



CZECH
HOSPITAL
PLACEMENTS

HOW TO START YOUR JOURNEY AS A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

CHP PROGRAM eBOOK
PART I

and much more...

Who can be your mentor?



I remember my first shift at ER; it was love at the first sight. That day I left with the feeling that I finally found a specialty which combines internal medicine, cardiology, intensive care, and a series of other specialties. This field requires quick decision making and self-confidence. Within a few minutes you can save patients' lives or relieve them of their complications. After every shift I go home with the feeling that I helped my patients, or that I freed them of their pain or that I made it possible to treat their acute illness. Emergency medicine is a specialty which fulfills your desire to help and allows you to see the results of your work instantly. After a year of working at the emergency department I was offered to work as a chief of medicine and I have been facing that challenge ever since.

My biggest motivation is the opportunity to help and take care of people who need it. I believe that these are the ethical foundations that every healthcare professional should possess. Do you agree?



MUDr. Jiří Šoupal

Jiří is the Head of the ER Department for Adults. He has been working as a doctor for 25 years already, 12 of them he spent at Washington University in Saint Louis, USA, then 4 years at the Erasmus Medical Center, in the Netherlands, Rotterdam.

Foreward

So you have decided to become a doctor, nurse, dentist, physiotherapist, paramedic or midwife. There is a long way between decision and its execution. Every year there are thousands of applications for medical, dentistry or nursing schools. No matter if you live in US, UK or anywhere else. Medicine and dentist school are one of the most competitive fields of study and only the best are accepted. Nursing has become more and more competitive in recent years.

If you still have the opportunity to choose courses for your last year of high school, consider taking advanced courses in biology, mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, and foreign languages. Speak to your advisor or to the universities you would like to attend, to see if any of these classes can provide university credits. It doesn't seem like much now, but completing these courses early can allow you to take more advanced university courses sooner than some of your peers. This means by the time you finish university, you will have been able to progress to more advanced courses, which looks great on a medical school application. In some universities, you may have the opportunity to graduate early, leaving you with a free semester to do research, volunteer, or work in a hospital. This extra experience and the initiative to do as much as possible will be very important when it comes time for your medical school interview.

We have created this eBook for our students of the Czech Hospital Placements Program, but it can be useful for everyone who is preparing for admissions to the university or undertakes an experience in a life clinical environment. It is designed to give you practical information about the progressive levels of education necessary to become a medical professional, to inform you of vital information about working in a hospital, and to prepare you for the rigorous process of being accepted into medical school.

If you ever wondered what are the rules when entering the operating theatre, how to apply, what are the skills that healthcare professional must possess, how to choose a university, how to be persuasive in your personal statement or essay or how to master the interview, then keep reading.

We hope that this eBook gives you the information that assists you on your journey to work in the medical field.

MY CAREER JOURNEY

THE MOMENT I REALIZE THIS IS MY DREAM TO FOLLOW
When I found out I want to become a doctor, nurse, dentist..

I WANT TO FALL IN LOVE WITH MY UNI
Carefully choosing the best university for me

DO I POSSESS THE SKILLS TO BECOME THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL?

I AM GONNA SHADOW THE REAL PROFESSIONALS! MY MENTORS!
My first tangible work experience from the clinical environment is coming!

WOW. THE JOB REALITY VS. MY EXPECTATIONS
My first tangible work experience from the clinical environment is coming!

HAVE BULLETPROOF ARGUMENTS FOR MY ESSAY/ PERSONAL STATEMENT
My first tangible work experience from the clinical environment is coming!

ACCEPTEEEEED!
or
I DIDN'T GET IN. WHAT TO DO?

STARTING TO WORK FOR IT
Physiology and anatomy books are my best friends

THINKING ABOUT A RIGHT CLINICAL EXPERIENCE JUST FOR ME

THINKING ABOUT A RIGHT CLINICAL EXPERIENCE JUST FOR ME
I will observe and learn from the best. What should I wear? How can I talk to a patient?

DAY D. THIS IS WHAT I WANT! (OR NOT.)
If you realize that healthcare is your dream, go for it!
If not, that is the big part of experience.

I CAN WRITE A KILLER APPLICATION FORM
Now is the great moment to capitalize what I learned from my practical work experience

MY INTERVIEW IS HERE. I WANT THAT SPOT
I show myself in the best light and strong arguments during the interview. They must want me to be their next student!

FINALLY!
MY JOURNEY BEGINS...

How to find the perfect university

One part of your life is over. High school is coming to an end, and you have a big decision in front of you. You need to decide what university you will attend. Although all universities with the same course names might seem similar, there is a lot to take in account. Every university has its characteristics. You will spend a significant part of your life there. You need to love the school. Do your research – talk to your guidance counselor and previous and current students, go there for open days, and ask everything you need.

When you are applying for a particular course at a university you need to check the prerequisite coursework (courses you need to go through). Every university has its own requirements and be sure you check as soon as possible. It may seem that you may take the required courses in one or two semesters but that might a huge mistake. For example, you may be required to pass Organic Chemistry, but a prerequisite for Organic Chemistry might be Principles of Chemistry II, and a prerequisite for Principles of Chemistry II is Principles of Chemistry I. What we are trying to say is you cannot decide in your senior year to study medicine, dentistry, physiotherapy, midwifery or nursery. You need to start planning as soon as possible for your future career, if you want to complete your studies in a remotely timely manner.

When looking for the prerequisite also check the deadlines for your university application as they differ from school to school.

Remember that the quality of the university is what matters!

1. What is the name of the hospital that cooperates with the university? What is the quality of provided care? Which doctors can you meet there? Are there some well-known specialists? How big is the hospital? What is it known for?

As a future healthcare professional you should consider where you will have your first long term of internships and practices. It will be one of your first tangible experiences and its quality is essential to your motivation during studies and overall approach to the field.

2. Are you able to continue your graduate studies with the same school you will obtain a bachelor's degree?

There are plenty of schools that have excellent undergraduate science programs, but not all of them are connected to a graduate medical school. It isn't necessary to study at the same school for your entire academic career, but remember that you may have to leave at some point.

3. How competitive is your potential field of study, particularly at the university/college you are considering? How many students do they accept?

Healthcare is a very competitive field. Nevertheless, there are schools that are more competitive than others. Furthermore, every school takes a different amount of students according to their limitations. Everyone is different. Some people prefer being in a small group of students where they know each other and some like bigger groups where they can get lost more easily.

4. Who will your professors be? Are they more academic teachers or more practical? Is there anyone in particular that you're interested in having as a professor?

