AOHS Health Careers Exploration

Lesson 7

Visiting the Doctor

Teacher Resources

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| Resource | Description |
| Teacher Resource 7.1 | Presentation and Notes: Health Care Professionals’ Roles in a Doctor’s Office (includes separate PowerPoint file) |
| Teacher Resource 7.2 | Posters: Hand Washing and Hand Rubbing (separate PDF file). |
| Teacher Resource 7.3 | Guide: Guest Speaker |
| Teacher Resource 7.4 | Assessment Criteria: Specialist Reference Sheet |
| Teacher Resource 7.5 | Answer Key: Identifying Specialists |
| Teacher Resource 7.6 | Key Vocabulary: Visiting the Doctor |
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| Teacher Resource 7.8 | Vocabulary Support: Terms to Know for the Lesson (separate PowerPoint file) |

Teacher Resource 7.1

Presentation Notes:   
Health Care Professionals’ Roles in a Doctor’s Office

Before you show this presentation, use the text accompanying each slide to develop presentation notes. Writing the notes yourself enables you to approach the subject matter in a way that is comfortable to you and engaging for your students. Make this presentation as interactive as possible by stopping frequently to ask questions and encourage class discussion.

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| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide1.JPG  There are different ways to organize a doctor’s office. In small offices there may be just one doctor and a few people who are part of the staff. In larger offices, several doctors may work as partners. They may share office space and exam rooms and have a larger staff.  In this presentation, you’ll learn about the professionals who are typically found in a doctor’s office—large or small. You will learn about the various roles of these professionals and what interactions with patients and coworkers are like in a doctor’s office. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide2.JPG  In general, primary care physicians, or doctors, have regular patients that they see over the course of years. Through these repeated visits, patients develop relationships with the professionals who work in a doctor’s office. These professionals have an interest in helping patients maintain good health and progress through periods of illnesses. Usually patients visit their primary care physician for a routine visit or for acute problems such as the flu, a cough, a rash, dizziness, or shortness of breath. At a doctor’s office, patients are diagnosed and treated for various conditions and educated about ways to prevent illness. Patients may be given advice about making their diet healthier or ways to quit smoking. In successful doctors’ offices, the staff is friendly, knowledgeable, supportive, and professional. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide3.JPG  Let’s imagine that you are visiting the doctor because you have a burning sensation in your stomach after you eat. When you walk into the doctor’s office, you’re greeted by the medical secretary, who confirms your appointment and asks you to have a seat.  Five minutes later a medical assistant calls your name, takes you into a private exam room, and takes your weight and height. The medical assistant then takes your vital signs and records this information in your file. The medical assistant asks you questions about your health history and your current problem and records the information on a form, which also goes into your file.  Then a doctor comes in your room, reviews your file, does a physical examination, and asks you questions about the discomfort you are experiencing. The doctor decides that because of the specificity of your problem, you should see a doctor who specializes in digestive issues. He or she asks the medical secretary to give you the information you need to make an appointment with a gastroenterologist.  Meanwhile, a medical biller begins the paperwork to bill your insurance company for your visit. An office manager is doing behind-the-scenes work to make sure that the office runs smoothly.  Your doctor’s visit has involved interacting with multiple professionals. What are the roles of all these professionals with whom you’ve interacted? What tasks are these professionals responsible for? |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide4.JPG  A physician’s main roles are practicing medicine and overseeing the work of the staff. (A physician who provides primary care for children is a pediatrician.) The physician is the person in the office who is ultimately responsible for the care of his or her patients. Physicians obtain the health history of their patients. They order and interpret diagnostic tests, provide treatment, and prescribe medications. They also teach patients about good health practices and provide health instructions. If a patient has a problem that is beyond the physician’s scope of expertise, the physician is responsible for referring the patient to the appropriate specialist. All of the professionals who work in the physician's office report to the physician. Successful physicians build trusting relationships with the people who work for them and with their patients. An important trait for successful physicians is being able to think clearly and make smart decisions under pressure. They are motivated by an interest in helping people. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide5.JPG  When a patient visits a doctor with a problem that is beyond the realm of the doctor’s expertise and knowledge, the doctor will refer the patient to a specialist. Specialists are doctors who have a certain amount of training and certification for diagnosing and treating a specific health condition or part of the human body. For example, if a patient is concerned about an abnormally shaped mole, the doctor may refer him or her to a dermatologist, who specializes in the treatment of skin diseases. If a patient is experiencing blurry vision, the doctor will likely refer him or her to an ophthalmologist, who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of eye diseases. There are many kinds of specialists whose areas of expertise include respiratory diseases, digestive diseases, and heart and blood vessel diseases. Like general doctors, specialists have a staff of health care professionals who work for them. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide6.JPG  Physician assistants are responsible for carrying out specific medical duties that have traditionally been done by physicians. They work under the supervision of a physician. Physician assistants can take medical histories, which may involve recording information about illnesses in the patient’s past or specific health conditions that may run in the patient’s family. They can perform physical exams, and they can make preliminary diagnoses. They can also order common lab tests and prescribe medication. Physician assistants may be involved with treating minor medical emergencies. Like physicians, physician assistants can also have specialties, such as an orthopedic physician assistant. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide7.JPG  In many ways nurse practitioners and physician assistants are alike. Like physician assistants, nurse practitioners can order lab tests, take medical histories, and treat common injuries. They also can specialize in a certain condition. This allows doctors to focus on treating more critical and complex cases. While nurse practitioners have similar responsibilities to physician assistants, historically nurse practitioners have had more professional independence. Physician assistant training takes place at a medical school and follows a similar model to physicians. Nurse practitioners, on the other hand, train in a nursing school and emphasize health promotion and wellness in addition to disease assessment. In many states, nurse practitioners are allowed to prescribe medication and treat patients without the direct supervision of a doctor. The laws that say what physician assistants and nurse practitioners are allowed to do vary from state to state. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide8.JPG  A medical assistant may do both medical and administrative work in a doctor’s office. Like a physician assistant, the medical assistant is supervised by the doctor. The clinical, or medical, roles that the medical assistant takes on in the doctor’s office are determined by state law, but they may include preparing the examination room for a patient, recording a patient’s vital signs, and cleaning and sterilizing instruments.  The administrative tasks depend on the specific organization of the doctor’s office, but they usually involve acting as a liaison between the patient and the doctor. For example, let’s say a patient calls the doctor’s office because he or she has a rash on his or her foot. The patient will speak to the medical assistant, who will take down the appropriate information about the patient’s condition. Then the medical assistant will speak to the doctor and explain the patient’s problem. Finally, the medical assistant will call the patient back to deliver the doctor’s advice and book an appointment, if necessary. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide9.JPG  The medical office manager is responsible for overseeing the daily operations, or the business side, of the doctor’s office. He or she makes sure that the office is running smoothly and coordinates day-to-day business matters. The medical office manager may be responsible for budgeting and for looking for ways to cut back on costs while maintaining high-quality services. The medical office manager may also oversee personnel matters like scheduling, and implementing policies and procedures for the office. In an office of a large group of doctors, there may be more than one manager, or administrator, running the business of the office. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide10.JPG  The medical secretary coordinates the communication activities of a doctor’s office. The medical secretary is responsible for typing letters and emails, setting appointments, ordering supplies, and making sure that office equipment, like fax machines, are working efficiently. In some small offices, the medical secretary is also responsible for billing patients and insurance companies. In larger doctor’s offices, a receptionist is usually responsible for greeting patients and answering calls, and a medical secretary may be responsible for the rest of the communication-related tasks. In some offices, the medical secretary may be responsible for billing. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide11.JPG  The medical biller oversees the billing process for a doctor’s office. Patients may not have direct interactions with the medical biller unless they have an issue with their bill or insurance company and need assistance. The medical biller is responsible for making sure that patient bills are accurate and complete. He or she has extensive knowledge about complex insurance guidelines and handles insurance claims and correspondence with insurance representatives. The medical biller responds to patient calls regarding bills and insurance issues. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide12.JPG  There are varying levels of educational requirements for health care professionals who work in a doctor’s office. The most involved requirements are for physicians. Physicians first must attend a four-year college, where they take courses that will prepare them for medical school. After they complete four years of medical school, they are required to do an internship and residency, which can take between three and eight years. To become a physician, you must commit to completing many years of education and training, but at the end of the experience, you are able to practice medicine, one of the most valued and respected professions in our society.  Becoming a physician assistant or nurse practitioner requires less education than a physician, but the requirements are still rigorous. To become a nurse practitioner, you must first be a registered nurse and have a bachelor’s degree in nursing, or a BSN. You must complete a nurse practitioner program that lasts 18 months to two years, and then you must become certified. To become a physician assistant, you must have a bachelor’s degree, complete a two-year program, and also earn certification. An associate degree is required for medical assistants, medical billers, and medical secretaries. They will take both medical- and business-related courses in a community college or a vocational program that will prepare them for their jobs.  In small offices, a bachelor’s degree may be adequate for an office manager. However, in larger offices and departments a master’s degree is usually required. Many office managers have a master’s degree in health services administration, and they also have previous work experience in health care. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide13.JPG  Physicians have one of the highest earning jobs in our society. According to the US Department of Labor, in 2013, the mean annual wage for office-based physicians who were family and general practitioners was $189,800. Physician assistants earned $94,890. The mean annual wage for registered nurses in physician’s offices was $62,850, Nurse practitioners in physician’s offices made an average of $94,320. Medical assistants earned $30,880, and the mean annual wage for medical secretaries was slightly higher at $32,200. According to Indeed.com, in 2015 a medical office manager makes an average annual salary of $49,000. Medical billers are included in the category of medical records and health information technicians; according to the US Department of Labor, in 2013 their annual mean wage in physician’s offices was $32,700.  The salary for all health care professionals varies depending on the place they work, the state that they work in, and the size of the office. |  |
| C:\Users\Mika\Documents\Pearson\2015\June\1\HealthCareers_Lesson7_Presentation_ROOT_052915\Slide14.JPG  The health care professionals who work in a doctor’s office each plays his or her part in providing excellent care to patients—from the doctor, who is ultimately responsible for the patient’s care, to the medical assistant, who carefully records the patient’s vital signs, to the medical secretary, who greets patients and makes sure the office runs smoothly. The work of each professional is valuable and ensures patients will receive the care they require. |  |

