

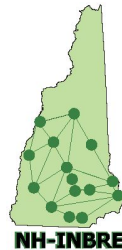
# Medical School Mentoring

Session 1: The Pre-Meds Guide to  
Clinical Experience

Presented by: The NH-INBRE  
Alumni Network



October 27th, 2025



# About Us - NH INBRE Alumni Network & Mentoring Programs

New Hampshire INBRE (IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence) is a program funded by the National Institutes of Health to develop a coordinated network of biomedical research and research training in New Hampshire.

In 2021, the NH INBRE implemented a [one-on-one mentoring program for INBRE students](#) to be paired with INBRE alumni.

Alumni mentoring provides career and academic guidance to current students on a volunteer basis.

In 2022, following the INBRE annual conference, two INBRE alumni recognized an urgent need to provide mentorship support for the numerous pre-med majors at the partner schools.

In 2023, the Medical School Mentoring program was launched for all pre-med students at the partner schools.

*Medical School Mentors are current medical students that are either INBRE alumni or volunteers from the lead partner schools.*

2025: Mentoring program extends invites to all INBRE funded schools. **Welcome!**

#### Lead Partners:

Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth  
University of New Hampshire at Durham

#### Partner Institutions:

Colby-Sawyer College  
Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH)  
Franklin Pierce University  
Keene State College  
New England College  
Plymouth State University  
Saint Anselm College  
University of New Hampshire at Manchester

#### Associated Members:

Rivier University



# Medical School Mentoring Program: Goals

- Provide resources, information, and support to students who are on their journey to become physicians.
- To **supplement** the pre-med advising at the NH INBRE partner schools.
- Establish more networking relationships within the INBRE community and beyond.



# Mentor Introductions



**Somer:** Postdoc  
Geisel School of  
Medicine at Dartmouth,  
Program Admin



**Haley:** M3  
Stritch School of Medicine  
Loyola University of Chicago  
Took MCAT in August 2021



**Caitlyn:** M4  
St George's University  
School of Medicine  
Took MCAT in July 2021



**Ashley:** M4  
Ross University  
School of Medicine  
Took MCAT in May 2021






# Why clinical experience matters

- Builds connection between you and your career (your “Why Medicine?”)
- Shows dedication to the pursuit
- Makes gap years meaningful (if taking any)
- Gives you perspective to different career types in healthcare
  - Helps you differentiate between why you chose MD/DO and not PA, RN, CNA, etc
- Skills gained: patient care, history taking, even just environmental exposure will help you later on in school
- Helps you find mentors








# Archived Material

## 2024 - 2025 Archived Sessions:

October	November	January	February	April
Medical School Panel Meet & Greet	MD/DO/MD-PhD/Caribbean Schools	All about the MCAT	Meet & Greet with Admissions	How to choose which schools to apply to
 Goals, milestones, and customized plan for applying to medical school	 Types of schools, degrees, and other dual degree programs	 Preparing to take the MCAT and practice question review	 Q&A with Dartmouth Geisel School of Medicine	 Applying to medical school and picking the right ones

## 2023 - 2024 Archived Sessions:

September	October	January	February	March	April
Medical School Panel Meet & Greet	MD/DO/MD-PhD/Caribbean Schools	Meet & Greet with Admissions	All about the MCAT	Gap Year Ideas	Primary Application, Secondaries & Interview Prep
 Goals, milestones, and customized plan for applying to medical school	 Types of schools, degrees, and other dual degree programs	Q&A with Dartmouth Geisel School of Medicine	 Preparing to take the MCAT and practice question review	 Plan your gap year and hear personal gap year stories	 What to expect

## 2022 - 2023 Archived Sessions:

January	February	March	April
 All About the MCAT	 Personal Statement Dos & Don'ts	 Primary Application	 Letters of recommendation, making your school list & secondary apps

*Click the link under the past sessions for archived presentations*

# What Counts as Clinical Experience

## Direct Patient Interaction:

- Volunteering in hospitals or clinics
- Scribing
- EMT or medical assistant roles
- Hospice volunteering
- Phlebotomist
- CNA/Home Health Aid
- Patient transportation
- Community Screenings (BP screenings)

## Indirect Exposure:

- Shadowing physicians
- Medical or hospital volunteer (non-patient roles)
  - a. Information desk, supply restocker
- Public health outreach
- Clinical Research with data/ EMR charts
- Health policy or advocacy

# What is better?

- Direct vs Indirect clinical experience?
  - Both count as hours!
  - Both are important
  - Both show different aspects of the healthcare field
- Short answer: You need both, direct clinical experience is generally more valuable because it shows you've worked with patients, not just around them.

## Typical Expectation:

Most medical schools like to see **at least 100–150 hours** of **direct** experience, though more is better if it's meaningful and **sustained**.

Experiences should be diverse and demonstrate key traits like empathy, teamwork, and critical thinking.

# Direct patient interaction

## Examples:

- **Hospital volunteering:** Assisting nurses, helping patients with comfort items, transporting patients, etc.
- **Medical scribing:** Charting patient encounters for physicians — great exposure to real-time clinical decision-making.
- **Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA):** Providing basic patient care in hospitals or nursing homes.
- **Emergency Medical Technician (EMT):** Responding to emergencies and providing pre-hospital care.
- **Medical Assistant (MA):** Taking vitals, preparing patients for exams, assisting in outpatient clinics.
- **Phlebotomist:** Drawing blood and interacting directly with patients.
- **Hospice or palliative care volunteer:** Supporting patients and families through end-of-life care.
- **Clinic or community health volunteer:** Helping at free clinics or vaccination drives.

# Shadowing / Observational Experiences

These help you observe the physician–patient relationship and learn how different specialties work.

## Examples:

- Shadowing a family medicine physician, pediatrician, or surgeon.
- Spending time in a rural or underserved clinic.
- Observing procedures or hospital rounds.
- Virtual shadowing programs (some hospitals and organizations offer these).

**Tip:** Keep a journal of what you learn from each experience, it helps you write your personal statement and primary application when it comes time to.

# Community & Preventive Health Involvement

Even if not inside a hospital, these show commitment to patient well-being and healthcare access.

## Examples:

- Volunteering with public health outreach programs (e.g., blood pressure or diabetes screenings).
- Working with mobile clinics or health fairs.
- Participating in telehealth patient follow-up or remote monitoring programs.
- Health education projects — teaching about nutrition, hygiene, or preventive care.

**Tip:** You can help create an organization or group like this! This would also count as leadership on your application.

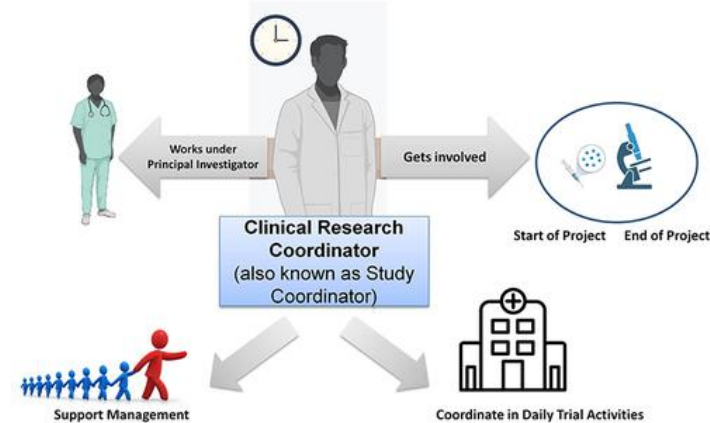


# Clinical Research with Patient Involvement

These combine research skills with patient interaction or clinical relevance.

## Examples: Clinical Research Coordinator

- Assisting with clinical trials (recruiting participants, collecting samples, taking vitals).
- Working in a translational or outcomes research lab that involves patient data.
- Interviewing patients for quality improvement or survey studies.
- This opportunity is good for someone who loves research and wants to get clinical experience as well.
  - a. They offer this jobs at bigger research institutes (i.e. Dartmouth or Boston Hospitals)
  - b. This is a good opportunity for gap years after undergrad



# Specialized or Unique Experiences

These can make your application stand out if they align with your interests.

## Examples:

- Global health trips or medical missions (with ethical, sustainable organizations).
- Disability-focused programs (working with adaptive clinics or rehabilitation centers).
- Veterans or homeless clinics (underserved patient populations).

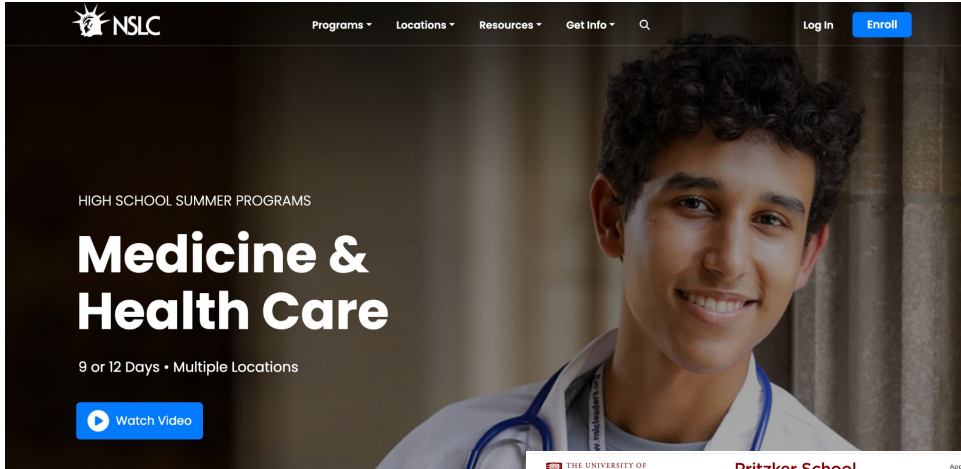
# How to Find Opportunities

- Contact hospital volunteer offices
- Ask professors, alumni or advisors
  - a. Use the Medical School Mentoring Mentors as a resource
- Look for pre-health student organizations
- Use local clinics or nonprofit programs
- Apply to structured summer programs (AHEC, SHPEP, etc.)

