AOHS Health Careers Exploration

Lesson 7

Visiting the Doctor

Student Resources

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Student Resource 7.1

Description Chart: Health Care Professionals in a Doctor’s Office

Directions: Think about all of the health care professionals you may encounter during a visit to a doctor’s office. Write down the names of the professions in the first column of the chart below. In the second column write a brief description of the work that you think they do. If you aren’t sure about the name of the profession, describe what the person does and then take a guess at the job title.

| Health Care Profession | Role in a Doctor’s Office |
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Student Resource 7.2

Note Taking: Health Care Professionals’ Roles in a Doctor’s Office

Directions: During the presentation Health Care Professionals’ Roles in a Doctor’s Office, use the space provided below to take notes on the roles and responsibilities, character traits, educational requirements, and salary expectations of different professionals who work in a doctor’s office. The organizational chart is provided to help you visualize how these different professionals interact with each other.

**Physician:**

**Specialist:**

**Office manager:**

**Physician assistant:**

**Registered Nurse (RN)**

**Nurse practitioner:**

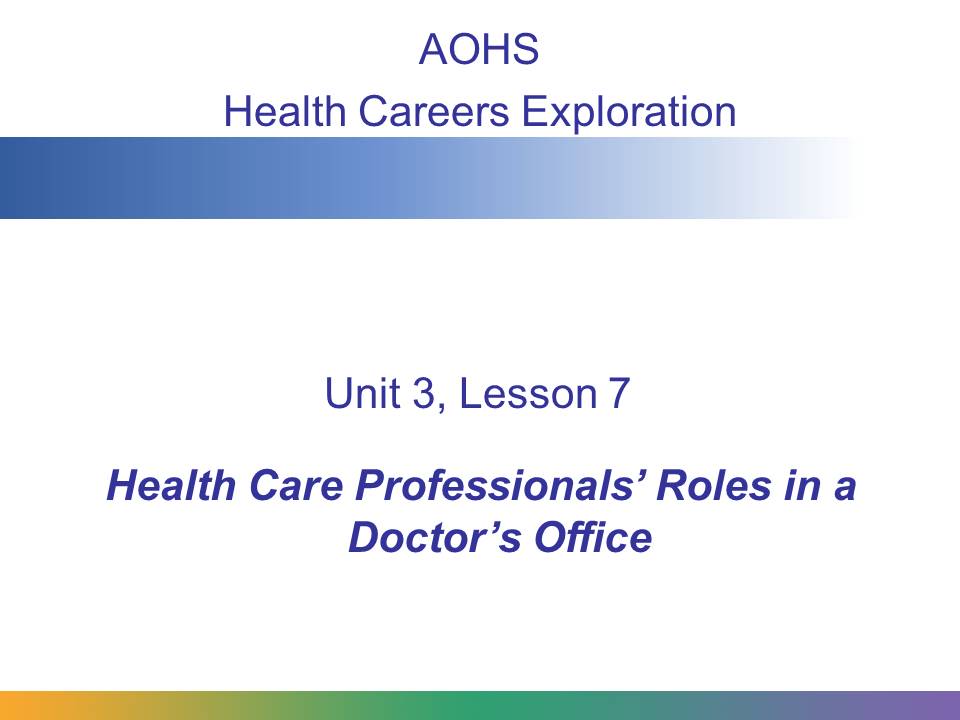
**Medical assistant:**

**Medical secretary:**

**Medical biller:**

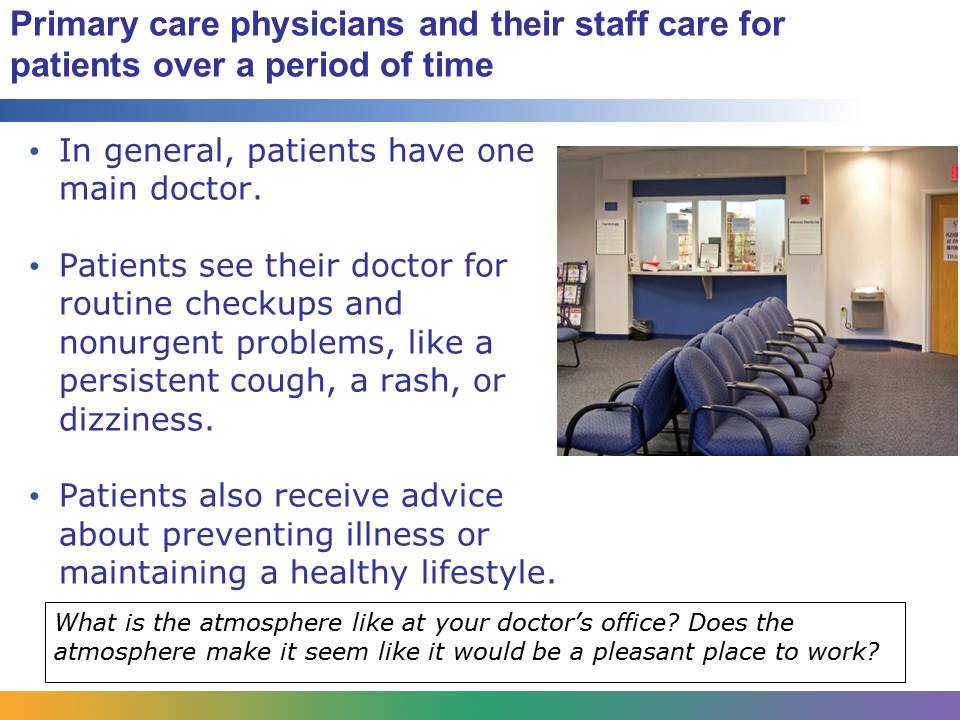
Student Resource 7.3

Reading: Health Care Professionals’ Roles in a Doctor’s Office

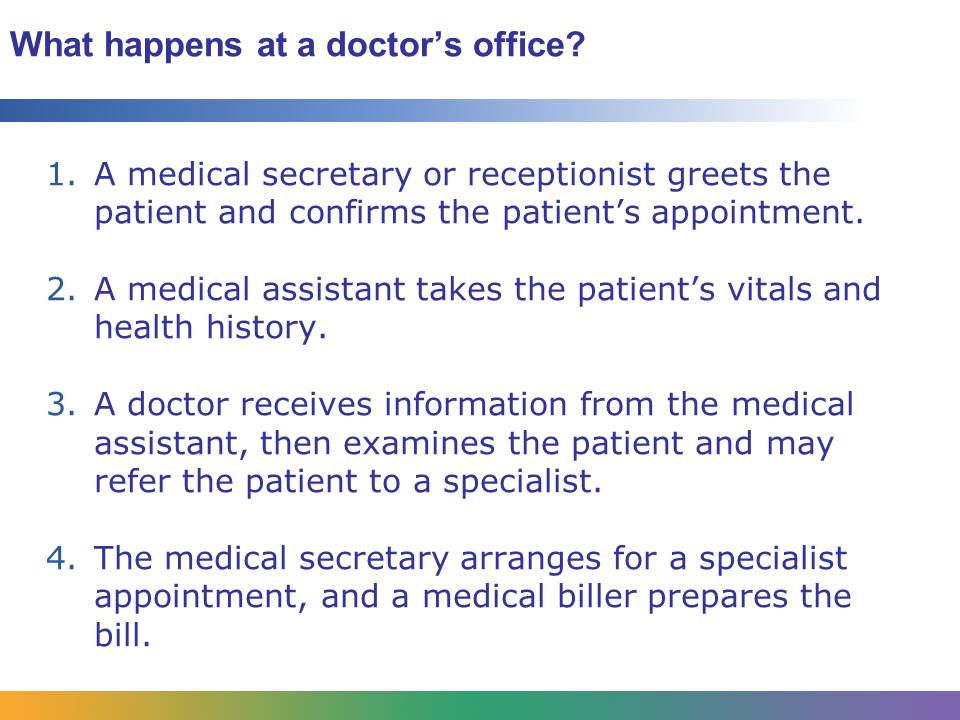


There are different ways to organize a doctor’s office. In small offices there may be just one doctor and a few people who are part of the staff. In larger offices, several doctors may work as partners. They may share office space and exam rooms and have a larger staff.

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.



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.



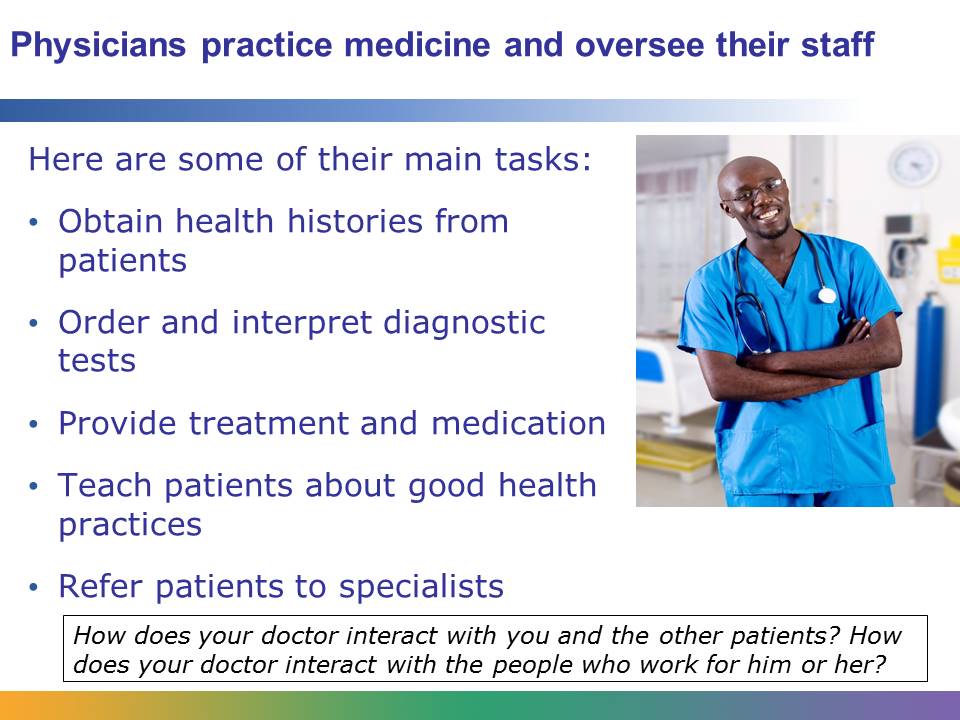
Let’s imagine that you are visiting the doctor because you have a burning sensation in your stomach after you eat. When you walk into the doctor’s office, you’re greeted by the medical secretary, who confirms your appointment and asks you to have a seat.

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.

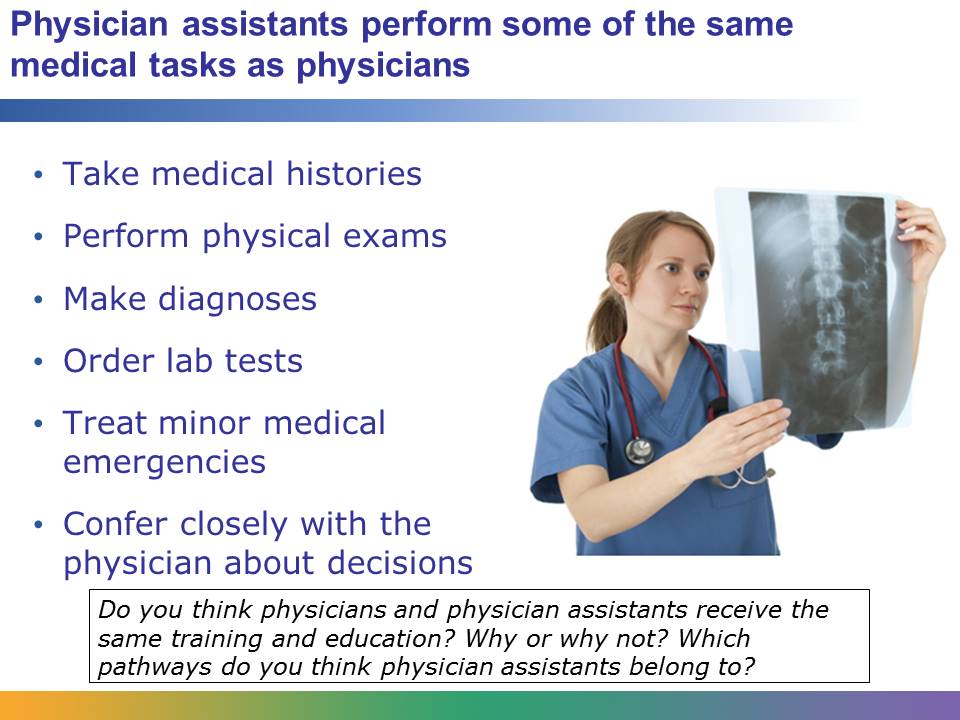
Your doctor’s visit has involved interacting with multiple professionals. What are the roles of all these professionals with whom you’ve interacted? What tasks are these professionals responsible for?



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.



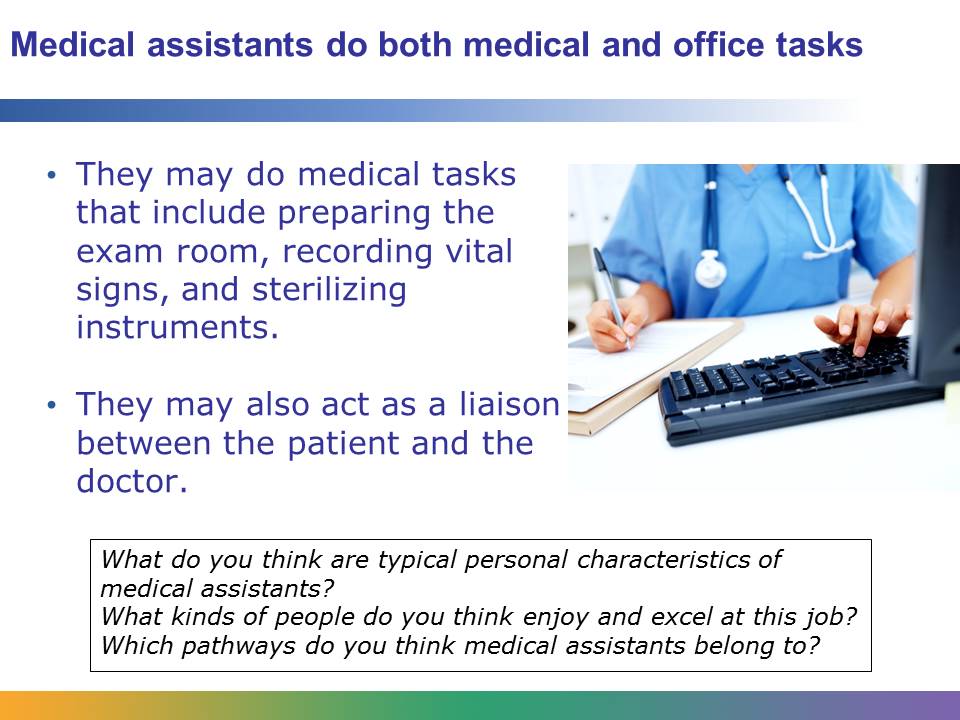
When a patient visits a doctor with a problem that is beyond the realm of the doctor’s expertise and knowledge, the doctor will refer the patient to a specialist. Specialists are doctors who have a certain amount of training and certification for diagnosing and treating a specific health condition or 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.



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.

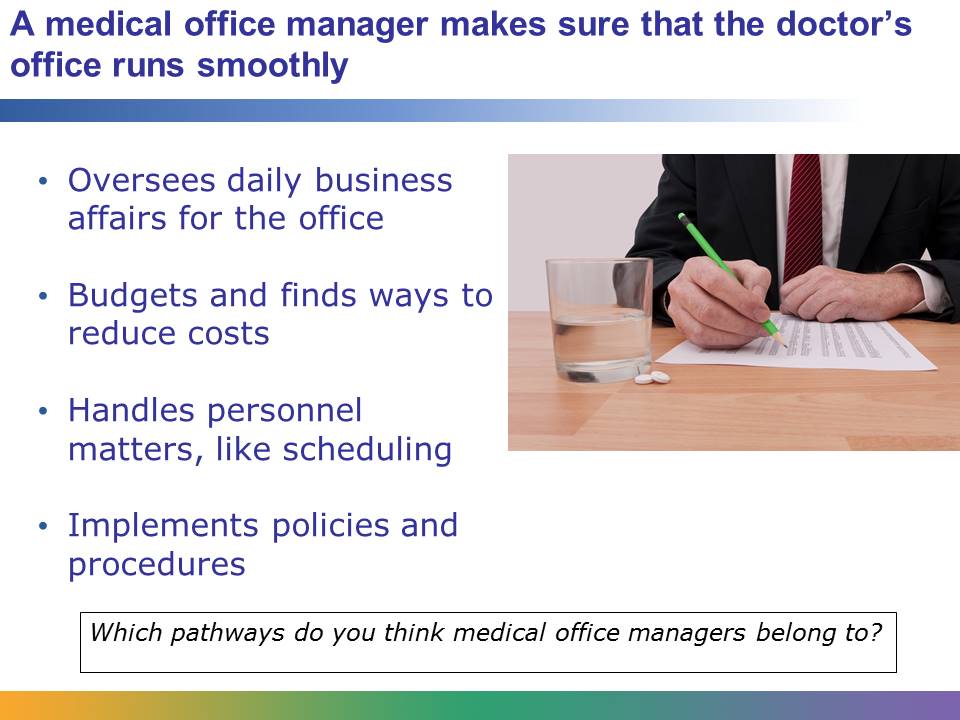


In many ways nurse practitioners and physician assistants are alike. Like physician assistants, nurse practitioners can order lab tests, take medical histories, and treat common injuries. They also can specialize in a certain condition. This allows doctors to focus on treating more critical and complex 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.

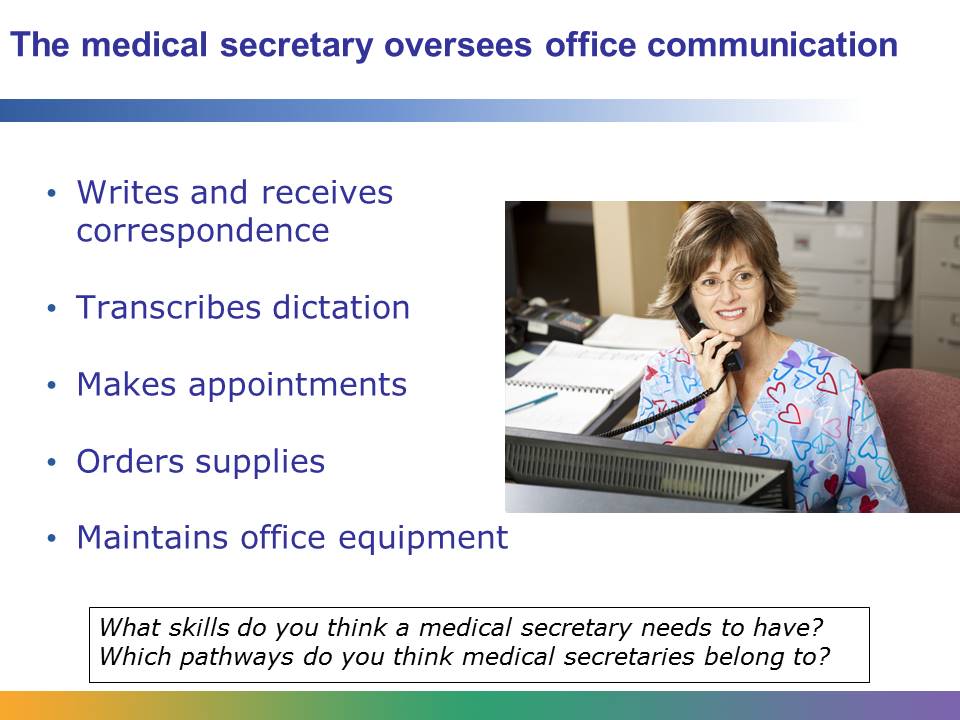


A medical assistant may do both medical and administrative work in a doctor’s office. Like a physician assistant, the medical assistant is supervised by the doctor. The clinical, or medical, roles that the medical assistant takes on in the doctor’s office are determined by state law, but they may include 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.



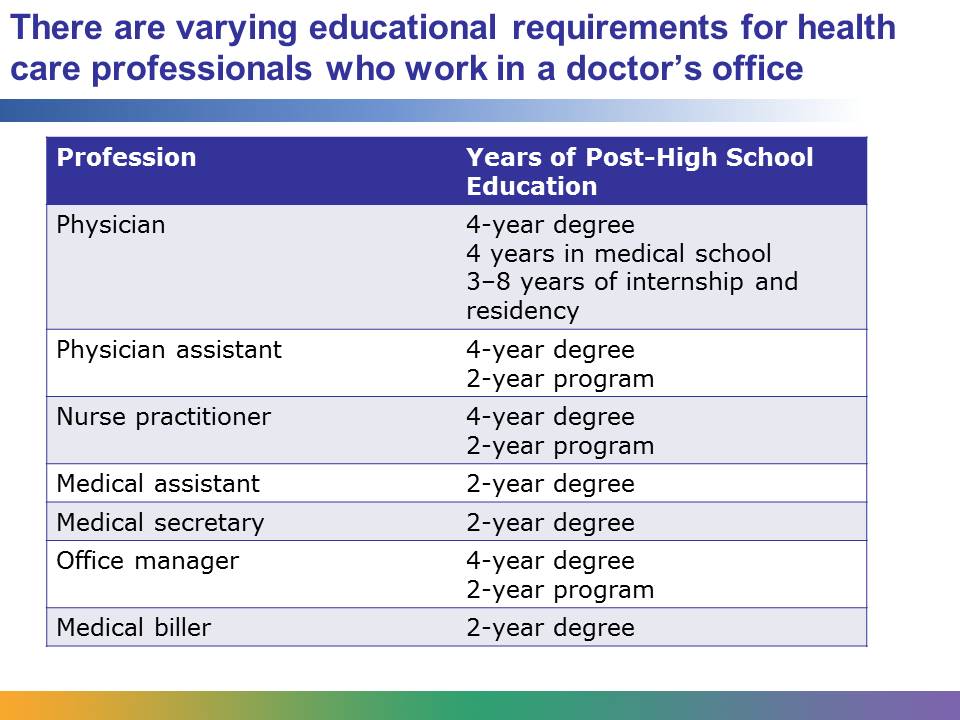
The medical office manager is responsible for overseeing the daily operations, or the business side, of the doctor’s office. He or she makes sure that the office is running smoothly and coordinates day-to-day business matters. The medical office manager may be responsible for budgeting and for looking 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.



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.



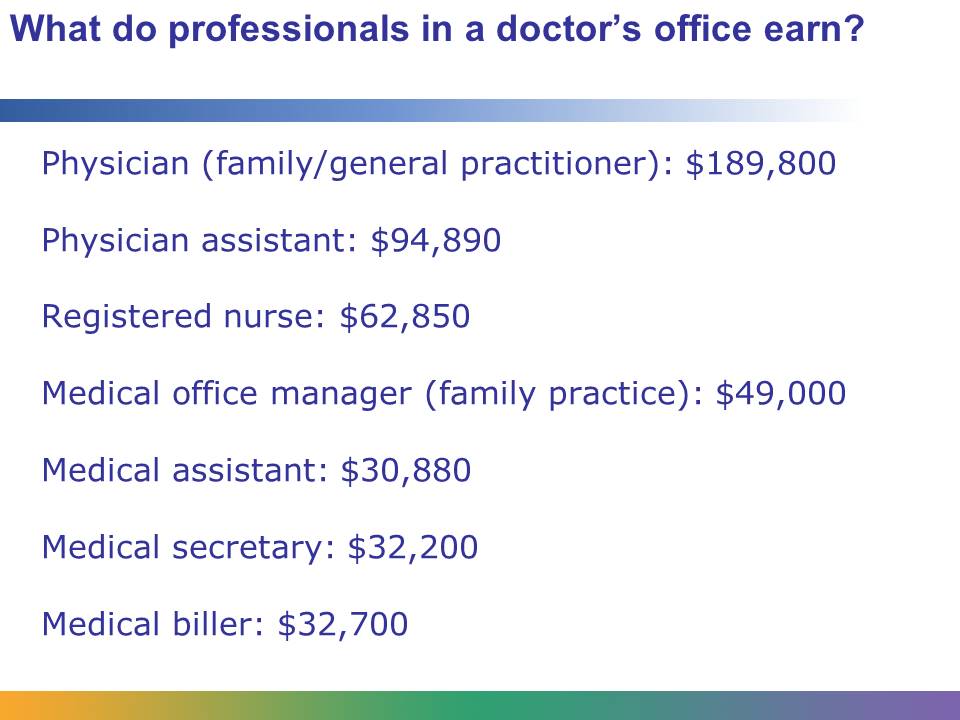
The medical biller oversees the billing process for a doctor’s office. Patients may not have direct interactions with the medical biller unless they have an issue with their bill or insurance company and need assistance. The medical biller is responsible for making sure that patient bills are accurate 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.



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.

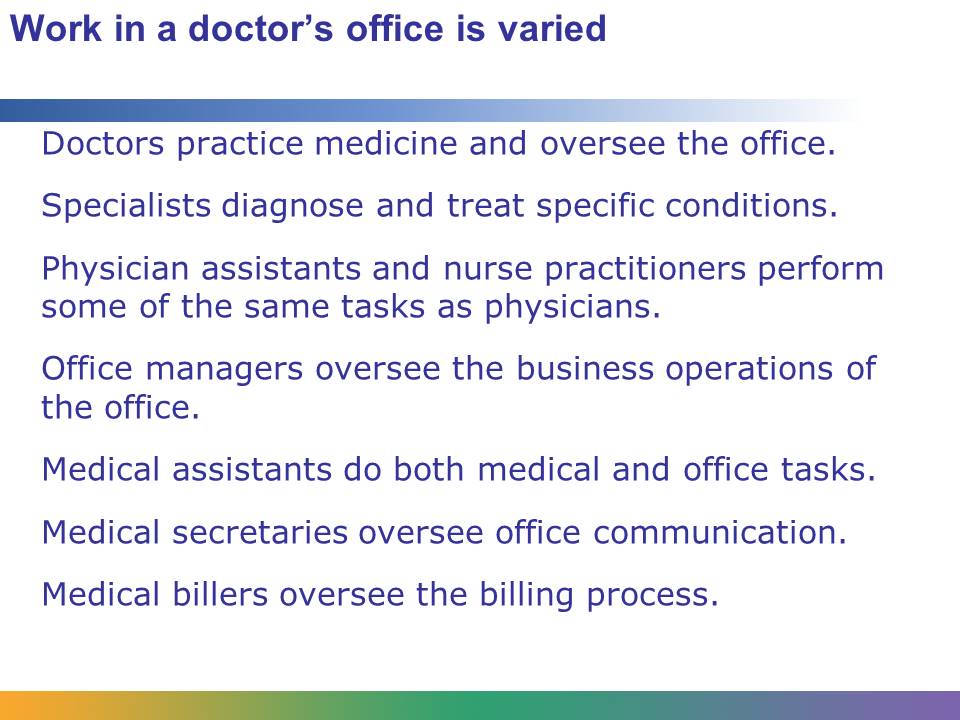
Becoming a physician assistant or nurse practitioner requires less education than a physician, but the requirements are still rigorous. To become a nurse practitioner, you must first be a registered nurse and have a bachelor’s degree in nursing, or a BSN. You must complete a nurse practitioner program 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.



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.



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.

Student Resource 7.4

Lab: Vital Signs

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Health care workers take a patient’s vital signs to gather important information about the basic health of the patient’s body. There are four main vital signs: pulse, respirations, temperature, and blood pressure.

In this activity, you will take the vital signs of members of your group. Your teacher will tell you which vital signs you will be taking and the order in which you take them. For each vital sign, read the information given below and then follow the instructions in the order given. Remember, it is essential that vital signs are accurate, so following directions carefully is of the utmost importance.

Before and after making contact with a patient, it is important to thoroughly wash your hands. Review the hand-washing steps with your group before beginning the activity. You may also wish to refer to the poster How to Handwash that your teacher has displayed by the sink for detailed illustrations about the proper hand-washing procedure.

Hand-Washing Steps

1. Turn on the water to warm at the sink.
2. Wet your hands thoroughly.
3. Apply soap to your hands.
4. Lather all surfaces of your wrists, hands, and fingers, producing friction for at least 15 seconds. See the poster How to Handwash that your teacher has displayed by the sink for specific instructions.
5. After lathering for at least 15 seconds, rinse all surfaces of your wrists, hands, and fingers, keeping your hands lower than the elbows and the fingertips down.
6. Use a clean, dry paper towel to dry all surfaces of your hands, wrists, and fingers.
7. Use the paper towel to turn off the faucet. Dispose of the paper towel in the waste container.
8. Do not touch the inside of the sink at any time.

Taking the Patient’s Pulse

**What is a pulse?** A pulse refers to the pressure of blood pushing against the wall of an artery as the heart beats and rests. There are different factors that can affect the pulse. Fever, stimulant drugs, or exercise can accelerate the pulse. Depressant drugs, sleep, or coma can cause it to decrease.

**Where is pulse measured?** There are different points on the body to measure pulse. It is felt most easily in the arteries that are close to the skin and can be pressed against a bone by the fingers. The most common location to check the pulse is radial, at the inner part of the wrist below the thumb.

**What do you check for when you take a patient’s pulse?** Check for three things: rate, rhythm, and volume of the pulse.

The rate is measured by beats per minute. For children over the age of 7, the pulse should be at 70–100 beats per minute. For adults, the general range of the pulse is 60–100 beats per minute. The rhythm refers to the regularity of the pulse, or the spacing of the beats. The rhythm is described as regular or irregular. The volume refers to the strength or intensity of the pulse. Words like *strong* or *weak* are used to describe the volume. It takes time and experience to be able to determine the rhythm and volume of the pulse.

Steps for Taking a Patient’s Radial Pulse

**Equipment:** Watch with a second hand, Vital Signs: Pulse chart (included at the end of this worksheet), pencil

1. Read through all the steps before beginning.
2. Assemble the equipment.
3. Wash your hands. See the section titled Hand-Washing Steps.
4. Have the patient sit down. Explain the procedure to the patient.
5. The patient’s arm should be supported, not dangling. The palm should be facing downward.
6. Use the tips of your first two fingers to locate the pulse below the thumb on the patient’s wrist. Do not use your thumb.
7. When you feel the pulse, push down slightly, and then start counting. Use the second hand of a watch, and count for one full minute.
8. As you count, notice the rhythm and volume of the pulse. Are some pulses stronger or weaker than others? Do some have a more regular rhythm than others? It takes practice to measure this, but it is something you should look for.
9. After the minute is up, record the date, time, rate, rhythm, and volume on the Vital Sign: Pulse chart at the end of this worksheet.
10. If you are measuring respirations, follow the steps in the next section. If you are not taking respirations, complete the activity by washing your hands.

Measuring Respirations

**What is respiration?** Respiration is the process of taking in oxygen and expelling carbon dioxide. Breathing in is called inspiration. Breathing out is called expiration. One respiration consists of one inspiration and one expiration.

**What do you check for?** Health care professionals check for three things: rate, character, and rhythm. The rate counts the number of breaths per minute. The normal rate for respirations in adults is a range of 12–20 breaths per minutes. The rate is slightly faster with children.

The character and rhythm are also noted. The character is the depth and quality of a respiration. Health care workers use words like “deep,” “shallow,” or “difficult” to describe the character. Rhythm is the spacing between breaths. It is described as “regular” or “irregular.” It takes time and experience to determine the character and rhythm.

**When do you measure respirations?** Respirations are measured right after the pulse is taken. Health care workers may not tell the patient they are taking respirations, because if the patient is aware, he or she might inadvertently alter the rate of his or her breathing.

Steps for Measuring Respirations

**Equipment:** Watch with a second hand, Vital Signs: Respirations chart (included at the end of this worksheet), pencil

1. Read through all the steps before beginning.
2. Begin right after the patient’s pulse has been taken.
3. Leave your hand on the patient’s wrist.
4. Count the number of times the patient’s chest rises and falls during one minute. Count one expiration and one inspiration as one respiration.
5. Pay attention to the character and rhythm. Is the breathing deep or shallow? Is it labored? Is the rhythm regular or irregular?
6. After the minute is up, record the date, time, rate, rhythm, and character on the Vital Signs: Respirations chart at the end of this worksheet.
7. Wash your hands.

Taking the Patient’s Temperature

**What is a normal temperature?** The normal range for body temperature is 97–100.4 degrees. However, there can be variations. For example, time of day affects body temperature. In the morning the body temperature is usually lower than in the evening. Temperature will also vary depending on the part of the body where the temperature is taken. The average temperature taken orally is 98.6.

**Where is temperature taken?** Oral temperatures are taken in the mouth. Auxiliary temperatures are taken in the armpit, under the upper arm. Aural temperatures are taken in the ear or auditory canal. Temporal temperatures are taken by scanning the forehead with a special thermometer. Rectal temperatures are taken in the rectum. In this activity you will be taking an oral temperature using a clinical thermometer covered with a plastic sheath.

**What does an abnormal temperature show?** A fever is when the body temperature is high, usually above 100.4 degrees. A fever usually indicates infection or injury. Hypothermia is a condition in which the body temperature is low. It is caused by prolonged exposure to the cold. The human body cannot survive for long at a temperature of 93 degrees or below.

Steps for Taking a Patient’s Temperature

**Equipment:** Gloves, clinical electronic thermometer, oral sheaths, Vital Signs: Temperature chart (included at the end of this worksheet), pencil

1. Read through all the steps before beginning.
2. Assemble the equipment.
3. Wash your hands and put on gloves. See the section titled Hand-Washing Steps.
4. Ask the patient to sit down, and make sure the patient is comfortable.
5. Explain the procedure to the patient.
6. Check to see that the patient has not put anything hot or cold in his or her mouth for at least 15 minutes before taking the patient’s temperature with an oral thermometer. The temperature in the mouth affects the accuracy of the reading.
7. Take the thermometer out of its holder, and put the tip into the plastic cover that can be thrown away when you are done.
8. Press the button to turn the thermometer on.
9. Ask the patient to open his or her mouth. Carefully place the tip of the thermometer under the tongue at the back of the mouth.
10. Ask the patient to gently close his or her lips around the thermometer. Ask the patient not to bite the thermometer. You may need to hold the thermometer in place.
11. Keep the thermometer in place until it beeps, and then remove it.
12. Read the numbers in the window. This is the patient’s temperature.
13. Record the patient’s temperature exactly as it appears on the thermometer on the Vital Signs: Temperature chart at the end of this worksheet.
14. Remove the plastic cover and throw it away.
15. Follow the cleaning instructions that came with your thermometer. Place the thermometer back in its holder.
16. Remove your gloves and wash your hands.

Taking the Patient’s Blood Pressure

**What is blood pressure?** Blood pressure is 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.

**What are the two types of blood pressure measurement?** The two types of blood pressure measurement are systolic and diastolic. Systolic pressure occurs in the walls of the arteries when the left ventricle of the heart is contracting and pushing blood into the arteries. When the heart is at rest, diastolic pressure occurs. Diastolic pressure is the constant pressure in the walls of the arteries when the left ventricle is at rest.

**How is blood pressure recorded?** A fraction is used to record blood pressure. The top number is the systolic reading. The bottom number is the diastolic reading. For example, a systolic reading of 100 and a diastolic reading of 70 are recorded as 100/70.

**What is a normal range?** For a healthy adult, the systolic reading should fall between 100 and 120, and the diastolic reading should fall between 60 and 80.

**What is hypertension?** High blood pressure is called hypertension. Common causes of hypertension include obesity, stress, and high salt intake. If hypertension isn’t treated, it can lead to heart disease, stroke, or kidney disease.

**What is hypotension?** Low blood pressure is called hypotension. Some possible causes of hypotension are heart failure, shock, depression, or dehydration.

Steps for Taking a Patient’s Blood Pressure

**Equipment:** Gloves, digital blood pressure monitor (sphygmomanometer), Vital Signs: Temperature chart (included at the end of this worksheet), pencil

1. Read through all the steps before beginning.
2. Assemble the equipment.
3. Wash your hands and put on gloves. See the section titled Hand-Washing Steps.
4. Ask the patient to sit down, and make sure the patient is comfortable. Have the patient rest for three to five minutes before taking his or her blood pressure.
5. Explain the procedure to the patient.
6. Roll up the patient’s sleeve. It should be rolled up to about five inches above the elbow. Make sure that the sleeve does not constrict the arm.
7. Position the patient’s arm so that it is supported and comfortable. The palm should be face up. The arm should be at heart level.
8. Wrap the deflated cuff of the blood pressure monitor around the upper arm. It should be about one inch above the elbow. Do not pull the cuff too tight. Make sure it is smooth and even.
9. Press the button. The cuff will automatically inflate and then deflate.
10. Record the measurement as it appears in the gauge on the Vital Signs: Blood Pressure chart at the end of this worksheet. Ask your teacher for help if you are not sure how to read the gauge.
11. Remove the cuff.
12. Wash your hands.

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| --- | --- |
| Vital Sign: Pulse | |
| Patient name |  |
| Date and time |  |
| Rate (beats per minute) |  |
| Rhythm (regular or irregular) |  |
| Volume (strong or weak) |  |
| Vital Sign: Respirations | |
| Patient name |  |
| Date and time |  |
| Rate (number of respirations in one minute) |  |
| Rhythm (regular or irregular) |  |
| Character (deep, shallow, difficult, labored) |  |
| Vital Sign: Temperature | |
| Patient name |  |
| Date and time |  |
| Temperature |  |
| Vital Sign: Blood Pressure | |
| Patient name |  |
| Date and time |  |
| Diastolic pressure |  |
| Systolic pressure |  |
| Blood pressure fraction |  |

Student Resource 7.5

Reading: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Care

Health care is broken down into tiers. A tier is a row or layer of something that has other rows or layers above or below it. For example, in an auditorium there are tiers of seats. In health care, there are three main tiers of care. They are called primary, secondary, and tertiary care.

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| --- | --- |
| Primary Care  Physicians who prevent and treat the main health problems of an individual and a community provide primary care. These physicians are usually trained in pediatrics, internal medicine, or gynecology, which is the branch of medicine that deals with women’s reproductive organs and diseases. Physicians who work in primary care are often called primary care providers. Patients see primary care providers for their yearly checkups. These physicians usually see patients regularly over a period of time. | Fotolia_13930771_S pedi.jpg |

Pediatricians are primary care providers who provide basic medical care for babies and children.

The care provided by primary care physicians is aimed at both individual patients and the larger population. They provide public health services. These services include administering immunizations, promoting proper nutrition, and providing health education. When a patient has a medical problem, he or she usually first sees his or her primary care doctor. If the problem is beyond the expertise of the primary care physician, the physician will make a referral for the patient to see a specialist. The specialist works in secondary care.