5. What is the difference among subjects by schools you are considering?

Although you might think all subjects should be similar by same courses they are not. It depends a lot on a teaching style, teachers and specialty of universities.

6. What is the employment rate and where do the graduates work? Do they work in the field?

This is definitely a question to ask. You are studying to find gainful employment that you will love and that will be worth the effort. Consider what the university offers to you.

7. Do they offer summer courses? Is there a possibility to take a foundation year?

Summer courses are a great chance to broaden your knowledge between terms or even before the school starts at all. If you do not feel that you are ready for university, search for a foundation year that can help you prepare for university.

8. What are your opportunities to travel? Does the school have some international partnership with another universities or agencies?

Studying and traveling belong together. Find out if your school offers some international programs such as ERASMUS+ in Europe.

9. Does it organize conferences? Are you able to network with people in the field from outside of the school?

Networking with people from your field is very important for your future career. At these conferences you might get a dream job or a colleague you will value all your life. Where else could you meet top specialists so easily?

10. What sort of extracurricular activities are available to students?

University is not only about studying but also about being social and enjoying your life. Do you love volleyball or dancing? Is there a club available that suits your interests?

Does the university fit your needs?

1. How high is the tuition? How can you get a partial or full scholarship?

This is one of the basic questions to answer. Tuition is high but the conditions for scholarships differ a lot from school to school.

2. What is the teaching style? When will you get to the hospital and get a practice with hands on experience?

There are many teaching styles that you may meet. Some school stress practice more than the others. Some schools are focusing on a theory and practice comes later. Determine what you like more and choose according to the decision.

3. Do you like the location and its weather and surroundings?

If you are used to sunny California, you might have troubles to live in rainy Seattle and otherwise. Always consider the change but do not be afraid to make the change.

4. Are you willing to move to another town, region or country?

Some students want to go further and some want to stay near the hometown. Don't about moving across the country. University is not only about getting the education and knowledge but also about becoming independent. On the other hand, you do not need to be afraid you will not achieve your independence when you will attend school in your home town (but it takes more effort).

5. What does the university accommodation look like? How far is it from the campus?

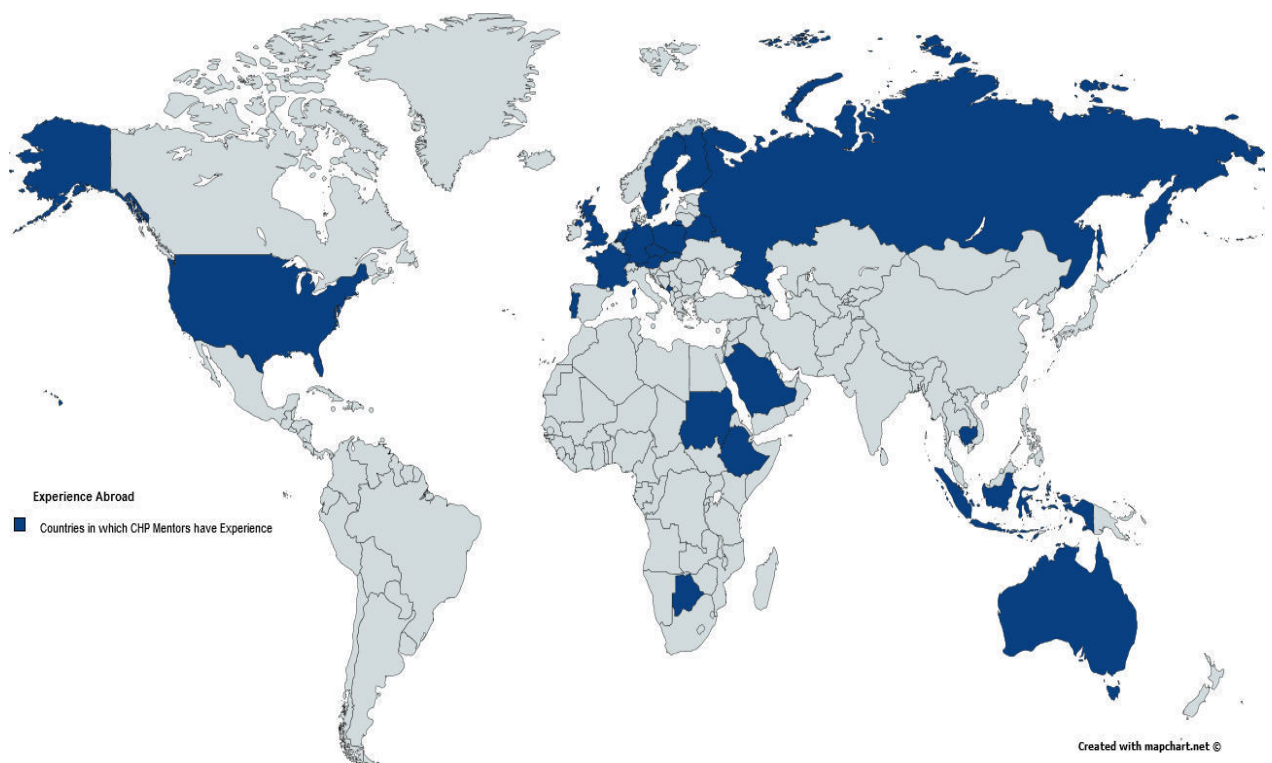
You may say it is not important, but it is where you will stay most of your time apart from the university itself. Also check the living costs associated with a dormitory. Is it better to live in the dorms or would you like to rent a flat with other classmates?

Make a list for every university you are considering with a little + and – on the top. Write everything you like about the school to positives and what you are missing to negatives. When you answer all the questions you will be able to answer the characteristics of the school and decide which one is best for you. Are there bigger classes or is there more “family” atmosphere and smaller classes? The final choice is up to you. Let others to advice you but never let them make the decision for you. Believe that whatever you choose and anywhere you go you will be satisfied as long as it will be your choice.

Studying abroad

During your time studying as an undergraduate, you should strongly consider taking some time to study abroad. Doing so can provide you with a wealth of information that that you would not have the opportunity to obtain while living at home. Living and studying in a foreign country can help you learn about how you work and interact in different cultures and societies, how comfortable you are being far away from home, and also allows you to reflect on your home and your own university, to help you to understand what it is that you like and dislike.

At the core of the CHP program is a large group of doctors, nurses, surgeons, anesthesiologists, paramedics, and other professionals, who have volunteered to open their work to you and allow you to shadow them. They have provided information about their educational experience, and one of the most predominant similarities they have is their decision to study or work abroad for part of their career. These professionals are predominantly of Czech and Slovak origin, but they have experience working all over the world. This experience ranges from studying abroad during their undergraduate for programs like Erasmus, to obtaining practical medical experience in Asia or the Middle East, to working and volunteering in Africa. Below is a map of some of the countries in which our mentors have worked





MUDr. Martin Bláha, PhD.



