

Guide to Get the Most Out of YOUR Health Profession Shadowing

The key to shadowing is learning about, growing in and more fully understanding your field of interest. Make the most of your shadowing experience!

STEP 1: Research and contact different health professionals in your field you want to shadow.

- Be kind, courteous, and most of all show some excitement towards learning and becoming a part of your health profession. Your passion and excitement will leave a lasting impression.
- Find potential opportunities to shadow by:
 - Contacting VCU Alumni: through www.vcualumni.org or via LinkedIn University pages
 - Searching Google: i.e. "Pharmacy listing, 23220"
 - Finding large and small hospitals, as well as private practice, community health centers, free clinics and hospice centers
 - Looking up insurance companies, ex: Aetna, Kaiser Permanente, Humana, etc.
- Contact organizations
 - Send an email, call directly or send a written letter (an example can be found at the end of this document)
 - Keep in mind that private or small practices, such as those involved dental, physical or occupational therapy, or veterinary, will probably be easiest to make and maintain contact due to their size. Hospitals and larger institutions may be busier and require multiple follow up contacts. Don't give up!
 - Confirm dates, times, length of shadowing if possible, and any other details before your first day arrival (check-in procedures, documentation needed, dress code etc.)

STEP 2: It's your first day shadowing! WHOOW! What to expect and what to do.

- Expect
 - To be standing around and watching everything the healthcare professional does.
 - To possibly feel awkward or out of place.
 - The health professional may ask the patient if they are okay with you observing and a patient may say no. Do not take it personally.
- Do
 - Ignore any awkwardness or feeling of being out of place while a procedure or consultation is happening. Everyone who has shadowed has been through it! Consider it a rite of passage of sorts.
 - Greet everyone and smile. Address everyone formally unless told otherwise.
 - BRING SOMETHING SMALL TO TAKE NOTES ON! Pay attention to:
 - People to observe:
 - The health professional, other employees, patients and their families
 - Work environment factors to observe:
 - Workload and pace, team work and team cohesion, communication styles, attitude and work values
 - Work style factors to observe:
 - Skills required, procedures/interventions being performed, type and length of patient interaction, equipment used, and variety of tasks performed
 - ASK QUESTIONS.
 - Don't interrupt a procedure. Remember you're a guest.
 - Dress business casual, unless directed otherwise.
 - Women: Slacks, blouse or button shirt, blazer, heels or nice flats
 - Men: Slacks, button shirt, blazer, dress shoes

STEP 3: Day one is done. Figure out what you know and don't know about people who work in this profession.

- Do you know about their...
 - Lifestyle
 - Work schedule
 - Reasons to do [a procure, process etc.] a certain way
 - Patient interactions
 - Skills required
 - Office dynamics

STEP 4: Further Shadowing. Show interest and ask questions to find out what you want to know.

- Some good questions are:
 - What do you like best and least about your job?
 - If you had to do it over would you consider the same career?
 - How do you to balance your family/personal life with this career?
 - How has the industry changed since you began working in it?
 - What is your advice on applying to, and choosing, a health professions school?
 - What are some trends you see in this profession?
 - How do you continue to grow your education or skills?

STEP 5: Reflect. The key to determining if this is the best career path for you!

- What did you like and dislike about the professional and job you were shadowing:
1 (Hated it!) – 5 (no opinion or don't know) – 10 (absolutely loved it!) = Circle one
 - Work schedule 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 - Patient contact 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 - Stress level 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 - Responsibilities 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 - Professionalism 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 - Environment 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 - Variety/Routine 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- Based on your experiences, what are your next step(s) to determining the best career path for you?
 - _____
 - _____

*Sample Email

Dear **Dr. _____**,

I am a **(year in school, i.e. junior)** studying **(major)** at Virginia Commonwealth University. I have learned a lot from my academic experience and would now like to learn about **(health profession)** from the perspective of a health care professional. I am seeking a shadowing opportunity and hope you might allow me to observe your clinical interactions for a few hours on a day and time that works best for you. *(You can include the hours you are free here).* I have completed the HIPPA module on patient confidentiality and have an updated TB screening *(not always required but recommended)*. In addition, I have copies of all of the forms that are necessary for shadowing at **(i.e. ABC hospital)**. Attached you will find my resume in case you'd like to review my prior experiences and activities. Please let me know if you are able to accept a student shadow at this time.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Interested VCU Student





616.331.8585 | www.gvsu.edu/clasadvising | C-1-140 MAK

Chiropractic Shadowing Opportunities

Alpha Chiropractic Clinic
Dr. James Waswick, D.C.
Dr. Susan Gordon-Arnston, D.C.
Dr. Jeffery Arnston, D.C.
6491 San Ru Ave. Suite B
Jenison, MI 49428
616-669-8880

Alpine Chiropractic
Dr. Kelli Wilcox-Degraaf, D.C.
Dr. Ronald Wilcox, DC
5900 Alpine Ave.
Comstock Park, MI 49321
616-784-5433
www.alpinechirocenter.com

American Chiropractic Center
Dr. Warner DeLeeuw, D.C.
0-81 Lake Michigan Drive NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49534
616-453-4437

OR
738 32nd Street SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49548
616-243-1444
<http://www.americanchiropractic.com>

Barton Chiropractic
1122 Leonard NE
Grand Rapids, MI
616-459-8552
<http://www.bartonchiropracticoffice.com>

Dr. Kellen Brusveen, D.C.
11325 54th St.
Allendale, MI 49401
616-777-0309
<http://www.allendalechiropractor.com/>

Doran Chiropractic
6534 Lake Michigan Drive
Allendale, MI 49401
616-895-5499

Standale Chiropractic
Dr. Brandon Berg, D.C.
4110 Lake Michigan Drive NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49534
616-453-3404
www.standalechiropractic.com

Gillis Family Chiropractic
Dr. Ben Gillis, D.C.
1845 RW Berends Drive SW
Wyoming, MI 49519
616-538-2200
www.gillisfamilychiropractic.com

Life Family Chiropractic Centers
3484 Chicago Drive
Hudsonville, MI 49426
616-662-1191
5795 Balsam Dr
Hudsonville, MI 49426
616-662-1191
www.lifefamilychiro.com

ChiroHealth
Dr. Sandra Stanton, D.C.
6769 Courtland Dr.
Suite 100
Rockford, MI 49341
616-863-9482
www.chirohealthrockford.com

Dr. Jed Emms
Grand Rapids Family Chiropractic
6807 Cascade Rd., Ste. D
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
drjed@grfamilychiropractic.com
616-975-1100

O'Brien Family Chiropractic Center
Dr. Michele O'Brien, D.C.
Dr. Gabriel O'Brien, D.C.
1519 E. River Rd., Suite B
Muskegon, MI 49445
231-744-6400
<http://www.muskegonchiropractors.com/>



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Chiropractic Shadowing Opportunities

Higher Health Chiropractic
Dr. Andrew Schneider, D.C.
Dr. Erik Kowalke, D.C.
1027 Gezon Pkwy
Wyoming, MI 49509
616-301-8300
<http://gethigherhealth.com/>