Teacher Resource 7.3

Guide: Guest Speaker

Arrange for a health care professional who works in a doctor’s office to speak to the class. The professional may be a doctor or anyone who plays a major role in a doctor’s office, including a medical assistant or a nurse practitioner. If it is not possible for the health care professional to visit the class, arrange for a teleconference using Google video chat, Skype, or other similar technology.

Before the activity, explain to the speaker that during the classroom visit, you will ask him or her to provide a 15-minute overview of his or her work, and then students will have the opportunity to ask questions. Ask the speaker to prepare to address the following topics during the overview:

* Important roles and responsibilities of people in this profession
* How a doctor’s office is organized
* Information about each professional who works in the office, including the professional’s role and main responsibilities and tasks
* The types of encounters that professionals in the office have with patients
* When and how each professional in the office interacts with patients
* How professionals in the office interact with each other
* Behavior that is appropriate for working in a doctor’s office

Teacher Resource 7.4

Assessment Criteria: Specialist Reference Sheet

Student Names:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Using the following criteria, assess whether students met each one.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Met | Partially Met | Didn’t Meet |
| The reference sheet demonstrates an understanding of roles, responsibilities, qualities, skills, and education requirements of the profession featured. |  | □ | □ | □ |
| The information on the reference sheet is accurate and represents thoughtful research. |  | □ | □ | □ |
| The information on the reference sheet is presented clearly and is geared toward the target audience. |  | □ | □ | □ |
| Each paragraph on the reference sheet has a clear main idea and supporting details. |  | □ | □ | □ |
| The reference sheet is neat and uses proper spelling and grammar. |  | □ | □ | □ |

Additional Comments:

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Teacher Resource 7.5

Answer Key: Identifying Specialists

Match the specialists listed in the box below with the correct job description in the chart. Then take notes in the I Learned column as you learn more about each specialty. Depending on which specialties you cover in class, you may not complete the third column.

