

THE BEST APPROACH FOR DOCTOR SHADOWING DURING COVID

More than ever, the world of medicine demands talented and determined medical professionals who love their healthcare vocations. This means that those of us who are looking to get into PA or Medical school are looking for the best possible shadowing experience, whether that's domestically or through study abroad or shadowing abroad.

Naturally, shadowing doctors and learning from them is one of the best ways to get this kind of hands on experience, but COVID-19 has made that more of a challenge than normal. This means that many doctor shadowing programs have been paused, or are taking new steps to adapt to the new regulations about how people can interact with those in the medical field.

Luckily, there are techniques we recommend that can help alleviate risk when doing doctor shadowing in the age of COVID. These tips will help pre-health and pre-med students looking for both national and international medical shadowing approach their studies with the best practices in mind.

Explore Virtual Volunteer Opportunities

The first thing we'd recommend when it comes to doctor shadowing in the COVID era, is to take advantage of virtual shadowing and visit hours. This allows you to work with a doctor over a virtual meeting platform, eliminating the risk of virus transmission. Although Atlantis does not offer virtual shadowing, we recommend our alumni and prospective students to consider it.

Explore Additional Local Volunteer Opportunities

In addition to connecting with doctors virtually and gaining valuable experience that way, there's a world of local health communities that can offer valuable experience in a lot of different ways. Local healthcare organizations and nonprofits are still running strong in communities across America, and are a big part of gaining insight into the world of medicine.. Volunteer help is often both needed and welcome, and you should consider these options, keeping in mind your own safety and that of those around you.

International Shadowing

Atlantis, and other programs, are bringing back in person shadowing in the summer of 2021, and are gearing up to offer safe programs for students. Most Atlantis alumni also shadow domestically, and we expect that to continue, with students seeking for ways to deepen their experience in medicine, contribute to several AAMC competencies, and, crucially, do this in the summer, as a way to liberate the academic year to allow for focus on classes (and thus grades and a good MCAT score, ultimately). Whether or not you shadow internationally, you certainly should ensure that you obtain clinical experience leading up to your Medical or other healthcare graduate school application.

For Those Who Are Shadowing in Person...

For those who can't shadow virtually, there are still precautions we recommend that can help keep all parties safe in the COVID era:

NAAHP Prehealth Opportunities During the Pandemic Ideas Summary

Focus Locally

- Be an active, helpful member of your home community.
- Volunteer to cover childcare needs for neighbors or to check in (by phone/from a distance) on the elderly.

- If you're part of a religious community, see if there are ways that you can provide support through them.
- Check with organizations where you have volunteered in the past to see if you can step back into previous roles.
- Use [idealists.org](https://www.idealists.org), [volunteermatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org), or [omprakash.org](https://www.omprakash.org) to seek other local options, but be ready for slow responses.
- Idealist article: [Nine ways to help others during the coronavirus pandemic \(https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/help-others-coronavirus\)](https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/help-others-coronavirus)
- Look into the volunteer [National Medical Reserves Corps](#) branch near you
- Donate blood and volunteer to help the [Red Cross](#) address blood delivery and donation support needs in your community. (Remote volunteering options exist for those at high risk.)
- Check to see if [Meals on Wheels](#) needs more volunteers in your community. Inquire whether other local organizations focused on supporting the elderly need volunteers; for example, [Caring Connections](#) is asking for volunteers willing to deliver groceries in NJ/PA counties to step forward.
- Food pantries, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters in most areas are continuing to look for volunteers and have been trying to maintain social distance for their volunteers and those they serve. [Feeding America](#) can help students to find their local food pantry.
- Many chapters of the [United Way](#) have updated their volunteer opportunities to show all the local nonprofits seeking help.

Volunteer Virtually

- Check with your college's office that coordinates community service for any opportunities that they recommend
- [Brighten A Day](#) connects volunteers to seniors and hospitalized children who are in need of some cheer
- [Operation Warm](#) has a list of 25 ways to volunteer virtually
- [Paper-airplanes.org](https://www.paperairplanes.org) invites volunteers to provide online tutoring to "bridge gaps in language, higher education, and professional skills training for conflict-affected individuals"
- [Dosomething.org's](#) nine places to volunteer online and make a real impact
- If you've received crisis hotline training, check to see if your community's crisis hotline could use additional phone or chat volunteers. Many crisis hotlines are overloaded right now.
- [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)
- [Crisis Text Line](#) (requires 30 hours of training)
- [The TREVOR Project](#) – supports LGBTQ youth
- Work with underserved and under-resourced youth
- [Upchieve](#): Online tutoring for disadvantaged youth
- Assist in digitizing, transcribing and otherwise contributing to nonprofit organizations
- [Amnesty Decoders](#)
- [Digital Smithsonian Museum](#)
- [Project Gutenberg free ebooks service](#)
- [Zooniverse](#) crowd-sourced research
- Assist with the upcoming election
- Participate in voter registration efforts: www.rockthevote.org/get-involved/
- 100 Ways to Get Involved: www.lwv.org/blog/100-days-and-100-ways-get-ready-election-day
- Sign up to be a poll worker: <https://www.workelections.com/>
- [Physiocamp](#) seeks volunteers to provide online health/science education through "[Telecamps](#)"
- [Telehealth Access for Seniors](#), shared by Mimi Hsu, UVM student coordinator

Network with Local Health Professionals

- Once the current situation has stabilized: Contact alum physicians near your home by searching by location in your school's alumni directory and on LinkedIn. It will be interesting to talk with them about their experiences as physicians, especially during this time. Of course, they may be far too busy to connect with you due to being stretched thin by the pandemic. Consider seeking out retired physicians who are watching this unfold, or medical students who are currently not allowed on the wards. Shadowing is unlikely to be possible in the near future.

