

Patient Care Experience Information for Prospective Students

Applicants are required to complete a minimum of 1,000 hours of direct (hands on) patient care experience. Successful applicants often exceed the minimum number of hours. Current students accepted in previous admission cycles had direct patient care experience ranging from 1,000 to over 13,000 hours. Applicants without previous health care experience are often able to acquire acceptable direct patient care experience working as a medical or nursing assistant or aide in settings such as hospitals, clinics, or physicians' private practices where a wide range of patients is seen and there is an opportunity for exposure to numerous types of health care providers. Volunteer patient care experience in a long term care or hospice setting is also acceptable. Applicants are also encouraged to shadow a PA to learn more about the daily routine/role of the PA; however, this experience does not count as "direct" patient care experience.

Desirable: medical assistant, physical therapist/PT aide/assistant, respiratory therapist, occupational therapist, EMT/paramedic, licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, nurse practitioner, certified nursing assistant, nurse's aide, phlebotomist, medical corpsman, pharmacist, hospital social worker, psychologist, X-ray technician, surgical technician, medical technician, emergency room technician, patient care technician, Peace Corps volunteer, clinical health educator, athletic trainer, hospice volunteer (if experience includes direct patient care), chiropractor, dietician

Partially acceptable if there is direct patient contact (up to 500 hours will count from these categories): medical technologist, audiologist, exercise physiologist, optician, pharmacy technician, child life associate, dental assistant/hygienist, medical scribe

NOT acceptable: shadowing, non-clinical research positions, CPR or ACLS instructor, patient transporter, pharmaceutical representative, ski patroller, massage therapist, life guard, personal (fitness) trainer, aerobics instructor, registrar, laboratory-based researcher, unit or medical secretary, ward/insurance clerk, peer educator, reader or other non-medical work in waiting room or other medical setting, volunteering at marathons, blood donor clinics, fundraising for medical causes, etc.

Although valuable to the practice of medicine, clinical experiences which lack direct patient care responsibilities are not competitive and do not prepare students for successful completion of our Physician Assistant Program.