USA, Australia



Doc. MUDr. Michael Halaška, PhD.



Italy, Austria



Mgr. Sandra Marianová



Netherlands



MUDr. Dana Pittlová



**Botswana, England,
Northern Ireland**



MUDr. Dmitry Rakita, CSc



Russia



MUDr. Radovan Fiala



Germany



MUDr. Tereza Lužná



France, USA



Bc. Nikola Blaškovanová



Saudi Arabia, Cambodia



MUDr. Vít Drochýtek



**Sweden, Portugal,
Indonesia**



Mgr. Lenka Drábková



Great Britain, Slovenia

Undergraduate courses

As you work towards your acceptance in medical school, it will be necessary to choose take courses that will prepare you for the next level of education. Some universities will provide you with a specific “Pre-Medical” major, which is designed specifically for students who continue their education into a professional medical field. Nursing degrees typically require a year or two of general studies, followed by an acceptance into a nursing program for the remaining part of the degree term. Other universities will merely provide degrees in Biology, Anatomy, and Physiology, and suggest that you focus on these areas to prepare yourself for graduate studies in medicine. Regardless, it is necessary (both as a requirement to medical school and also as requisite information to pass medical acceptance exams) to take the following courses. These courses are fairly basic compared to the rigorous classes you will take when becoming a nurse or doctor, but they are nonetheless necessary, as they provide you with the core concepts and skills necessary to move forward.

Required courses

These courses are required for acceptance into most medical schools in the western world. Without completing these courses during your undergraduate studies, you are unlikely to be considered or prepared for medical school.

- **Biology** (One year, two semesters)
 - Basic level biology classes are the cornerstone of any science degree. Regardless of whether or not you choose to work as a medical professional, academic researcher, or in the private sector, biology is a necessary study. In these classes you will learn about how life is defined by the scientific community, the basic properties of organelles, cells, organs, and living creatures, and the progression of human understanding of the study of life.
- **General Chemistry** (One year, two semesters)
 - Understanding chemistry is absolutely required to pursue any sort of medical field. General chemistry courses will teach you the very basics of chemistry, from what makes chemical elements unique, to how these elements interact with each other and how those interactions are imperative for the world to exist.
- **Physics** (One year, two semesters, typically with laboratory experience)
 - Understanding physics is necessary to becoming a medical professional. Understanding the forces that act in the world around is vitally important if you want to study the bodies we live in. In addition, the laboratory experience will be exceedingly valuable.
- **Organic Chemistry** (One year, two semesters, with laboratory experience)
 - Long seen as the scourge of premed students, “organic chemistry” is a phrase that strikes fear into the hearts of past and present students. A notoriously difficult study, organic chemistry focuses specifically on the chemistry of carbon-based creatures, explaining at a molecular level how life can exist. While this is one of the most complicated classes offered by most universities, you wouldn’t want to visit a medical professional who wasn’t quite comfortable with these concepts.

Recommended courses

In addition to the requisite courses mandated by most medical schools, there are a variety of courses that are universally suggested, although not directly necessary for acceptance. These courses will prepare you for success during your medical career, assist you in your process of acceptance, and also give you the skills necessary to work as a professional after you finish your education.

- **Anatomy and Physiology**

Anatomy and Physiology are some of the core studies in medical school, and are presented with immense depth at the graduate level. An undergraduate course in these fields will by no means allow you to slide through the studies at your medical school, but will allow you to be familiar with the concepts and the vocabulary.

- **Ethics**

In addition to the demands of a medical professional in regards to scientific knowledge, a doctor must also negotiate a variety of moral issues during their career. Changing laws, beliefs, and ideas need to be understood. In addition to this, ethical questions are a feature of medical school interviews.

- **Writing and Speech**

Possessing information is a wonderful skill, but almost as important is the ability to present this information to others. Be it my presentations, essays, interviews, conferences, theses, or research, you must be able to speak and write effectively you want to be read or heard.

- **Social Sciences** (Psychology, Sociology, etc.)

A huge part of learning to help people is the ability to manage their mental and emotional states. Understanding the world we live in, and how individual people react with that world, is terribly important.

Admission tests

Getting into medicine is a complicated process. Every country has its specifics. In The UK is for admissions used UCAS = University and College Application Service, whereas US uses AMCAS = American Medical College Application Service. Find out what the requirements for each application are and which tests do you need to undertake – MCAT? BMAT? UKCAT?

Find out also what information do you have to fill in to the application form? How many applications are sent per year and how many is accepted? Check the competitiveness and do not underestimate the other applicants. They will try hard just as you do.

The Medical College Admission Test

When you applying for American medical schools, you are required to pass the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). The MCAT tests your abilities in problem solving, critical thinking, and general knowledge.

MCAT is now divided into 4 parts:

- Biological and Biochemical Foundations of Living Systems
- Chemical and Physical Foundations of Biological Systems
- Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior
- Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills

For each of the four sections it is possible to get 132 points. Your score in the MCAT is the summation of these four sections, for a maximum score of 528. Your results will show your score in each section, allowing you to see your strengths and weaknesses. You will see how you stand among others and determine whether you are satisfied with the result, or if you want to retake the test. You may take the test several times, and many students take the MCAT for the first time in their junior year of university.

- **Do all US medical schools accept MCAT exam?**

Not quite. Texan schools have their own admission tests provided by the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service. Always check the requirements of the school to which you are applying.

- **Can I send to schools MCAT results older than a year?**

This depends from school to school. Usually they do not accept results older than 3 years but it differs so always check it first.

APPLYING IN THE US

AMCAS

American Medical College Application Service

- 1 IDENTIFYING INFORMATION**
Basic personal information, such as name, ID number, etc.
- 2 SCHOOLS ATTENDED**
All schools you have attended since graduating from high school
- 3 ADDITIONAL PERSONAL**
List of schools you wish to send an application to, via AMCAS
- 4 COURSE WORK**
All courses you took in university, including those not for credit (avg: 52)
- 5 WORK AND ACTIVITIES**
List up to 15 experiences and describe the three most meaningful in greater detail
- 6 LETTERS OF EVALUATION**
Submit up to 10 letters, though two or three is more typical (quality over quantity)
- 7 MEDICAL SCHOOLS**
List of schools you wish to apply to via AMCAS
- 8 ESSAY**
Write about why you want to attend medical school, up to 5300 characters
- 9 STANDARDIZED TESTS**
Your score on the MCAT (and possibly other tests), or information about recent/upcoming test dates

On average

2.8% of applicants are accepted and enroll



In 2013: **731 595 applicants**
48 910 acceptances
20 550 enrollees

APPLICATION SUBMITTED

Application is submitted to AMCAS
and a fee is paid

APPLICATION PROCESSED

All documents are examined, the
provided information is verified, and
GPA is calculated

APPLICATION SENT

Medical schools receive the
application (new MCAT scores are
automatically updated)



APPLYING IN THE UK

UCAS

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

1 REGISTRATION AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Basic personal information, such as name, ID number, etc.

