

UW Medicine / Clinical Observations at UW Medical Center

<http://www.uwmedicine.org/uw-medical-center/observership>

- It is the observer's responsibility to identify a provider to host them. Observational privileges will not be granted without the agreement of a UWMC provider to take full responsibility for the observer's time at UWMC.

Pre-Medical Students

- Visit the [School of Medicine website](#) to set up an observership and apply.

Observing at Harborview

- Visit the [HMC Observation Privileges](#) page to find more information about observing at Harborview.

Immunizations

- Observers are required to comply with all UWMC Immunization Policies and Procedures. **Applications with incomplete immunization documentation will not be approved.**
- Observers must submit records of a single TB skin test placed within one year of your observation date. In addition, they must complete and submit the TB symptom survey included in the packet within thirty days prior to their observation date.
 - All applicants must provide a copy of their PPD results, which includes written documentation of the skin test reaction size.
 - Applicants with positive PPD results must submit any available supporting documentation, such as a positive TB skin test reading and chest x-ray results. In addition, they must complete and submit the TB symptom survey included in the packet within thirty days prior to their observation date.
- Applicants must provide proof of immunization by providing copies of your immunization history. Contact UWMC Employee Health if you have specific questions, 598-4848.

How To Apply

1. Fill out the application.
2. Sign the agreements on page two and three of the application.
3. **Applications without a signature in the "Clinical Staff Sponsor" sections of the form will NOT be processed or approved.**
 - If the observer will be shadowing multiple providers within the same department or clinic, please write the additional names the space provided on page four of the form.
 - If the observer will be with more than three departments or clinics, an additional copy of page four with the provider's information and signature of approval is required.
4. Type a letter of intent on page five of the application.
5. Attach your immunization history, as outlined on page six of the application.
 - **Applications without documentation of TB screening will not be approved.** The PPD must have been placed within one year prior to the desired observation start date.
 - **Applications with incomplete immunization histories will not be approved.**
6. Scan the completed application, save it as a pdf, and email it to the Medical Director's Office at observer@uw.edu for the Medical Director's approval and signature.

7. Call 206-598-4848 to make an appointment with UWMC Employee Health to review your vaccination history. They are open Monday through Friday, 8:00am-4:00pm.
8. **Allow 2 weeks for processing. Applications submitted less than two weeks from the observation start date may not be processed and approved in time.**

– Click here for the form: [Application and Agreement for Observational Activities](#)

After Approval

- The Observer must bring the approval memo and application, provided by the Medical Director's Office, to Public Safety (located in BB-120) to obtain a temporary identification badge. This badge will allow the observer into patient care areas and must be worn visibly at all times. Individuals without a UWMC badge may be asked by Security to leave patient care areas.
- If you have questions or need further information please contact the Medical Director's office at observer@uw.edu

Shadowing Physicians

For Pre-Medical Students



Like many medical schools across the country, the University of Washington School of Medicine wants to make sure that applicants are making an informed decision before they spend their time and money to apply to and attend medical school. One of the common pieces missing in applications is the experience of shadowing. In order to “test drive” future career options, applicants should shadow physicians in the United States whose practice most closely resembles the applicant’s potential career goals.

Volunteering with patients, conducting clinical research, or working as an office assistant or insurance coordinator in an office are all great ways to develop a broader understanding of the field of medicine. However, they are NOT the same as shadowing.

Shadowing means specifically observing the physician-patient interaction.

By observing physicians at work, applicants can see how physicians deliver bad news or deal with difficult patients. Applicants will also develop a more realistic understanding of what medicine can and can't do. Although participating in medical mission work abroad may involve shadowing and is a wonderful form of service learning, it will not adequately provide an applicant with what the practice of medicine will be like in the U.S. Shadowing in the U.S. is an opportunity for prospective physicians to witness firsthand what they are getting into.

The UW School of Medicine recommends that applicants shadow for at least 40 hours in the U.S.

The 40 hours do not have to be with one physician or all in one week. In fact, shadowing multiple physicians over several months to years will give applicants an opportunity to explore not only different medical fields, but also to compare different practice settings and different physician styles.

Why shadow

- [Why Shadow](#) (PDF)
- Find out what the career is all about
- Clarify and validate initial impressions
- Understand the realities/limitations of medicine (i.e. learn about "the dark side")
- Test level of commitment
- Discover likes and dislikes
- Enhance motivation
- Improve the articulation of goals

Questions to ask yourself when shadowing:

- Can I see myself doing what this doctor does on a daily basis?
- Can I see myself as a colleague of this doctor?

