

## Volunteer Opportunities in Health Professions Fields

When you call, ask for the coordinator of volunteer services. Explain your objectives and the type of experience you are looking for (e.g. patient contact, shadow or talk with health professionals, research) Carefully consider how much time you can give.

This list is not complete. There are opportunities everywhere. Be aware and creative!

Student Volunteer Outreach @ 923 W.P.U.  
412-624-1065  
[www.svo.pitt.edu/](http://www.svo.pitt.edu/)

UPMC-University of Pittsburgh Medical Center  
[upmc.com/about/support/giving/Pages/volunteer.aspx](http://upmc.com/about/support/giving/Pages/volunteer.aspx)  
*for more listings and contact information*

Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (PCI)  
*Patient & Family Support  
Laboratory Research, Administrative*

Montefiore & Presbyterian Hospitals (Oakland)  
*Emergency Department, Anesthesia Workroom, Operating Room,  
Physical/Occupational Therapy, Volunteer Ambassadors Program*

Magee-Women's Hospital (Oakland)

Shadyside Hospital (Shadyside)  
*HELP Program*

Children's Hospital (Lawrenceville)  
*Child Life (activity center, Recovery, Anesthesiology Workroom with  
OR techs, OT & PT (limited), Waiting Areas, Dental,  
Clerical\*weekly commitment\**

WPIC-Western Psych. Inst. & Clinic (Oakland)  
*Research, Clerical & Administrative, Children & Adolescent  
Classrooms, Children Inpatient Services  
Adult Inpatient or Outpatient Services*

West Penn Allegheny Health System  
[www.wpahs.org/patients/information/volunteers.html](http://www.wpahs.org/patients/information/volunteers.html)  
*Various opportunities at each hospital include but are not limited to:  
Greeters and Guiders, Intensive Care or Emergency Room Waiting  
Room Liaison, Nursing Units, Occupational Therapy, Operating  
Room, Patient Representatives, Patient Mail Delivery, Patient  
Escort, Physical Therapy, Patient Care, Hospice care, 11<sup>th</sup> Hour  
Volunteer, Senior/Nursing Home Volunteer, Bereavement Volunteer*

Allegheny General (Pittsburgh's North Side)  
AGH Suburban Campus (Bellevue)  
Alle-Kiski Medical Center (Natrona Heights)  
Canonsburg General (Canonsburg)  
West Penn (Bloomfield)  
West Penn-Forbes Regional Center  
Forbes Hospice (Monroeville)

Veteran's Affairs Pgh. Healthcare System  
in Oakland, Highland Park or Aspinwall  
<http://www.pittsburgh.va.gov/giving/>

St. Clair Hospital  
Volunteer Services 412-942-2085  
[www.stclair.org/93/volunteer-opportunities](http://www.stclair.org/93/volunteer-opportunities)

Blind & Vision Rehab. Services of Pittsburgh  
<http://www.bvrspittsburgh.org/502/helping-us/>

Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force  
412-345-7456 x585  
[www.patf.org/communiy-outreach/volunteer](http://www.patf.org/communiy-outreach/volunteer)

Ronald McDonald House (Oakland)  
Mindy Adleff (412)246-1103  
[mindy@rmhpcphg.org](mailto:mindy@rmhpcphg.org)  
[www.rmhpcphg.org/how-you-can-help/volunteer](http://www.rmhpcphg.org/how-you-can-help/volunteer)

Hope Hospice of Greater Pittsburgh  
Volunteer coordinator 412-367-3685  
[hopehospicepgh.org/volunteers.shtm](http://hopehospicepgh.org/volunteers.shtm)

American Red Cross of SW Pennsylvania  
412-263-3146  
[www.redcross.org/support/volunteer](http://www.redcross.org/support/volunteer)

Easter Seal Society  
Mary Kay Snyder 412-281-7244 x272  
[www.westernpa.easterseals.com](http://www.westernpa.easterseals.com)  
*Upcoming and special events, Adult Day Service*

Spina Bifida Association (Wexford)  
1-800-243-5787  
[kevanhec@sbawp.org](mailto:kevanhec@sbawp.org)  
[www.sbawp.org/content.asp?sectionID=35707](http://www.sbawp.org/content.asp?sectionID=35707)  
*Adult Service Program, Gateway House Program*