2 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ethnic origin, national identity, etc. - non-compulsory and only for students from the UK

3 STUDENT FINANCE

How you will finance your studies - only for UK and EU citizens

4 COURSE CHOICES

You may apply to up to four schools

5 FULL EDUCATION HISTORY

All your educational progress and qualifications

6 EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Up to five paid jobs (full- or part-time)
Volunteer work should be mentioned in the personal statement

7 PERSONAL STATEMENT

Show your positive qualities and commitment in 4000 characters

8 REFERENCES

Who wrote your references and the references themselves

9 FINAL CHECK

Check all your information before submitting your application, as you will be charged a fee for changes afterward

On average

9,5%

of applicants are
accepted to medical
school



In 2012:

82 489 applications

7 805 placements

APPLICATION
SUBMITTED

Application is submitted to UCAS and
a fee is paid

APPLICATION
PROCESSED

All documents are examined and the
provided information is verified

APPLICATION
SENT

Medical schools receive the
application



Biomedical Admissions Test

BMAT exam is required by 8 schools in the United Kingdom, including Cambridge and Oxford; and one in Singapore. The test takes 2 hours and consists of 3 parts:

- Aptitude and Skills
- Scientific Knowledge and Applications
- Writing

You may take the exam only once a year, which is different from the American MCAT. The registration period for the test is usually from September to October, and the test itself takes place in November.

Which schools require BMAT?

| | |
|---|--|
| <u>Brighton and Sussex Medical School</u> | <u>University of Cambridge</u> |
| <u>Imperial College London</u> | <u>University of Leeds</u> |
| <u>Lancaster University</u> | <u>University of Oxford</u> |
| <u>University College London</u> | <u>Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (Singapore)</u> |

UK Clinical Aptitude Test

The UKCAT is an admissions test for some universities in the United Kingdom. The test takes 2 hours just as BMAT, but it is divided to 5 parts:

- verbal reasoning
- quantitative reasoning
- abstract reasoning
- decision reasoning
- situational judgement

As an entry test it is very important to prepare for the exam. You may find some of the previous tests on the internet, allowing you to see the structure of the questions and create a strategy. Finding out what is easy for you and also what may cause you trouble can help you achieve better results.

You will get only receive one copy of your results, but you may obtain more for an additional charge. You do not need to send your results to all of the schools to which you applied. In cooperation with the UCAS, the results are distributed to the interested universities. You only need to fill in your UCAS Personal Identification Number (PID), name of the university, and a course (only for universities that require UKCAT and to which you are applying for)

If you are not from the United Kingdom you do not have to travel to the UK to take the test. You have an opportunity to do the test [in your country](#) (only for some countries, no all).

Which schools require UKCAT?

| | |
|--|--|
| <u>University of Aberdeen</u> | <u>University of Leicester</u> |
| <u>Cardiff University</u> | <u>University of Liverpool</u> |
| <u>University of Dundee</u> | <u>University of Manchester</u> |
| <u>Durham University</u> | <u>University of Newcastle</u> |
| <u>University of East Anglia</u> | <u>University of Nottingham</u> |
| <u>University of Edinburgh</u> | <u>Plymouth University</u> |
| <u>University of Exeter</u> | <u>Queen Mary, University of London</u> |
| <u>University of Glasgow</u> | <u>University of Sheffield</u> |
| <u>Hull York Medical School</u> | <u>University of Southampton</u> |
| <u>Keele University</u> | <u>University of St Andrews</u> |
| <u>King's College London</u> | <u>St George's, University of London</u> |
| <u>University of Warwick</u> | |

For more information, have a look on the 2015 Guide:
http://www.ukcat.ac.uk/App_Media/uploads/guide-2015/UKCAT_Guide_15.html#p=1

Start preparing early. Nevertheless, if your test results are not what you hoped for do not panic! Some schools do not put less interest in the results then to the other parts of the admission process.

Nursing

Nursing can be one of the most rewarding professions. Nurses were, are, and always will be an important part of the hospital team. Nurses take care of the mental health of patients, just as they help to manage illnesses, administrate medication, perform diagnostic tests, and analyze the results. Nurses take care of patient hygiene and report the condition of the patients to doctors and other supervisors

There are many types of nursing. In today's society, specialties are needed in every field. During your career you may decide to become a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Registered Nurse (RN) or be a Nursing Assistant. Furthermore, you may pursue a specialty and become a Certified Heart Failure Nurse, Nurse Midwife, Family Nurse Practitioner, Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist, Certified Neuroscience Registered Nurse and much more. There are tons of specializations after you finish your undergraduate studies.

Although an LPN and an RN might seem very similar according to the name of the profession, their duties are totally different. A registered nurse is allowed to administrate drugs, perform diagnostic tests, analyze them, and plan and coordinate the plans for patients' care. They are the right hand of every doctor. An LPN can only provide basic nursing care, such as controlling the blood pressure, inserting catheters, and bathing and dressing patients. An LPN needs to report the condition of their patients to a registered nurse. Registered nurses supervise Licensed Practical Nurses, Nursing Assistants, and other Nursing Aides on the hospital team.

To become a Registered Nurse, you need to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing (BDN), Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN), or Diploma from an accredited program. BDN is just as other bachelor's programs. You will find the course on a college or university you want to attend, apply and fulfill the entry requirements. The courses take 3 or 4 years of study.

ADN is suitable for students who want to become a nurse in a shorter amount of time. You may finish the degree only within 2 years to become a Registered Nurse. It takes less time and the tuition is therefore lower.

So where is the advantage of studying BDN over ADN?

Studying longer does not only mean having bigger knowledge base. The bachelor will prepare you for further studies in nursing and give you more opportunities to gain higher position in work. Also when you have BDN you earn more money than nurses with ADN.

It is really up to you what will be your choice as you will become registered nurse with either path. Talk to your student advisor if you need more advice for making the right choice.