- What are the joys and frustrations of this career?
- What are the pros and cons of this particular type of medical practice?

Consider: size of practice (solo or group), types of patients (age, sex, problems/diagnoses, insurance), size of community, salaried or self-employed, paper charts or electronic medical records, hours and call schedule, family life, community service and/or influence, ability to practice in rural area or overseas

- Am I drawn to diagnostic problem solving?
- Am I drawn to procedures?
- Is the doctor involved in clinical research?
- Is the doctor involved in "bench" (lab) research?
- How does the doctor learn more about his/her patient's personal lives? How is this knowledge factored into the patient's care?
- How does the doctor relate to his/her patients?

Consider: formal or friendly approach, standing up or sitting down, rushed or not rushed, listening or interrupting, speaking with words that the patient can understand or speaking medical jargon or speaking in patient's primary language if it isn't English

- What factors seem to play into how the patients respond to the doctor?
- How do I feel when there is no "cure" or treatment options?
- How do I feel about chronic problems compared with acute problems?
- How do I feel when I see patients who don't listen to advice or who don't take good care of their health?
- Did all patients with the same diagnosis seem the same? If not, how and why might they have been different from one another?
- Do I like situations in which a decision has to be made quickly?
- Do I like the pace of this type of practice?
- What did the doctor do when s/he didn't know the answer to something?

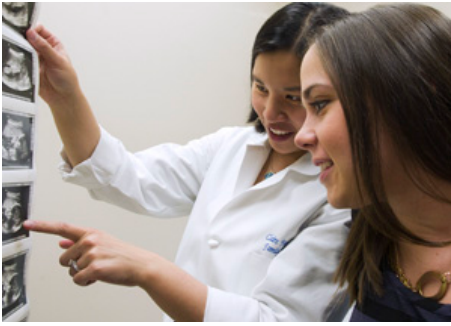
Arranging a shadowing experience

As an aspiring medical student, it is your responsibility to make the initial contact with the physician. Hospitals or county medical societies may be able to refer you to physicians who are willing to have shadows.

Practices and Hospitals have different regulations for having observers in the room with the doctor and the patient. It is your responsibility to find out what these are in order to meet them. At the least you will need to demonstrate that you understand the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, better known as HIPAA](#). Documentation may be required that you are fully immunized and therefore do not present a risk of infection to a patient.

For shadowing experiences at the UW Medical Center, please visit the [Clinical Observations](#) page to learn more. Other physicians, practices, and hospitals may require different or additional forms, see our [sample confidentiality documents](#) at the bottom right column of this page.

Ideas for finding shadowing opportunities:



- Ask your personal physician if you might be able to shadow him/her. If not, is there someone s/he could recommend?
- Network with friends and family to contact physicians they may know.
- Get a job as a scribe or medical interpreter.
- Volunteer at a hospital or clinic and network with physicians there.
- See the list below we have compiled for ideas and contacts.

Regional

WWAMI Area Health Education Centers (AHECs):The Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) in the WWAMI region work to attract young people into health careers. They want to help qualified students in their states be successful applicants to medical school. They can be helpful in identifying shadowing experiences for medical school applicants.

- Western Washington: [AHEC Western Washington](#)
- Eastern Washington: ahec.ewa@wsu.edu

Washington

- [Pro-Scribe](#): Provides medical documentation services in northwest
- [Scribe America - Outpatient Physician Scribe in Spokane](#)
- [Pre-Med Mentorship Program](#) for Pre-Med students through the Washington Academy of Family Physicians
- [Internships at the UW](#)
- [University of Washington SMDEP](#)
- [Healthcare Alternative Spring Break at UW \(HCASB\)](#) use the "[Applying and Planning](#)" for shadowing opportunities
- [Washington State Hospital Association \(WSHA\)](#)
- [Washington State Medical Association \(WSMA\)](#)

Volunteer Physicians for Shadowing Experiences

- Tim Bringer, MD - Family Practice/OB, Mountain Home, (near Boise) ID timbdoc@gmail.com
- Ty Chun, MD – Surgery in Silverdale, WA tychunmd@gmail.com
- Lisa Galbraith, DO, MPH - OB/GYN, Kadlec Medical Center, Prosser, WA BL6395@aol.com
- Jim Irwin, MD, CMO - Samaritan Healthcare, Moses Lake, WA jirwin@samaritanhealthcare.com
- Carl Plonsky – Pediatrics in Tacoma, WA, Assistant: Patricia Davis - patriciad@unionavepeds.com

For Physicians interested in being shadowed:

Thank you for making this opportunity available!