\*Many programs/opportunities require a certain time commitment, so be prepared for that

# Structured Programs

# Summer Health Professions Education Program



NSLC

Programs ▾ Locations ▾ Resources ▾ Get Info ▾ 🔍

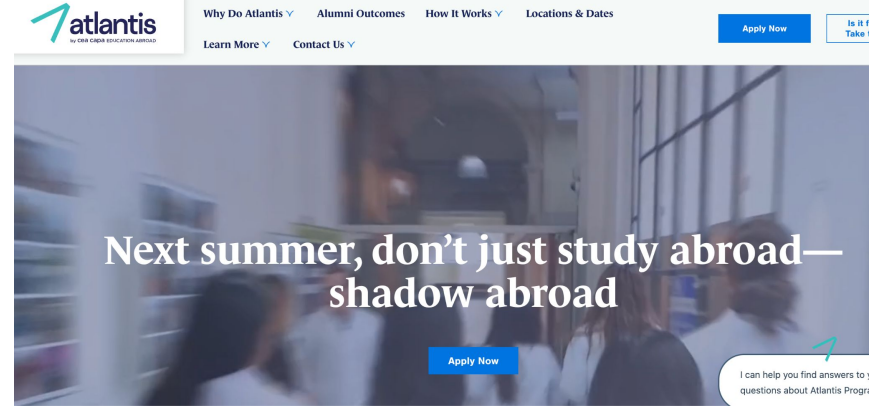
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#### RESOURCES

### Summer Pathway Programs

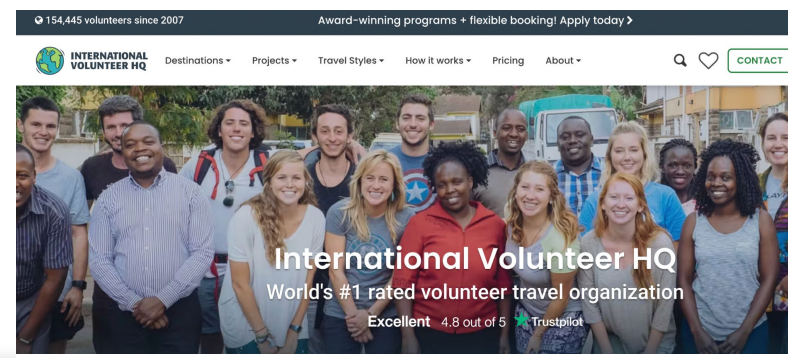
The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine is home to a variety of pathway programs that prepare and inspire talented high school and college students to pursue careers in medicine and in health-related research.

**Program Outcomes**

PSOMER and CAMP participants have gone on to attend medical school at institutions such as: Baylor University, Emory University, Indiana University, Loyola University, Meharry Medical College, The University of Chicago, University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Miami, University of Pennsylvania, Wright State University.

**Program Contacts**

Niswalia Davis, Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Administrator



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# Making the Most of Your Experience

- Go in with a plan: what are you trying to get from this experience?
- Be proactive: ask questions, observe carefully, set expectations
- Reflect on what you learn about patient care
- Keep a journal for future application essays: what you learned, who you worked with
- Show professionalism — be reliable and respectful
- Maintain meaningful relationships
- Quality > Quantity

# What Admissions Committees Look For

- Sustained commitment (over months, not just weeks)
- Reflection and personal growth
- Understanding of teamwork in healthcare
- Ability to articulate your “why medicine” story
- Genuine exposure to patients: You’ve seen illness, recovery, and the human side of medicine up close—the good and the bad.
- You can describe how those moments deepened your empathy and commitment to care.

**Example reflection:** “After helping a patient during a blood pressure screening, I realized the importance of small, preventive steps in improving long-term health.”

# What Admissions Committees Look For Cont.

## Commitment to Underserved or Diverse Communities

- Many schools prioritize applicants who engage in community-based or service-learning experiences.
- Experiences that reduce health disparities or promote preventive care (like your community BP screenings!) show alignment with real-world health needs.

# Discussion: What did WE do for clinical experience?





**Contact Information:**

Haley Zanga: [hzanga@luc.edu](mailto:hzanga@luc.edu)

*Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine '26*

Somer Matar, PhD: [Somer.Mary.Matar@dartmouth.edu](mailto:Somer.Mary.Matar@dartmouth.edu)

*Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies '25*

*Thank  
you!*