Paid Opportunities

- [Become a contact tracer](#)
- [Become a medical scribe](#)

Research Professional Schools

- Surf through websites for schools in your chosen profession in your home state
- Medical school links are available below:
- [AAMC Allopathic \(MD\) Medical Schools](#)
- [AACOM Osteopathic \(DO\) Medical Schools](#)
- Watch this [video](#) to learn about osteopathic medicine.
- For other professions, check [NAAHP Links of Interest](#)
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Engage in free online learning opportunities

- [Class about pandemics from Harvard](#)
- Class about [community change in public health from Johns Hopkins](#)
- [Essentials of global health](#) from Yale
- [NIH Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences COVID-19 related courses](#)
- [Ivy League free courses](#) list via freecodecamp.org
- Class "[An Examination of coronavirus-COVID-19](#)" from St George's University
- Medical School Headquarters YouTube: [premed.tv](#)
- Georgetown offers free MOOCS including [Bioethics](#), [Biomedical Big Data](#), [Globalization](#), or [Genomic Medicine](#).
- [FluentU's list of recommended resources to learn Medical Spanish](#) (some free, some paid)
- [LinkedIn Learning](#), [Coursera](#)

Do some pre-health reflection and journaling

- Premeds: Use the [AAMC Anatomy of an Applicant Self Assessment Guide](#) and [AACOM's Qualities of a Successful Medical Student](#) to consider your preparation for medical school and the medical profession.
- Use past secondary application essay prompts as reflection questions.
- Advice about prehealth journaling from [Princeton Health Professions Advising](#); [Missouri State University](#)

Read & Listen & Watch

- Insight into physicians' lives and motivation via podcasts and YouTube videos
- [WebShadows](#)
- D.O. or DO not: conversations with osteopathic physicians: <https://www.doordonotpodcast.com/>
- Health Careers with Dr. Marn: <https://hcwithdrmarn.com/>
- University of Colorado School of Medicine Virtual Shadowing video series: email Bre McKercher at Breanna.McKercher@cuanschutz.edu for a link.
- Read books that provide insight about being a doctor, applying to medical school, or learning about other health careers.
- Book lists: [Goodreads.com: Popular Medicine Books list](#) <https://limbookclub.weebly.com/> .
- Book recommendations from advisors:
- [The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down](#)
- [The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks](#)
- [Being Mortal](#)
- [When Breath Becomes Air](#)
- [Teeth: Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America](#)
- [Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States \(Seth Holmes, MD/PhD\)](#)
- Read Blog posts from current medical students
- [AACOM's Choose DO Blog](#)
- [AAMC Aspiring Docs Diaries](#)

- Podcasts are a great way to learn and engage.
- [All Access Medical School Admissions podcast](#) with Christian Essman, director of admissions at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine
- [Top 10 podcasts for pre-meds from Diverse Medicine](#)
- Premed Mondays with Dr. Dale: <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/anchor-podcasts/premed-mondays-2>
- The Short Coat Podcast: <http://theshortcoat.com/tag/dave-etler/>
- Talking Admissions & Med Student Life hosted by Dr. Benjamin Chan: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/talking-admissions-and-med-student-life/id722416493>
- Watch documentaries
- [Making Rounds](#) features cardiologists at Mt. Sinai
- [Vaccines: Calling the Shots](#)
- [Lenox Hill](#) docuseries on Netflix

Participate in Virtual Seminars, Fairs, and Info Sessions

- The [website of the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions](#) maintains a comprehensive list of pre-health events around the country, including many virtual events. Programs are welcomed to post their events free of charge.

Work on Life/“Adulting” Skills

- Do you know how to cook? Offer to cook and deliver a meal to neighbors trying to manage childcare and work obligations at home.
- Develop an at-home exercise routine (this is also good self-care!)- go on line with it !
- Take up or revisit a craft or hobby — origami, bike repair, gardening, the instrument or art supplies you put down at the end of high school- go to any local hospitals or offer these skills to local schools or nursing homes
- If you’ve never tracked your budget and expenses before, analyze your spending from the last year and develop a budget moving forward (see Nerdwallet tips)

Engage in Self-Care

- [CDC Advice on Managing Anxiety and Stress during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [World Health Organization Mental Health Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
- [Advice from thewirecutter.com](#)
- Daily meditation and advice from experts via the folks at Ten Percent Happier: <https://www.tenpercent.com/coronavirussanityguide>

News Stories Highlighting Student Efforts During the Pandemic

- [With video calls and an army of volunteers, this 15-year-old is battling pandemic loneliness in nursing homes](#), Washington Post, October 2020
- [Rutgers Medical School Students Mobilize to Support Health Care Workers](#), Tap Into Somerville, April 15, 2020
- [Local Medical Students Team up to Provide Child Care for Health Workers](#), WAMU, April 15, 2020
- [Doctors in Training: In Limbo, \[Princeton\] Alumni Med Students Find Ways to Serve](#), Princeton Alumni Weekly, April 14, 2020
- [Clinical training on pause, UC med students find ways to be of service](#), UC Newsfeed, April 9, 2020
- [MN “Covidsitters” organization developed by UMN medical students](#), STAT News, March 31, 2020
- [Chicago Medical Students Form Volunteer Teams](#), Chicago Tribune, March 28, 2020
- [Medical Students, Sideline for Now, Find New Ways to Fight Coronavirus](#), NYT, March 23, 2020
- [Students form Harvard-wide Task Force](#), The Harvard Crimson, March 20, 2020
- [Premed student develops grocery service for seniors](#), KSBW TV, Las Vegas, March 16, 2020