Clinical Volunteering: Helping or participating in a clinical setting. Primarily benefits others. May include verbal and/or physical contact with a patient. May lead to shadowing.

Shadowing: Observing doctor-patient interactions. Primarily benefits the shadow. Usually includes no patient interaction or physical contact. The doctor is not required to teach the shadow, and is likely NOT to write a letter of recommendation. May lead to mentoring.

Mentoring: Advising or training, especially a younger colleague. Generally benefits both mentor and mentee. Involves teaching. Could involve physical contact with a patient and/or learning procedures. May lead to letter of recommendation.

Having a shadow shouldn't take the physician any extra time. By nature, most physicians like to teach and it is hard to resist that urge when having a budding physician at your side. Because of the lack of "hands on" interaction with the patient, there is limited liability other than privacy. An affiliation agreement with UW is NOT necessary. If you are associated with a hospital, the applicant should arrange a volunteer experience with the volunteer office. Arranging for shadowing should go through medical director's office. These offices could collaborate on training and forms to sign. Once someone has been trained as a volunteer, they should understand what they need to know about confidentiality for shadowing. You may wish to establish some parameters with the applicant, either in writing or verbally, regarding the shadowing experience. These may include conforming to your facility's privacy, health, and safety rules, as well as acceptable and unacceptable behavior while shadowing. You should be explicit about whether pre-medical students can ask questions, and if so, when and where. Should the student remain in the room and interact with the patient if you have to temporarily leave the room? What is your preferred dress code?

Shadowing provides prospective physicians with the opportunity to witness first hand both the joys and frustrations of practicing medicine. They get to see how we handle delivering bad news or dealing with recalcitrant patients. They develop a more realistic understanding of what medicine can and can't do. You can decide how much time and how often you are willing to be shadowed. HIPAA is not a barrier; the students can be trained briefly by your office staff if they don't already have HIPAA training.

The shadowing student should understand HIPAA and sign a document demonstrating they acknowledge understanding that what they see and hear stays in the office. Use our [sample documents listed below](#), or create one specific to your facility.

The [Washington Academy of Family Physicians](#) provides opportunities through their website for students to request a mentor and be matched to a Family Medicine physician in the state of Washington. Some of the regional [AHECs](#) (Area Health Education Centers) also match prospective medical students with physicians for mentoring and/or shadowing.

We are trying to broaden the resources available to applicants by compiling a [list of physicians](#) in a variety of specialties and locations who are willing to have students watch them as they care for patients. You may want to check with your malpractice insurance carrier or hospital legal department to be certain that having an observer does not put you at any increased risk. Please see some sample documents below to use or modify to fit your circumstances.

If you are willing to have pre-med students "job shadow" you for a day, or a few hours per week or month, please contact [Carol C. Teitz, MD](#), Associate Dean for Admissions at UWSOM.

Shadowing Documents for non-specific Clinics or Hospitals:

Below are agreements we have created for your use as is, or to customize for your specific Clinic or Hospital.

- [Confidentiality Sample A](#)
- [Confidentiality Sample B](#)

- [Glossary of Terms](#)

UW Medical Center specific:

Please visit the [Clinical Observations](#) page to download their form and learn about shadowing opportunities at UWMC.

Confidentiality Statement will look like this

Confidentiality Agreement

“It is the policy of _____ hospital (or clinic) to maintain confidential information in strict confidence, both while at work and off duty. Therefore, all employees, volunteers, physicians, board members, students, contractors and others who have access to confidential information are prohibited from disclosing such information in any unauthorized manner. They must use this information only in ways that are consistent with this commitment to confidentiality.

Consistent with the principle of “need to know”, it is also incumbent on all who are exposed to confidential information to see that they use only as much of such information as is needed to do their job or perform their function.”

“_____ hospital or clinic treats the protected health information (PHI) of patients and members with special care. There are numerous Federal and state laws that protect the privacy and security of a patient’s information including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH).” Our facility has a legal and ethical responsibility to safeguard and to protect all confidential information. Confidential information includes patient information, employee information, business information, financial information and other information relating to this health care facility. In the course of my employment and/or voluntary association with x clinic or hospital I understand that I will come into contact with confidential information. Confidential information may be spoken, written or electronic. The purpose of this agreement is to clarify my duties regarding confidential information. I understand that I will not share any confidential information.”

Summary of HIPAA:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/summary/privacysummary.pdf>

Washington State WAC [70.02.020](#)

I have read and understand the above and agree to abide by strict confidentiality requirements.

<u>Print name</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Date</u>
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