If you want to get even faster to the healthcare environment you may take a course to be a Nursing Assistant which takes from 1 to 6 months.

For admissions in the UK you need to use UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. It is a tool to apply you for all school in the UK. Scroll back to the infographics "Studying in UK" to see detailed information. After you submit your application you need to get to a short list to be able go on in the process. If you get there you will be asked to come and write an entry test. You do not write the test before so the results are not in your application. Therefore, is essential for you to excel with personal statement (you will get tips in 3rd part of this e-book). Once you get though the tests successfully you will be invited for an interview. This interview is your final chance to impress the committee as this is a last part of your application process (tips for your interview are also in the 3rd part of our eBook). Admission requirements in the US are individual by every school.

Who can be your mentor?



Coronary heart disease is the main cause of death in the Czech Republic and also throughout the developed world. In my work I meet with the latest catheterization techniques and methods. I see professionals that fight with this insidious disease every day. I like being a part of a team that can save a human life or at least make it better within a few minutes with a quick intervention of coronary arteries. My patients often have an acute problem and the emergency service brings them to us. They suffer from an acute heart-attack and therefore their life is at risk. Everything happens very quickly for these patients, as every minute means more damaged heart cells and therefore bigger ischemia and a more severe heart-attack. I find the work with these patients very interesting and the immediate effect of the treatments and relief of the patient is for me very encouraging and motivating. An extremely interesting procedure in my opinion is the implantation of an aortal valve through a catheterization way that we do in cooperation with the cardiosurgical team. This method is relatively new in the world and I am proud that such complex procedure is conducted in our department.



Bc. Kateřina Vojtovičová

Kateřina is a Nurse in the Catheterization Unit of the Cardiology Specialized Center. She says that her job has been also her hobby for 12 years.

Why do you want to become a medical professional?

This is the most important question you should ask yourself. Unfortunately, you may not encounter it all that often. Medicine has always been a revered career path, and your friends and family are not likely to try and talk you out of it. Parents and grandparents will be very proud, and your friends will be very impressed.

However, it's important that you pursue the career for the right reasons, and that you are committed to the work. Being accepted to and completing medical school, and the subsequent work as a medical professional is one of the most demanding things a person can do. Many people who attempt this will fail at some part of the journey, and only those who are truly prepared and dedicated to the idea will be successful.

Deciding to become a medical professional is not a choice that anyone can make for you, and you may choose to do so for a variety of reasons. We've spoken to our mentors during the creation of this program and asked them directly, "Why did you choose to become a medical professional?" Here are some of their responses.

- Marta Astraverkhava

"I also wanted to choose a profession that would involve communication with people. Since my childhood I have wanted to help to make people's lives better. "

- Hana Bartošová

"Fighting for their health and contentment is for me the right thing to do. So far the desire to care for others has fulfilled me. This compassion for the suffering and defenceless is reflected also out of my profession. I am very sensitive to animal suffering and other injustice. I just wish I could save the whole world."

- Michaela Říhová

"Every patient whom I could help to have a better life is for me the satisfaction for sleepless nights or sunny days spent at work. On the other hand, being a doctor brings the possibility to grow, train, and lead your mind to openness."

- Andranik Sargsjan

"Being a doctor is very hard and sometimes not immediately gratifying for obvious reasons – taking care of people that are dependent on the help of others. Nevertheless, it brings the one thing that other professions cannot: Power, power to help a man in need, exactly in the moment when we need to deal with the incorrigible – human life."

- Jakub Lorenc

“Mainly, I wanted to be able to help an injured person when the situation occurs, to closely cooperate with doctors and to watch how the disease or injury evolves during the treatment. The idea that I can help to someone with their injury or suffering, helped me to make the choice to choose the field of healthcare. I want to do the right thing and help others in their hard moments.”

- Tereza Hlaváčková

“Furthermore, I knew that I wanted to work in a group of people and a healthcare team is definitely the one. It suits me to have my fair share of responsibility for the patient’s treatment and I enjoy participating on assembling the therapy. Seeing positive results of your work after helping my patients in therapy is always very pleasant.

- Martin Kočí

“When I was 18 years old some of my friend and relatives faced some medical issues. I was very frustrated that I was not able to help them despite how much I wanted to. I realized what a frustrating burden a patient can be for his or her relatives and friends. You do not understand what is going on, you have no information, and you cannot do anything else besides trust a doctor. I realized that this job is the one that makes sense. No matter what you run into in your life, you have a job that has a purpose.”

- Martin Kysilko

“During my studies in Lyceum I enjoyed my chemistry classes, but being “only” a chemo-technological engineer seemed to specific to me. Medicine has an aspect of interpersonal contact and allows someone to use their education outside of work, e.g. providing first aid, lecturing to students, providing medical supervision at various events, and so on. Moreover, it is one of few professions where you can provide help to others directly. “

- Matěj Štefánek

“I wanted to choose a profession where I wouldn’t be making a profit from the losses of others, but a profession where I would help others. This perspective made the list of possible career choices thinner. Simultaneously, I was always fascinated by the act of life creation – how it’s possible that something so complex and well developed is created from basically “nothing”.”

- Martin Bláha

“Studying medicine was for me a logical choice that stemmed from my interest in nature and science. Medical faculties have clearly specified content of study. It is not an artificially created field that can be difficult to find a job in after school. Healthcare is also not connected to politics and therefore brings some amount of autonomy. Medicine is a field that is the same all around the world in different countries.

Therefore, you may find a job in other countries which gives you even more personal freedom.”

- Dana Pittlová

“During my studies at grammar school I was fascinated by the perfect functionality of the human body and its many secrets. At this point in my life I have a sense of humility, because I know that we as doctors do not have sole control over human lives, and ultimately it is not in our power to save every patient.”

- Jiří Šoupal

“It has been a very long time and I don’t think I can say that much about it, but some of the main reasons were the desire to be useful, an interest in an intellectually fulfilling and yet practical specialty, the difficulty of the challenge (I thrive on challenges), no relation to politics (it was the year 1986), because in case of a war, I didn’t want to be the one destroying human lives, but the one saving them. Politics at the time meant only one thing – joining the communist party and going with the flow. Other parties were forbidden and therefore I didn’t want to be part of politics. I also always loved nature, biology, history, books, and biographies of Pasteur, Munth, and others. Although the biggest motivation of all was the opportunity to help and take care of people who need it. I believe that these are the ethical foundations that every medical worker should possess.”