Secondary Care

The health care professionals in secondary care have specialized medical training. This training, knowledge, and skills are required to treat and diagnose certain problems. These professionals are specialists. Specialists include cardiologists, who specialize in heart disease, and oncologists, who specialize in cancer. Secondary care professionals can provide short- or long-term care.

Patients often see a health care professional in secondary care after getting a recommendation from a primary care provider. For example, if a patient discovers an unusual lump on his or her body, he or she will first visit his or her primary care physician. This physician will examine the lump. Then the physician will likely make a recommendation for the patient to see a secondary care professional in diagnostic services. That professional will perform a biopsy to determine if the lump is cancerous.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Fotolia_3477522_S surgery.jpg | Tertiary Care  The health care professionals in tertiary care provide medical or surgical services for complex and advanced problems. They treat conditions that are uncommon, like serious burns, and conditions that require collaboration between more than one specialist. Tertiary care usually occurs in specialized hospitals or departments. Tertiary care professionals may provide short- or long-term care depending on the patient’s needs.  Open heart surgery is performed by tertiary care providers. |

Student Resource 7.6

Defining Format Chart: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Care

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: As you read Student Resource 7.5, Reading: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Care, take notes on the definitions of the terms listed below. First, write the category that the term belongs to in the Category column. Then, in the Characteristics column, write the essential characteristics that distinguish the term from other terms in the same. The category for the first term is filled in for you.

| Term | Category | Characteristics |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Primary care | is a tier of health care that | 1.  2.  3. |
| Secondary care | is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  that | 1.  2.  3. |
| Tertiary care | is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  that | 1.  2.  3. |

Student Resource 7.7

Matching: Identifying Specialists

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

Directions: 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 your class, you may not complete the third column. An example is given for the first specialist.

| 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 | This specialist concentrates on the care of surgical patients and provides pain relief. He monitors the patient’s vital signs during surgery. |
|  | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the internal organs |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the heart and blood vessels |  |
|  | Diagnoses, prevents, and treats sports-related injuries and conditions |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the skin |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the stomach and intestines |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats acute illness or injury |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats cancerous tumors |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats diseases and disorders of muscles and bones |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats diseases of the ear, nose, and throat |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats mental, addictive, and emotional disorders |  |
|  | Provides care for women during pregnancy and childbirth |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the brain and nervous system |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats diseases and disorders of the chest and lungs |  |
|  | Provides care for women and diagnoses and treats diseases of the female reproductive system |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the eyes |  |
|  | Provides care for newborns with complex or high-risk problems |  |
|  | Diagnoses and treats disorders of the urinary system |  |

Student Resource 7.8

Writing Assignment: Specialist Reference Sheet

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

Directions: Follow the instructions below to research and write a reference sheet for a specialist. Your target audience for the reference sheet is high school students who are interested in a career as a specialist. Before you begin work, look at some of the reference sheets in your notebook and think about what makes them informative, well organized, and interesting. Make sure you read and understand the assessment criteria at the end of this resource before you begin work.

1. Pick a specialist about whom you would like to create a reference sheet. You may want to choose a specialty that you think is related to your culminating project work. You can choose a specialist from <http://www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/medical-specialists-medical-specialists> or choose one of the specialists listed below. If you would like to use a specialist who is not on this list, check with your teacher first.
   * Anesthesiologist <http://careers.stateuniversity.com/pages/467/Anesthesiologist.html>
   * Cardiologist <http://www.cardiosmart.org/CardioSmart/Default.aspx?id=192>
   * Emergency physician <http://www.med.umich.edu/em/education/medstudents/FAQ%27s.htm>
   * Gastroenterologist <http://s3.gi.org/patients/ccrk/WhatIsAGastro.pdf>
   * Otolaryngologist <http://www.entnet.org/HealthInformation/otolaryngologist.cfm>
   * Psychiatrist <http://www.mpsonline.org/PSYCHIATRY/Pages/WhatisaPsychiatrist.aspx>
   * Radiologist <http://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/careers/index.cfm?pg=diagcareer>
   * Sports medicine physician <http://www.aoasm.org/about/sports-medicine-faq>/
   * Urologist <https://www.auanet.org/about/what-is-urology.cfm>
   * Neonatologist <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/health-management/pediatric-specialists/Pages/What-is-a-Neonatologist.aspx>
   * Pulmonologist <http://www.acponline.org/patients_families/about_internal_medicine/subspecialties/pulmonology/>
   * Gynecologist <http://www.abog.org/faq.asp>
2. Use the chart at the end of this assignment sheet to take notes as you research the specialist you have chosen. Begin your research using the URL provided in Step 1. You may need to go to more than one site to complete your research. Ask your teacher to verify any additional sites that you would like to use. Use the following descriptions of each section to guide you in your note taking.
3. **A snapshot.** In this section, describe in a paragraph a moment in the daily life of the specialist. For an example, refer to the reference sheet for a registered dietetic technician in Student Resource 6.6. The first paragraph on this reference sheet provides a colorful glimpse into a dietetic technician’s workday. It shows some of the people she works with and the tasks she’s responsible for. The snapshot should read like a brief story or a description of a scene.
4. **Major responsibilities.** In this section, write a paragraph that gives an overview of the major responsibilities the specialist has. In this paragraph, you can include information about where the specialist typically works.
5. **Qualities and skills.** In this section, write a paragraph that explains the key qualities and important skills the specialist needs to excel at his or her work. For example, if the specialist works with patients who are in pain, one quality that he or she may have is compassion.
6. **What do I need to do to make it happen?** In this section, explain in a paragraph the steps that a person who is interested in the career needs to take. For example, what kind of post-high school education is needed? What should the person major in? What licensing or certification is required?
7. **How can I prepare now?** In this section, explain in a paragraph things a person can do in high school to prepare for a career as a specialist. What are specific courses that are important to take in high school? Is there volunteer work that will help the person prepare?
8. After you have completed your research, review your notes. Once you have a clear idea about what you are going to write in each section, begin to write. Write at least one paragraph for each section. You may refer to the reference sheets in your notebook at any time. As you write, make sure that each paragraph has a main idea and supporting details.
9. When you have finished writing, review your reference sheet and make sure that it meets the assessment criteria below. Make any necessary changes.

Make sure your reference sheet meets or exceeds the following assessment criteria:

* 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.