Presbyterian SeniorCare (Oakmont)  
Lorraine Sculco 412-826-6099  
[lsculco@SrCare.org](mailto:lsculco@SrCare.org)  
[www.srcare.org/volunteer-opportunities](http://www.srcare.org/volunteer-opportunities)

WorldTeach  
[www.worldteach.org](http://www.worldteach.org)  
1(857)259-6646  
[info@worldteach.org](mailto:info@worldteach.org)

Arthritis Foundation  
[www.arthritis.org/western-pennsylvania/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/](http://www.arthritis.org/western-pennsylvania/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/)

Central Blood Bank  
[www.centralbloodbank.org/us/volunteer-with-us](http://www.centralbloodbank.org/us/volunteer-with-us)

**CHECK THE BACK!**



Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

(800)562-5395

[www.cff.org/Chapters/wpa/wpa/VolunteerOpportunities](http://www.cff.org/Chapters/wpa/wpa/VolunteerOpportunities)

Foxwall Emergency Medical

Gordy Fisher (412)963-6611

[www.foxwall.org/join/](http://www.foxwall.org/join/)

Lupus Foundation

[www.lupuspa.org/help/volunteer.html](http://www.lupuspa.org/help/volunteer.html)

People's Oakland

Sandra Phillips (412)683-7140 EXT 240

[www.peoplesoakland.org/Community%20Support.html#volunteer](http://www.peoplesoakland.org/Community%20Support.html#volunteer)

**In the summers or after college...**

AmeriCorps\*VISTA Volunteer

[www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org)

[www.nationalhealthcorps.org/pittsburgh](http://www.nationalhealthcorps.org/pittsburgh)

TEACHFORAMERICA

[www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org)

1-800-832-1230

Peace Corps

At Pitt: [pcorps@pitt.edu](mailto:pcorps@pitt.edu) or 412-648-7424

National: [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)

**Comments taken from**

**<http://answers.yahoo.com>**

Approaching any volunteer experience as filling a prerequisite sends a red flag to admission committees. It makes you appear disingenuous and will certainly lessen your chances of acceptance. You're going to be competing against the girl who lived with a dying brother for three years who never did a minute of volunteer experience yet chose to go into medicine because of her exposure to the real world of medicine, or the guy who has been helping with Meals on Wheels since he could drive, works in a nursing home after school and on weekends and works with Habitat for Humanity every summer.

There are no "hours" of compassion.

*Q: How many hours of volunteer work makes your medical school application look most competitive? If an average applicant has, for example 200 hours, would 250 look more competitive?*

**A:** Your thinking may doom your application.

Volunteering isn't evaluated by time, but by motivation, intent and effect.

Primary care oriented schools are looking for applicants who have demonstrated a passion for wanting to help others. The little girl who helped her grandmother after she fell and broke her hip and then went on to work as a volunteer in nursing homes throughout high school is going to impress an admission committee far more than somebody who ran urine samples to the lab the summer between their sophomore and junior years in college. It's the quality, not the quantity.

If you're lucky and get an interview, the admission committee is going to want to know what is motivating you to make you want to be a doctor. They've heard it all and something that will certainly kill your chances of being accepted is responding with the trite beauty contestant answers such as, "I want to help mankind." You might as well say you want world peace. Compare that to the young man they interviewed before you whose younger brother died from leukemia and he spent the past three years volunteering in a pediatric oncology unit.

You don't have to have a tragic tale or to have experienced a significant health issue in your life to be accepted. There are applicants who have highly emotional reasons for pursuing a career as a physician who are emotional wrecks and don't get accepted.

Why did you volunteer? Certainly, you don't have a life long dream of running urine samples down hospital corridors. But if you really want to be an obstetrician and you volunteered in a nursery, they could see the connect and your motivation.

But most of all, they want to see that you have seen what the real world of medicine is like and that you don't have a Hollywood fantasy of health care. Have you witnessed the hysterical mother demanding that the hospital fly in the world's best specialist to work on her child's laceration on the forehead? Have you helped an old man walk down the hall to the bathroom and cleaned it up when it was too late? Could you sense the apprehension as you handed the gown to the woman who was called back in for a repeat mammogram? Did anything reach in and touch your heart or did you reach the "magic number of hours" and that's all you were going to do?