- Ondřej Sobotík

“I come from a family of doctors and since my childhood I have been interested in natural sciences, mostly biology. During high school I was fascinated by chemistry and physics. I decided well ahead to apply for medicine and studied in Olomouc. During my studies, I was motivated not only by desire to help people, but also by desire to understand the anatomy and complex body system with its mechanism. While studying I had the possibility to take part in internships abroad; I visited France, Montenegro and Finland. These experiences enhanced me from the professional point of view, as well as, in my private life.”

The qualities every medical professional should possess

An Indecisive Doctor, an Unprofessional Dentist, an Insensitive Midwife, an Uncommunicative Physiotherapist or an Unqualified Nurse – These Are Not Qualities You Are Looking for Once Coming as a Patient

Healthcare is an incredibly demanding field. Long hours and day-to-day responsibilities caring sick and stressed people require more than academic knowledge. So if you decide on this path, you should possess a very specific set of skills, qualities, personality traits. Some of them can be learned and developed, others are more inherent. To become a great physician, nurse, dentist, midwife, or physiotherapist, you will need both professional skills and good character. It is a hard job, so why not to start work on your skills right now? As an excellent healthcare professional you must be:

A **NALYTICAL** The ability to analyze all symptoms correctly and diagnose a patient's condition is not as simple as you might think. At first, you need to ask the proper questions. The patients are usually very stressed, even by a routine examination. As a doctor you need to be able to analyze not only patient's physical state, but also, the psychological condition, since human health is a fragile topic.

B **ELIEVER** Believe in your skills and competencies. When you talk to your patients, they need to feel your optimism. Your confidence is a signal their problem or health condition will be alright. If you believe, you motivate others to do so as well.

C **ONTROLLING YOUR EMOTIONS** Especially at the beginning of your career. It might be hard for you to witness unhappy fates of your patients. These cases shouldn't let you down personally. Giving information to relatives about the condition of a loved one might be difficult to do. Announcing diagnoses will be a part of your everyday job. There will be good days and bad days, too. You will have to handle both.

D **ISCREET** Never talk in front of the patient in negative or inadequate terms. And do not talk about other patients. You are not allowed to share any personal information about a patient with unqualified people. One of the first things a patient expects from you is 100% confidentiality.

E **MPHATHETIC & SENSITIVE** You will deal with people who are in pain and stressed. Try to put yourself in their shoes to understand how their condition affects their everyday life. When a patient feels he or she is in good care, it may even speed up the recovery. On the other hand, being treated in a stressful environment full of arrogant staff that can even prolong the patient's suffering. Try to minimize the patient's discomfort and pain with a gentle touch. A good nurse understands that the patient is sensitive and so she treats them carefully. A great dentist is gentle while performing the treatment in the patient's mouth.

F **LEXIBLE** Patients needs your care, regardless of what time of week or day it is. You often need to

give up your weekend plans and keep going even if you are tired. What's more, being flexible also means adapting and cooperating with other members of your working team.

GOOD AT MULTI-TASKING No two days in the hospital are the same. You will need to organize your time and manage all parts of your job and still have free time to spend with your family. If you are going to become a nurse, your task doesn't lie only looking after patients in the ward, you will also need also to take care of relatives coming for visits to know where to find all the doctors and staff, to make and receive calls, prepare the beds for new patients much more.

HUMAN You are not only a specialist but also a human being. Your work in healthcare can have its consequences. You might become resistant to some situations, well, this distance is sometimes *necessary* for doing the job – oncologists are a good example. Anyway, you never know if you won't find yourself in the role of a patient one day. So don't forget you are a human too, and not a machine.

IMMEDIATE Every minute is precious. When something goes wrong during a treatment or a surgery, you need to decide quickly and turn your intentions into action immediately. Sometimes only seconds are the difference between the life and death. The career of the healthcare professional is a very stressful, as there are moments you simply can't take back. Clear your head as quick and good decisions are skills you should certainly possess.

JUDICIOUS Of course we don't mean to judge the patients. Your role is to treat them. You have to be able to measure your steps and demonstrate them. As a healthcare

professional you will be learning all your life. Take advantage of every case you work on!

KIND & CARING These are the first qualities that come to mind when we talk about healthcare professions. Being at the hospital can be unpleasant for the patients. You can significantly calm them down by creating a peaceful environment. Saying hello to them and giving a smile might be the first medicine they get from you.

LISTEN & REPEAT Listening and hearing are not the same. Let people talk and listen to them carefully. This is key to effective communication, which you, as the healthcare professional, have to master. Otherwise you could miss an important detail about the patient's problem, or they might not even tell you. Before diagnosing, repeat all that important information that the patient told you. Perhaps they add some little detail that is very important.

MODESTY Saying to your patient „Well, um...I am not sure if your finger is one hundred percent broken...sorry I am new here, wouldn't you mind if I make one call...” is not the best way to create a strong patient-doctor bond. On the other hand, your overconfidence will lead nowhere. The patients appreciate a modest doctor or a nurse who knows where his or her limits are, and when to send the patient to the experienced specialist. Prideful mistakes are hardly forgivable.

NO I IN TEAM THINKER For patients it is crucial that all of the healthcare team members work together and communicate effectively with the same aim. Any changes in the patient's condition should be shared within the team. Each member is vitally important. Your mutual task is to do your best to make patients feel better. When you

create a welcoming atmosphere, you help people both physically and mentally. That is very important.

OBSERVING Watch your colleagues in action during the treatment. A good nurse keeps her eyes open and if something is wrong, she notifies the surgeon. While watching what others do, you learn from other professionals and also increase the safety of the patient.

PATIENT Healing patients is not the same as fixing a broken fence. It takes time and patience. Especially in oncology, cardiology, or neurology, patients are there for the long haul. Be patient with your patient 😊

QUALIFIED You cannot perform an operation just by watching the YouTube tutorial; every healthcare professional must be qualified for his or her job. The more complicated the work you do; the more qualification is required.

RESPONSIBLE & RESPECTFUL As said before, hospitals work as a team. They need to rely on you. It doesn't matter whether you are a doctor, nurse, midwife, dentist, or physiotherapist. Everyone has their role and everyone must give 100%. Be on time, know your position in the team, and respect your co-workers, superiors, and patients!

STRESS – RESISTANT You will have some very uncomfortable moments. Meeting with suffering patients and sometimes having to cope with death will be significantly more common than in other professions. Every loss is hard. You need to

learn how to manage these situations and to not carry the burden with you for too long. Be prepared to be under pressure very often.

