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
  - Work schedule
  - Patient contact
  - Stress level
  - Responsibilities
  - Professionalism
  - Environment
  - Variety/Routine

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
  - Patient contact
  - Stress level
  - Responsibilities
  - Professionalism
  - Environment
  - Variety/Routine

- 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
Medical Volunteering/Shadowing Guide

**Bad Axe**
Dr. Craig McManaman, DO
Orthopedic Surgeon
Huron Memorial Hospital
(989) 269-5015
*ONLY Pre-Med students

**Battle Creek Area**
Bronson Battle Creek
(269) 245-8470
http://www.bronsonhealth.com/volunteer/volunteer-at-bbc
*ONLY current volunteers may shadow

Oaklawn Hospital
(269) 789-3922
www.oaklawnhospital.org
http://www.oaklawnhospital.org/donate-your-time

Southwest Rehabilitation Hospital
(269) 965-3206
http://www.sw-rehab.org
http://www.sw-rehab.org/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/

**Cedar Springs**
Dr. Danielle Sigelko, DO
Family Medicine
White Pine Family Medicine
(616) 696-2020
Contact: danigrondin@gmail.com

**Detroit Area**
St. John Providence
(248) 849-8806
Contact: Cindy Boeneman (313) 343-3680
http://www.stjohnprovidence.org/Volunteer/

**Eaton Rapids**
Eaton Rapids Medical Center
(517) 663-9520
www.eatonrapsidsmedicalcenter.org

**Grand Haven**
North Ottawa Community Hospital
Contact: (616) 847-5215 or (616) 847-5612
http://www.noch.org

**Grand Rapids**
Dr. Duane Berkompas, MD
Cardiology
Spectrum Health
(616) 885-5000
duane.berkompas@spectrumhealth.org

Dr. Terri Bott-Kothari, MD
Radiation Oncologist
MetroHealth
(616) 252-8180

Dr. Jennifer Cory, DO
Internal Medicine
Metro Health
(616) 252-5201

Dr. Todd Chassee, MD
Emergency Medicine
Spectrum Health
(616) 391-1680
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/J5SVM7J
tchassee@gmail.com

Cherry Street Health Services
(616) 776-2120
http://www.cherryhealth.org
*11 locations in Grand Rapids

Dr. Stephen Cohle, MD
Medical Examiner
Blodgett Hospital
(616) 774-7499

Dr. Sandra Dettmann, MD
Addiction Medicine Specialist
The Dettmann Center
(616) 350-3230
notallgirls@me.com

Dr. Ulrich Duffner, MD, FAAP
Blood & Bone Marrow Transplant Program
Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital
(616) 391-9127
ulrich.duffner@spectrumhealth.org

Location: L:/Shared/PreProfessional/MD/Medical Volunteer & Shadowing Opportunities
Updated 9/2016
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Dr. Randall Duthler, MD
Family Medicine
MetroHealth Southwest
(616) 252-8440
Contact: jennifer.devries@metrogr.org
www.metrohealth.net

Gilda’s Club of Grand Rapids
(616) 453-300
Contact: Linden Becker lbecker@gildasclubgr.org

Health Intervention Services
(616) 475-8446 ext. 116
Contact: Lynne lkuhl@hisgr.org
www.hisgr.org
http://www.hisgr.org/volunteer

Jayme Heim, FNP
Dermatology
Psoriasis/Eczema Treatment Center
(616) 459-1361
http://psoriasiseczemacenters.com/

Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital
(616) 391-9000
http://www.helendevoschildrens.org

Dr. Brian Hinkley, DO
Family Medicine
Metro Health
(616) 252-1500
Brian.hinkley@metrogr.org

Dr. Ronald Hoogmoed, MD
Internal Medicine
East Paris Internal Medicine Associates
(616) 954-9291
Contact: hoogmoed@comcast.net
*Primarily older adults with chronic medical problems

Dr. Russel Lampen, DO
Infectious Disease
Spectrum Health Medical Group
(616) 774-2822

