without borders - [translatorswithoutborders.org/volunteer/](http://translatorswithoutborders.org/volunteer/)

# Which experience should I pick?

- What patient demographic do you want to work with?
- Do you want to spend more time outside/inside?
- Level of interprofessional interaction with other healthcare professions?
- How does the experience work with your timeline?
- Money/cost of certification (if applicable)



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