TALKATIVE Communication skills are a must. When talking to patients keep your vocabulary simple, without medical jargon if at all possible. On the other hand, they do not want to be spoken to like a child. You will meet tens of patients every day. But for them you might be the first person they confide their problems to. Remember that. Ask specific questions as people tend to forget the most important aspects of their issue, or they simply may not find it relevant. Perhaps they are ashamed of their problem. For example, urinary leakage is not a topic to talk about with everyone. To relax the atmosphere, ask your patients and also about other staff then their condition. Try to understand them.

UP TO DATE Stay up to date with current medical discoveries, innovative research and other trends such as new treatment methods. The healthcare industry is changing every day, so read new books and monitor current events online on professional web pages. Don't lie back on your laurels and assume that you know everything.

VERACIOUS Be honest with your patients. You must explain to the patient what happened if anything goes wrong. Sometimes it will not be easy. The bad news can seriously affect the patient's view of his or her future, so empathy is always required. You will need to get used to bringing unfavorable medical information to patients and their families. On the other hand, while delivering good news you will feel know how valuable your job truly is.

WORKAHOLIC Well, no one said working in healthcare is easy. Being a doctor, nurse, physiotherapists, dentist, or midwife, is a never ending job, as someone will always need your help. The devil and the doctor never sleep. Organize and balance your working/personal time and find moments just for yourself, your friends, and your family. After the demanding work, relax and recharge; it is important.

XRAY EYED When examining the patient, look at the treated body part like you

had the x-ray eyes. Check everything thoroughly to avoid you overlook another issue. The patient's problem can be even related to another disease so it is important to take the case comprehensively. Compare what you see and what the patient says to set a right diagnosis.

YET SHARING Once you will not be a student anymore, you will be a doctor, dentist, nurse, physiotherapist, or midwife.. But there will be others who will want to learn from you. Share your knowledge with your colleagues and students. During your studies share everything you learn with your classmates. They will share back!

ZESTFUL & HAPPY Do you have a passion for helping people? Of course it is almost impossible to be enthusiastic every day and give smiles all the time. Still, keep in mind the reasons why have you started working in healthcare. Enjoy the moments of your success, of your patient's recovery, and do it with the same passion which have driven you to medicine, nursing, dentistry, or another healthcare discipline.

Can you find at least 75% of these personal qualities and skills in yourself? If yes, that's perfect! You are on the right way to become the excellent healthcare professional. If not, some of these skills you can work on. And if you are not sure if you possess these qualities, then real placement in a clinical environment is the best way to find it out for yourself!



Who can be your mentor?

When I was in your age, I was attracted mostly by the prestige that was undoubtedly connected to medicine. Over my studies at the university I fell in love with the field and I never regretted my decision.

The Specialized Center of Neurosurgery is equipped with the most advanced equipment, which allows us to provide the best service to our young and adult patients.

We perform wide range of procedures from the field of neurosurgery – brain surgeries (traumas, oncologic diseases, vascular pathology, inborn defects (hydrocephalus, scaphocephaly and infection diseases), spinal surgeries (tumors, vascular diseases, infections and degenerative diseases such as disc herniation) and peripheral nerve surgeries.

In the spinal surgery we are one of the few hospitals that use the most advanced mini invasive - laparoscopic and endoscopic methods. We also use navigational systems, where we make a 3D scan of the patient and the system navigates and controls our course of action during the operation.



MUDr. Jiří Steindler

Jiří is the Head of the Neurosurgery Specialized Center. He has been working in the specialty for more than 14 years.

His motto is "Failure is not an option".



How to choose the right clinical experience

Having experience is a must when applying for university. Lacking experience can be one of the main reasons for rejection. Having experience (in the field that you are hoping to study in) is essential for the application process. It demonstrates your interest and passion in the field, your ability to take initiative in your education, and that you know what it's like to operate in a practical setting (as opposed to a classroom).

Your extracurricular activities in or outside of school should be regular, and not only one or two short visits. Ideally, you would be there long enough to demonstrate your ability to commit to something. There are countless options how to fulfil the part of community service but you need to start early. It takes time. You cannot expect you get to the facility the next day or even the next week.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Volunteer at your local hospital
2. Become associated with a charity or non-profit organization
3. Become a certified lifeguard
4. Volunteer to work with children
5. Volunteer in an assisted living home

It is important that you find something in which you are truly interested. It is important to have the experience for applications and resumes, but in addition to that you really need to gain some skills and knowledge from your time there. You have to enjoy your voluntary work. You need to love it! After all, one day helping those in need will be your day job.

Unfortunately, a shadowing work experience in a clinical environment is not easy to find. You may ask your family doctor, or a relative working in the field. No doubt that it would be great opportunity, although you may not real tangible experience, as you would see only limited part of the profession to which you have access. Furthermore, the committee appreciate the variety of your interests; it can be disconcerting to them that you have not tried to have any variety in your experiences. So where should you go?

There are few study programs where you may gain experience by shadowing the healthcare professionals – doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, dentists, physiotherapists, midwives, and paramedics. When making your choice, be sure you read through all of the terms and conditions, as every study program has its own specifics. Firstly, check the age group of students who are allowed to take part, the price, and what you get for it (especially look for hidden costs). Secondly, find out whether you are able to choose the departments that you will shadow. Don't forget to find how many departments you may experience during the program.

Also, check whether the program introduces you to the mentors you will shadow ahead of time, as the most important aspect of the experience are the people who will be showing you the profession. Also ask if they provide you with some confirmation of your participation (any kind of certificate) in the program, and whether you have to pay for it, or it's for free. Some mentors or the program managers may afterwards also provide you with a personal recommendation. A recommendation from one of your mentors would be very beneficial during your education.

Certainly, the more recommendations you have, the better position you will be in. What about your school teacher? Your superior where you volunteer? Ask them for a recommendation letter but remember: if they have only seen you few times, they are not likely to write you a useful recommendation. Keep in touch with them during your studies/work so that they can get to know you.

Another option is to write to a lot of clinics and doctors and ask to see if you can shadow them. It is a long process and you will probably get a lot of rejections, but perhaps one in a hundred will agree! Then all the effort will be worth it and you will have guaranteed yourself the necessary experience. On the other hand, you probably will not have the opportunity to choose the field or mentor, and you might end up in the reception area, only seeing incoming and departing patients. Check first to see what the content of your shadowing experience would be, and who the person you will be shadowing is. Another disadvantage is you won't get any study materials so you might end up not understanding the cases your mentor is dealing with. Nevertheless, if you run into this opportunity, take it, but never stop looking for better!

Getting the experience is essential as a lot of candidates are rejected due to lack of experience. Try to get as many as you can but always be concerned about the quality of the facility and provided mentoring.