Dr. Ryan Madder, MD
Interventional Cardiology
Spectrum Health
(616) 608-8300
ryan.madder@spectrumhealth.org

Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital
(616) 242-0300 or (616) 493-9752
Contact: volunteer@maryfreebed.com
http://www.maryfreebed.com/Jobs/Volunteering/Contact-Volunteer-Services

Mercy Health/Saint Mary’s Health Services
Contact: Rachel Selgo (616) 685-1898
or selgor@trinity-health.org
http://www.mercyhealthgrandrapids.com/welcometosaintmarys

MetroHealth Hospital
(616) 252-7009
www.metrohealth.net/careers/volunteers

Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services
(616) 281-6308
http://www.pinerest.org
*ONLY Students interested in Psychiatry

Spectrum Health Facilities
*Students interested in volunteering at any of the
Spectrum Health locations should apply at:
http://www.spectrumhealth.org/Volunteer

**Students interested in job shadowing at any of the
Spectrum Health locations should apply at:
http://www.spectrumhealth.org/jobshadowing

Spectrum Health Medical Group – Infectious Disease
(616) 774-2822
*7 Physicians, 4 Nurse Practitioners and 2 PAs

Dr. Timothy Thoits, MD
Neurology
Spectrum Health Medical Group
Contact: Timothy.Thoits@spectrumhealth.org

Dr. Jeffery Woo, MD
Internal Medicine
Grand Valley Medical Specialists
Contact: woojeffery@yahoo.com

Zeeland Community Hospital
(616) 772-5736
www.zch.org

*Primarily older adults with chronic medical problems
Medical Volunteering/Shadowing Guide

**Hastings**

Pennock Hospital  
(269) 945-1760  
Contact: Jan Hawthorne (269) 945-1212  
http://www.pennockhealth.com  
http://www.pennockhealth.com/volunteer.html

**Lansing**

Ingham Regional Medical Center  
Volunteer Contact: (517) 975-6924  
http://www.irmc.org  
http://www.mclaren.org/Lansing/Volunteersgl.aspx

Sparrow Health System  
(517) 364-1000  
http://www.sparrow.org/jobshadowing  
https://www.sparrow.org/?id=1516&sid=1

**Holland**

Holland Community Hospital  
(616) 394-3140  
Contact: volunteers@hollandhospital.org/jobs  
http://www.hollandhospital.org  
http://www.hollandhospital.org/AboutUs/Volunteers.aspx  
*Interested students must apply for volunteer opportunities through their job board online.

**Midland**

Mid-Michigan Medical Center- Midland Campus  
Volunteer Contact: (989) 839-3340  
http://www.midmichigan.org  
http://www.midmichigan.org/about/VolunteerOpportunities/

**Howell**

McPherson Hospital  
Contact: Lori Koehn (620) 241-2251  
or lorik@mcphersonhospital.org  
http://www.mcphersonmemorial.org/volunteers.cfm#volunteer

**Muskegon**

Dr. Jeremy Barber, DO  
Interventional Gastroenterology  
Mercy Health Partners  
(616) 502-9672

**Ionia**

Sparrow Ionia Hospital  
(616) 527-4200  
Contact: Mary Thacker (616) 523-1425  
or mary.thacker@sparrow.org  
http://www.sparrow.org/?id=702&sid=1

**Kalamazoo**

Bronson Methodist Hospital  
(269) 341-7654  
http://www.bronsonhealth.com  
http://www.bronsonhealth.com/volunteer

Mercy General Health Partners  
Volunteer Contact: Kathy Daly (231) 728-4711  
Shadowing Contact: Kaslena Hussey (231) 728-4089  
or husseyk@mercyhealth.com  
www.mercyhealthmuskegon.com/careers-volunteer-muskegon

Borgess Medical Center  
Volunteer Contact: (269) 226-4882  
Shadowing Contact: Sharron White (269)226-7363  
http://www.borgess.com  
http://www.borgess.com/default.aspx?pld=1087%20kMkRNKsheY