

General Practice Placements

General Practice (GP) placements are a great way to boost your Medical School application. GPs are on the frontline of healthcare and often rely on exceptional communication skills.

This page answers the following questions about GP placements:

- What will I learn from a GP placement?
- How do I get a GP placement?
- How do I make the most of my GP placement?

What Will I Learn In GP Placements?

Primary healthcare is a unique setting. It's one in which aspiring medics will see a multitude of key skills in action, including:

- Often GPs have very busy clinics. Watch how they skillfully extract key information from patients in a timely manner.
- Observe how GPs identify potentially serious symptoms and escalate these, when appropriate, to a secondary healthcare setting.
- Look at how the practice works as a unified team. Sit in on reception or the emergency line and witness how essential teamwork really is in Medicine.
- Understand the vital role GPs have in educating their patients on their health, and how to manage chronic conditions, such as diabetes.

How Do I Get A GP Placement?

Many people have a close relationship with their local GP. For confidentiality reasons, you cannot do work experience with your local GP. However, if you ask them, they may know another doctor who can accommodate you.

Otherwise, try to visit, call and e-mail as many GPs as possible within your area. You could also seek help from the careers advisor at your school and get in touch with the education department at your local [NHS Trust](#).

Be clear, polite and flexible to increase your chances of securing a placement.

How Do I Make The Most Of My GP Placement?

As with all your placements, keep a log of what you see. We know how easy it is to forget an interesting consultation after a hard week.

So, at the end of every GP session you witness, make a quick bullet point list. You can expand on it when you get back home. Ask the doctor why they did certain things.

If you have seen an interesting condition, read up on it. Look at some research papers and cite them in your reflections.

During your GP Placement, compare and contrast what you see against any hospital-based work experience you may have had. Understand how GP and hospital settings differ, as well as how they work together effectively. You will need to use specific examples from your placement on your [personal statement](#) and be able to discuss them at [interview](#). Think about what you saw and what qualities (e.g. communication) were on display. Extrapolate wider learning points from individual cases. Use our free [personal portfolio](#) to keep track of all your experiences. And remember to follow our three step reflection plan.