THE ROAD TO BECOMING A HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONER

Tips and suggestions for enhancing your skills, meeting pre-requisites and becoming a competitive applicant.
There are many career options if you have an interest in helping people through becoming a healthcare practitioner. Some examples include:

- Physical Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physician Assistant
- Medical Doctor
- Other - Chiropractor, Dentist, Pharmacist etc.
One of the best ways you can learn which profession is right for you is to shadow someone in the field. Most professional programs will require volunteer/shadowing experience for admission.

Local resources:
- Carle Hospital  217/383-6701
- Provena Covenant Medical Center  217/337-2378
- Carle Therapy Services  217/383-3400
- Champion Fitness & Physical Therapy  217/387-4560
- Disability Resources and Educational Services  217/333-4608
- Mettler Center  217/356-6543
- Provena Covenant Rehabilitation Center  217/337-2109
- Clark-Lindsey Village  217/344-2144
All professional programs will have a set of pre-requisites that will vary by profession and by program. It is critical to review the information provided on program websites to determine admission criteria including pre-requisites.

Many programs will have recommended coursework in addition to required coursework.

Most programs require a grade of C or higher in all pre-requisite coursework.

Resources for finding accredited programs:
- Physical Therapy - [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org)
- Occupational Therapy - [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)
- Physician Assistant - [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org)
- Medical Doctor - [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)

Program Rankings
- US News and World Report
Examples of Pre-Requisites

**Physical Therapy**
- IB 104 and IB 150/151
- CHEM 102/103 and 104/105
- PHYS 101 and 102
- MCB 244/245 and 246/247
- PSYC 100, 216 and 238
- STAT 100 and Calculus 1

**Occupational Therapy**
- MCB 244/245 and 246/247
- PSYC 100, 216 and 238
- SOC 100
- CLCV 102
- HDFS 105

**Physician Assistant**
- IB 104
- MCB 100/101
- CHEM 102/103, 104/105, 233/233 and MCB 450
- MCB 244/245 and 246/247
- STAT 100
- CLCV 102

**Medical Doctor**
- MCB 150/151 and 250
- IB 150/151
- CHEM 102/103, 104/105, 233/233, MCB 450 and/or CHEM 332
- PHYS 101 and 102
SAMPLE PROGRAM WEBSITES

- **Physical Therapy**
  - Iowa - [http://www.healthcare.uiowa.edu/physicaltherapy/degrees/dpt_admissions.html](http://www.healthcare.uiowa.edu/physicaltherapy/degrees/dpt_admissions.html)
  - Northwestern - [http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/nupthms/admissions/requirments/prerequisites.html](http://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/nupthms/admissions/requirments/prerequisites.html)

- **Occupational Therapy**
  - Midwestern - [http://www.midwestern.edu/Programs_and_Admission/IL_Occupational_Therapy.html](http://www.midwestern.edu/Programs_and_Admission/IL_Occupational_Therapy.html)

- **Physician Assistant**
  - Midwestern - [http://www.midwestern.edu/Programs_and_Admission/IL_Physician_Assistant_Studies.html](http://www.midwestern.edu/Programs_and_Admission/IL_Physician_Assistant_Studies.html)
  - Northwestern - [http://www.familymedicine.northwestern.edu/pa_program/](http://www.familymedicine.northwestern.edu/pa_program/)
  - Southern Illinois - [http://paprogram.siuc.edu/faq10-08.html](http://paprogram.siuc.edu/faq10-08.html)

- **Medical Doctor**
  - UIC - [http://www.medicine.uic.edu/](http://www.medicine.uic.edu/)
  - Medical College of Wisconsin - [http://www.mcw.edu/display/router.aspx](http://www.mcw.edu/display/router.aspx)
ENHANCING YOUR COMPETITIVENESS

- Solid GPA
- Valuable shadowing and/or volunteering experience
- Leadership experience
- Involvement
- Study abroad and/or fluency in another language
- Competitive GRE/MCAT scores
- Knowledge about current issues in profession
- Strong letters of recommendation
- Excellent personal statement
**CAMPUS RESOURCES**

- Tutoring, TA/Instructor office hours, supplemental instruction, learning centers, etc.
- Office of Volunteer Programs
  - [http://union.illinois.edu/ovp/index.html](http://union.illinois.edu/ovp/index.html)
- Illinois Leadership Center
  - [www.illinoisleadership.illinois.edu](http://www.illinoisleadership.illinois.edu)
- Registered Student Organizations
  - [http://union.illinois.edu/involvement/rso/a-z_list.aspx](http://union.illinois.edu/involvement/rso/a-z_list.aspx)
  - Pre-PT Club, Pre-OT Club, Pre-PA Club, Multiple pre-med organizations
- Study Abroad Office
  - [www.studyabroad.illinois.edu](http://www.studyabroad.illinois.edu)
- GRE/MCAT Prep Courses
- Professional Organization Websites
- Writer’s Workshop
  - [http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/](http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/)
- Career Center Workshops
  - [www.careercenter.illinois.edu](http://www.careercenter.illinois.edu)
TIMELINE

- Begin taking pre-requisites as early as freshman year.
- Begin shadowing/volunteering as early as freshman year.
- Continue involvement throughout college doing as much as you can through junior year.
- Take admissions test during spring of junior year or summer after junior year.
- Apply summer after junior year, into fall of senior year.
  - Some programs will utilize a centralized application service, i.e. AMCAS, CASPA, PTCAS, whereas others will require separate program applications.
Physical Therapy Brings Motion to Life (APTA)...just one example of how you can make a difference!
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCKuRIBCDuQ