

Shadowing & Observation Resources

Fall 2023

Shadowing & Observation Overview

Shadowing or observing healthcare professionals in their day-to-day work gives pre-professional students insight into what a given profession entails and provides a realistic view of what a specific job looks like. Seeking out shadowing opportunities demonstrates that students are committed to exploring the profession, and can help students answer the question, “Why this profession?” It can take some time to secure shadowing opportunities, so it is important to start seeking opportunities early. Students who know they need a specific number of shadowing or observation hours to apply to professional school should start seeking experiences early and not wait until the last minute.

Seeking Shadowing Opportunities

Securing shadowing opportunities takes time and effort. It is not uncommon to reach out to multiple providers or submit several shadowing applications before securing an opportunity. When making initial contact, be sure to provide the following information:

- Information about who you are (name, college you attend, major, contact information)
- Why you are reaching out to them (inquiring about shadowing or an informational interview)
- Your availability (be as flexible as possible)
- Resume

Having a template of what to say on the phone or via email when inquiring about shadowing can be helpful. Here is an example of an [email request](#) and a [phone request](#). If there is no response from an organization or contact within a week, it is appropriate to send a follow-up email or call again.

Students can find shadowing opportunities by reaching out to individual providers in their personal or academic network (family physician, physical therapist they have seen as a patient, pharmacist at local pharmacy, etc.). Hospitals and medical centers often offer formal shadowing programs. These formal shadowing programs are often limited to one or two experiences a year, so while they can be a good place to start, it is also helpful to continue reaching out to individual providers for shadowing experiences that may be more in-depth or that may continue for longer periods of time.

Informational Interviews

Although healthcare professionals may not be available for a full shadowing experience, they may be willing to offer time for a 20- to 30-minute informational interview. Informational interviews are a good way to ask questions of a professional to gain insight into things such as what their job entails, how they got to where they are, and what skills they use in their work.

- [Fahey Career Center Guide to Informational Interviewing](#)
- [How to Do an Informational Interview Video](#)

Shadowing Programs & Resources

Bryan Health Job Shadowing

In addition to Physician, NP, and PA shadowing, Bryan Health offers shadowing in PT, OT, Pharmacy, and Speech and Respiratory Therapy.

CHI Health Student Experience Program

Students can request to shadow many kinds of healthcare professionals at locations throughout the CHI Health System. In the [CHI Health Student Experience Program application](#), students can list their preferred location and profession of interest. The process can take 4 weeks or more, so students must plan ahead when indicating the dates and times they are available to shadow.

Children's Hospital & Medical Center Shadow Learning

The [Shadow Learning program at Children's Hospital & Medical Center](#) allows college students to observe medical professionals in a healthcare setting. Shadow requests are not guaranteed to be fulfilled, as it is up to the Children's employee to accept a shadow student. Direct questions to the Office of Education at OED@childrensomaha.org. Children's Hospital & Medical Center also offers a Child Life Internship.

Creighton School of Dentistry Shadowing

The Creighton School of Dentistry offers a dental clinic that provides affordable dental care to the local community. Creighton dental students offer dental services under the close supervision of dental faculty. Creighton undergraduate pre-dental students may shadowing in these clinics. To be eligible to shadow, Creighton undergraduates must complete a "Orientation and Training for Participation in the School of Dentistry Clinics" module that includes detailed information on protective measures to ensure the safety of the student and patient in the clinic environment. The module is available within the Pre-Health Information Community, PHLC 200, and PDDS 300 Blueline sites. Contact CARS@creighton.edu for more information.

Creighton Pediatric Therapy Clinic Shadowing

Students seeking observation hours to fulfill professional school application requirements may apply for shadowing opportunities at [Creighton Pediatric Therapy](#). Students can shadow Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, or Speech Therapists. Opportunities may be limited and are based on provider availability.

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital Undergraduate Observations

[Madonna](#) welcomes a limited number of undergraduate students to observe clinicians at work if they are currently enrolled in coursework to pursue a career in a rehabilitation setting.

OneWorld Community Health Centers One-Day Job Shadow

The [OneWorld Job Shadow Program](#) enables current or prospective healthcare students to observe healthcare employees in a workplace setting. The goal of the program is to help individuals learn about health career options, as well as the education levels and skills required for different occupations in the healthcare field. OneWorld's job-shadowing experience is designed to be a one-time, observation-only experience lasting two to four hours. Job shadowing is available Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm.

Southern California College of Optometry Alumni Shadowing Program

SCCO at Marshall B. Ketchum University is proud to announce [a new program to assist pre-optometry students seeking shadowing experience](#). SCCO Alumni have volunteered to host pre-optometry students.

Step into Podiatry | Find a Mentor

[Step into Podiatry](#) strives to match students with a podiatric physician who practices near where they live or go to school. Mentors will take time to show students how they practice medicine, introduce them to the team of healthcare practitioners with whom they work, and answer questions about the profession. Current DPM students are also part of the valuable network to provide insight into the rigors of graduate, medical education.

UNMC Job Shadowing Program

The [UNMC Job Shadowing Program](#) offers students the opportunity to observe many kinds of health-care professionals, including nurses, nurse practitioners, PAs, PTs, OTs, pharmacists, physicians, as well as other allied health careers such as clinical nutrition, nuclear medicine, and more. Each job shadow experience is two to four hours and students can request up to three experiences per year. Students may need to plan six weeks out for a job shadow experience based on availability of department personnel.

UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute Job Shadowing

The [Munroe-Meyer Institute \(MMI\)](#) aims to achieve the highest standard in family-centered services for persons with disabilities and complex health care needs across the lifespan. MMI has departments including occupational therapy, recreation therapy, and physical therapy. Job shadow experiences are available for many programs and services within the MMI. To inquire about jobs shadow experiences, send an email. Due to the sensitive nature of mental and behavioral health services, as well as legal requirements for confidentiality, job shadowing is not available in some disciplines or departments. MMI occasionally has job postings for Recreation Technicians and Behavior Technicians that do not require a lot of previous experiences and allow students to work closely with full-time professional staff members including recreational therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists.

Professional Students at Creighton

Students who participate in CARS Learning Communities have opportunities to interact with or shadow professional students in the School of Medicine (MD and PA), School of Pharmacy and Health Professions (pharmacy, PT and OT), and School of Dentistry. Shadowing may also be offered in conjunction with a pre-health student organization. While shadowing professional students is not the equivalent of shadowing a professional, it can give insight into professional school education.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a networking site that can help students connect with individuals who share commonalities. To find alumni contacts, for example, you can use the Alumni Tool. When you find a relevant contact, you can either connect with them directly or search for their contact information on the internet or by using CareerShift. See the [Career Center's website](#) for more information.