About



The Czech Hospital Placements Program gives you an opportunity to **observe and shadow real professionals who act as your mentors** during their daily job tasks, surgeries, interactions with patients, or treatment procedures for **25–30 hours a week**. The length of the program is up to you, the more weeks you come, the more departments you will be able to experience.

This is your chance to learn, gain skills, improve your abilities, and build new relationships with your mentoring team. Be ready for a very intense experience, since the mentor guides only you (or at most 1 other student) through a live clinical environment where no two work days are the same.

Before you arrive to the CHP Program, we provide you with our **exclusive study materials** regarding each of the specialty departments you have chosen. Only with good preparation you may gain the most of your placement. In addition to your shadowing hours you can take part in **Tutorials** on the latest research and treatment and **Excursions** to specialty department centers. These practical and theoretical lectures are held **3 times a week** by our mentors in the afternoons.

About

Our partner, **the University Hospital in Motol**, provides comprehensive care in all of the medical specialties, with an extra focus on children. The Hospital has the highest quality of technical equipment, allowing for very specific treatment options unavailable anywhere else in the country.

The hospital performs heart and lung transplants and neurosurgery on both children and adults. Thanks to the strong hospital partnership with the CHP Program and the commitment of our mentors whom we know personally, we can guarantee you **deep insight into the specialty departments and mentoring teams of real professionals.**



CHP Certificate

On completion of the CHP Program you will be awarded with the CHP Certificate, detailing all of the aspects of your work experience placement - such as the names of your mentors, dates, visited tutorials and excursions, and hours spent in the hospital.

Personal Recommendation

We provide the best and most motivated students who excel in their overall approach with the CHP Personal Recommendation. The Personal Recommendation is issued on behalf of the hospital, program manager and respective mentors.

These documents can be a key element in your university application and are completely free of charge.





Click to discover more

STEP ONE

Are you ready to
shift the trajectory of your life?

 **Apply Now**

Choose your  **desired department/s** and
 **the mentoring team** you would like to shadow.



STEP 2

Tell us  about yourself and fill in your  **arrival date**

STEP 3

Discover the CHP System

☒ You will receive access to a limited part of our online interface.

We designed it for you to

 **Study**,  **Communicate**, and
 **Get all the necessary information about your placement.**



You have it all easily accessible with **just one click**



STEP 4


Know first – Pay after


We don't want you to pay anything until you are assured that there is
a free spot in the department you desire.

When  the **placement** is available you are asked to pay
 **the administration fee.**

STEP 5

Share with us your goals and motivation

Simply, why do you want to become a healthcare professional. Your thoughts and opinions are crucial, not only to us, but also to your  **future mentors**. It helps them to know you more prior to your arrival.

 **Special materials** are waiting for you in the CHP System so you are able to schedule your whole trip.

STEP 6

Your placement is booked and confirmed once we receive  **the total payment**.

 **Now you have complete access to:**

 **Mentors' details**,  **Departments**,  **Hospital overview**
 **Your schedule**,  **Exclusive study materials**
and  **Students message board**

to get you ready for this experience!

Plan your arrival & weekend trips with fellow students, too.



In this phase we require 2 important documents:
Fit for Placement Form and **Insurance Confirmation**.



STEP 7



Arrival time



We will pick you up at Václav Havel Airport Prague (PRG) on Sunday. You will meet with the other  **CHP students**, our Team and the Program Manager in person. We will go through all what's necessary for your first day of placement.

STEP 8

Your first day in  **the hospital** starts!

We will introduce you personally to your  **mentoring team** and the lifetime adventure begins! In addition to your shadowing hours in the hospital, we will arrange for you  **Tutorials & Excursions**.

Anyone eager for extra knowledge are welcomed!



STEP 9

Travelling is a part of your experience




Weekends are here for you to discover and explore breathtaking Prague, the Czech Republic and other beautiful European countries.

Don't waste this opportunity!

STEP 10

Though unbelievable, your departure is here



Once this eye-opening experience is over, your opinion as our Alumni student is  **highly appreciated**. Afterwards, you will receive  the **CHP Certificate** as a summary of your placement. If you really stand out, you will be entitled to  a **Personal Recommendation** for the best CHP students. Both are free of charge.

Get more information about your placement at
www.chpprogram.com

Don't hesitate to get in touch with us on social media!
We are happy to get back to you as soon as possible.

facebook.com/CzechHospitalPlacementsProgram

instagram.com/chpprogram

Suggested Literature

"Complications" by Atul Gwande

Dr. Atul Gawande, whose resume includes teaching surgery at Harvard Medical school, advising former President Bill Clinton, and writing for the New Yorker, writes about the reality of surgery and all its difficulties. Far from tauting medicine as a perfect world, he explains the problems, the uncertainty, and constant learning that involves the surgical profession.

"The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" by Rebecca Skloot

Rebecca Skoot writes the amazing and bizarre story of Henrietta Lacks, or at least part of her story. In the early 1950's, it was discovered that a sample taken from Ms. Lacks unknowingly contained cells that proved to be immortal, allowing for a multitude of new means of scientific discovery. This book intertwines medicine and ethics, as it describes the difficulties of legal ownership of cells, samples, and the advancement that comes from them.

"Hot Lights, Cold Steel" by Michael J. Collins

Michael J. Collins writes an hilarious and informative book about his time as a resident in a major hospital. He provides a clear, down to earth explanation of what he went through, how it was different from his expectations, and the stark realities of living a medical life. A must read for anybody whose only experience with the medical community comes from evening television.

"Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World" by Tracy Kidder

Tracy Kidder is responsible for writing the biographical work of Paul Farmer, a legend in medical communities around the world. It documents his work in treating infectious disease and correcting the discrepancies in the medical world. It follows him around the world, through Haiti, Paris, Peru, Russia, and Cuba, as he worked endlessly to better the world around him. The other books we suggest give you information about what it will be like to be a doctor, but this book shows all the good that you're capable of doing, which is perhaps more important.

"How We Die" by Sherwin B. Nuland

The unfortunate reality of medicine is that, regardless of medical advancement and excellent care, we are certainly all going to die. Nuland writes about dealing with death from a variety of perspectives, with a particular grace and objective reassurance. This work is a bestseller even outside of the medical world, providing important questions to life's big question.

The Czech Hospital Placements Program is a study program designed, owned and organized for future healthcare professionals by Czech company BPLANS be organized s.r.o.

We thank University Hospital in Motol and their employees for a close cooperation and excellent partnership.

Get in touch with us:

info@chpprogram.com

#CHPprogram

LOVE WHAT YOU DO WITH EVERY HEARTBEAT



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