Notes about the Specialist I Am Researching

|  |
| --- |
| Pathway: |
| A snapshot |
| Major responsibilities |
| Qualities and skills people who pursue this specialty need |
| Steps high school students need to take to get into this career |
| Things a high school student can do now to prepare for this career |

Student Resource 7.9

Scenario: What Happens During a Visit to a Primary Care Doctor

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read the scenario below about a patient named Carol. Then explain what is likely to happen as Carol interacts with different health care professionals during each step of her doctor’s visit. In Step 3, use what you’ve learned about primary and secondary care to say what recommendations Carol’s physician might make to treat her problem. In Step 5, write what you think is happening behind the scenes with health care professionals with whom Carol hasn’t interacted.

**Scenario: Carol began to develop a minor rash on her cheek. The next day the rash spread to her forehead, so Carol called her primary care doctor and made an appointment.**

Step 1 (medical secretary):

Step 2 (medical assistant):

Step 3 (physician):

Step 4 (medical secretary):

Step 5 (medical biller and office manager):

Student Resource 7.10

Analysis: Identifying Health Care Professionals to Interview

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

Directions: Use this worksheet to begin compiling a list of health care professionals whom you would like to interview for your culminating project. Use what you’ve learned in this lesson and what you already know about your disease to help you respond to the questions and put together the list.

The disease we are featuring in our project is:

What role would a patient’s primary care physician have in helping to treat the disease?

Would the patient see one or more specialists? If so, list the specialists and their areas of expertise.

Specialist: Area of expertise:

Specialist: Area of expertise:

Specialist: Area of expertise:

With your group, look through the reference sheets that you’ve collected so far in your notebook. Are any of the health care professionals featured on the reference sheets involved in the care of a patient with the disease? List them below:

Review your responses on this analysis sheet. Then begin a list below of health care professionals whom you would like to interview for your culminating project pamphlet:



Student Resource 7.11

Preparation: Interviewing Health Care Professionals

Student Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: With your group, read through and discuss the following steps to prepare for an interview with a heath care professional. Under the “Prepare questions” section write the five most important questions your group has chosen to ask during the interview with one of the professionals on your list. At the end of this resource, write down additional ideas your group has about how to be best prepared for the interview. Once you feel prepared to make contact with a health care professional and conduct an interview, get to work setting up your first interview. Your first interview should be scheduled within the next two weeks. Use a table like the Interview Note-Taking Tool near the end of this resource to take notes during your interviews.

As you complete interviews for your culminating project, some of your interview notes will be assessed. Review the assessment criteria at the end of this resource, and make sure you understand how your interview notes will be assessed. As you conduct interviews and take notes, keep these assessment criteria in mind.

Tips for Interview Preparation

The interview liaison in your group is responsible for making sure interviews are set up, but he or she can enlist your help in any of the steps required to set up interviews. Remember, it is important to work as a team to make sure you have the best contacts and the best interviews possible.

**Make contact via email or phone**

If you make contact via email:

* Get a proper email address. Make sure you use an email address that gives you a professional identity. For example, [sarah.cane@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.cane@gmail.com) looks professional, but [funsarah@funtown.com](mailto:funsarah@funtown.com) does not. If you don’t have a professional address, ask your teacher for help you set one up.
* Add a clear subject line. Make it obvious why you are writing so the recipient is motivated to open and read your message.
* Open with a professional, friendly greeting and address people with the proper title until told otherwise (e.g., Dr. Smith or Professor Jones). Write the email as if you are writing a business letter.
* Put a concise, clear message at the beginning of the email. Get to the point quickly so your email is not skipped or deleted.
* Make sure that your email includes the following:
  + A brief explanation of your project and who you are
  + A request for a five-minute interview
  + At least two days and times that are convenient for you to conduct the interview. It may be difficult to arrange an interview with a health care professional during regular business hours, so you might suggest meeting during a lunch break or right when the professional gets off work.
* Keep content professional throughout the body of the email. Do not use informal terms, emoticons, or web lingo.
* End with a courteous closing. Thank the recipient for considering your request, and explain that you hope you have an opportunity to meet.
* Use proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Leave a good impression of you and your skills.
* Do not use all caps. All capital letters imply screaming and are more difficult to read.
* Have someone else in your group read your entire message before you send it. Be sure your tone and message are as you intended.

If you make contact via phone:

* Introduce yourself and get to the point. Tell the health care professional your full name, the name of your school and your teacher, and the reason for your call.
* Get the necessary information. When setting up the interview, make sure you’re clear about the day and time you and the professional have agreed to meet. If you need to check with your group members before agreeing to a time, let the professional know you will get back to him or her shortly to confirm. Write down the address where you will be meeting and any directions the professional gives you.
* Be professional, friendly, and courteous. Behave on the phone as you would if you were meeting the health care professional in person. At the end of the conversation, thank the professional for his or her time.
* Leave a professional message. If you receive the health care professional’s voice mail, leave a concise message that includes your name, the reason for your call, and the best way to reach you. Speak slowly and clearly.

**Prepare questions**

Many professionals may appreciate getting questions ahead of time so they can organize their thoughts or collect helpful resources in advance. Ask the health care professional if they’d like your questions before the interview.

Write the five questions that your group decides are the most important to ask during the interview.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

**Act professionally**

* Make sure that you know where the interview will take place and how to get there.
* Show up on time.
* Dress professionally.
* Shake hands and make eye contact.
* Respect the health care professional’s time. Try not to exceed the five minutes allotted for the interview unless the health care professional agrees to talk longer.
* Make sure that each member of your group asks questions.
* Thank the health care professional before you leave.

**Take notes during the interview**

* Remember to bring your notebook and something to write with.
* Review the five questions your group has come up with.
* It isn’t necessary to write down every word the health care professional says, but make sure to write down the most important ideas.
* If you have access to a digital audio recorder, consider taping the interview after getting permission by your interviewee.
* After the interview has finished, thank the health care professional and shake hands.

**Follow up and stay organized**

* Write a thank-you email.
* Organize your notes using the professional profile sheet.
* Keep the health care professional’s contact information for future reference.

Additional Ideas for Preparing for the Interview:

Interview Note-Taking Tool

Use a table such as the following to take notes during your interviews.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Professional’s name |  |
| Professional’s title and place of work |  |
| Date and time of interview |  |
| Questions | Responses |
|  |  |
| Additional information | |

Keep these assessment criteria in mind as you conduct interviews and take notes:

In future lessons, you will be submitting some of your interview notes for assessment. These are the criteria that will be used for the assessment:

* The interview questions are open ended, relevant, and on topic, and they elicit responses on a range of topics.
* The notes taken on the professional’s responses capture important ideas, and they include both the main idea of the response and the significant details.
* The notes include at least one powerful quotation of the professional's exact words.
* The completed notes are neat and use proper spelling and grammar.