| Specialists |
| --- |
| anesthesiologist, cardiologist, dermatologist, emergency physician, gastroenterologist, internist, neurologist, obstetrician, oncologist, orthopedic surgeon, otolaryngologist, psychiatrist, sports medicine physician, pulmonologist, urologist, gynecologist, neonatologist, ophthalmologist |

| Specialist (my prediction) | Job Description | I Learned |
| --- | --- | --- |
| anesthesiologist | Administers medications to cause loss of sensation during surgery | Answers in this column will vary. |
| internist | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the internal organs |  |
| cardiologist | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the heart and blood vessels |  |
| sports medicine physician | Diagnoses, prevents, and treats sports-related injuries and conditions |  |
| dermatologist | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the skin |  |
| gastroenterologist | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the stomach and intestines |  |
| emergency physician | Diagnoses and treats acute illness or injury |  |
| oncologist | Diagnoses and treats cancerous tumors |  |
| orthopedic surgeon | Diagnoses and treats diseases and disorders of muscles and bones |  |
| otolaryngologist | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the ear, nose, and throat |  |
| psychiatrist | Diagnoses and treats diseases and disorders of the mind |  |
| obstetrician | Provides care for women during pregnancy and childbirth |  |
| neurologist | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the brain and nervous system |  |
| pulmonologist | Diagnoses and treats diseases and disorders of the chest and lungs |  |
| gynecologist | Provides care for women and diagnoses and treats diseases of the female reproductive system |  |
| ophthalmologist | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the eyes |  |
| neonatologist | Provides care for newborns |  |
| urologist | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the urinary system |  |

Teacher Resource 7.6

Key Vocabulary: Visiting the Doctor

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| blood pressure measurement | A measurement of the pressure that the blood exerts on the walls of the arteries. The measurement is one way to gauge the health of the heart. |
| diastolic pressure | The constant pressure in the walls of the arteries when the left ventricle of the heart is at rest. |
| hypertension | A condition of high blood pressure caused by obesity, stress, or high salt intake; can lead to heart disease, stroke, or kidney disease. |
| hypotension | A condition of low blood pressure that can occur with heart failure, shock, depression, or dehydration. |
| hypothermia | A condition in which the body temperature is below normal. |
| medical assistant | A professional who is responsible for both medical and administrative tasks in a medical office. |
| medical biller | A professional who is responsible for overseeing the billing process in a medical office. |
| medical secretary | A professional who is responsible for communication tasks in a doctor’s office. |
| nurse practitioner | A professional who is responsible for carrying out specific medical duties that have traditionally been done by physicians. In some states, nurse practitioners are allowed to practice medicine without the supervision of a doctor. |
| office manager | A professional who is responsible for overseeing the business affairs of a medical office. |
| physician | A doctor; a professional who is qualified in medicine to treat people when they are ill. |
| physician assistant | A professional who is responsible for carrying out specific medical duties, under the supervision of a physician, that have traditionally been done by physicians. |
| primary care | Medical care that is given to prevent and treat the main health problems of an individual and a community. |
| pulse measurement | A measurement of the pressure of blood pushing against the wall of an artery as the heart beats and rests. |
| respiration measurement | A vital sign that measures the process of taking in oxygen and expelling carbon dioxide through the lungs. |
| secondary care | Medical care given to patients who have health problems that require the knowledge and skills of a health care professional who has specialized medical training. |
| specialist | A physician who has special training, knowledge, and experience in diagnosing and treating a specific condition or part of the body. |
| sphygmomanometer | An instrument used to measure blood pressure. |
| systolic pressure | The pressure that occurs in the walls of the arteries when the left ventricle of the heart is contracting and pushing blood into the arteries. |
| tertiary care | Medical care that provides medical or surgical services for complex and advanced problems and uncommon conditions. |
| thermometer | An instrument used to take body temperature. |
| vital signs | Temperature, pulse, respirations, and blood pressure. Vital signs are taken to gather important information about the basic health of a patient’s body. |

Teacher Resource 7.7

Bibliography: Visiting the Doctor

The following sources were used in the preparation of this lesson and may be useful for your reference or as classroom resources. We check and update the URLs annually to ensure that they continue to be useful.

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