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/

UPMC-University of Pittsburgh Medical Center
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, Anesthesia Workroom with
OR teams, 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.wphs.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, 11th Hour
Volunteer, Senior/Nursing Home Volunteer, Bereavement Volunteer

Allegheny General (Pittsburgh's North Side)
AGH Suburban Campus (Bellevue)
Alle-Kiski Medical Center (Natraona Heights)
Canonsburg General (Canonsburg)
West Penn (Bloombfield)
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

Blind & Vision Rehab, Services of Pittsburgh
http://www.bvrs.pittsburgh.org/502/helping-us/

Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force
412-345-7456 x585
www.pattf.org/community-outreach/volunteer

Ronald McDonald House (Oakland)
Mindy Adleff (412)246-1103
mindy@rmhcppgh.org
www.rmhcpgohow-you-can-help/volunteer

Hope Hospice of Greater Pittsburgh
Volunteer coordinator 412-367-3685
hopehospic.pg.org/volunteers.shtm

American Red Cross of SW Pennsylvania
412-263-3146
www.redcross.org/support/volunteer

Easter Seal Society
Mary Kay Snyder 412-281-7244 x272
www.westerneckeastereasles.com
Upcoming and special events, Adult Day Service

Spina Bifida Association (Wexford)
1-800-243-5787
kevanchec@sbawp.org
www.sbawp.org/content.asp?sectionID=35707
Adult Service Program, Gateway House Program

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

WorldTeach
www.worldteach.org
1(857)259-6646
info@worldteach.org

Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritis.org/western-pennsylvania/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/

Central Blood Bank
www.centralbloodbank.org/us/volunteer-with-us

CHECK THE BACK!
10-31-13
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation  
(800)562-5395  
wwwcfforg/Chapters/wpa/wpa/VolunteerOpportunities

Foxwall Emergency Medical  
Gordy Fisher (412)963-6611  
wwwfoxwallorg/join/

Lupus Foundation  
wwwlupuspaorg/help/volunteerhtml

People’s Oakland  
Sandra Phillips (412)683-7140 EXT 240  
wwwpeoplesoaklandorgCommunity%20Support.html#volunteer

In the summers or after college...  
AmeriCorps*VISTA Volunteer  
wwwamericorpsorg  
wwwnationalhealthcorpsorg/pittsburgh

TEACHFORAMERICA  
wwwteachforamericaorg  
1-800-832-1230

Peace Corps  
At Pitt: pcorps@pittedu or 412-648-7424  
National: wwwpeacecorpsgov

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 admissions 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 admissions 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?