



AAMC

Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

Your Path to a Career in Medicine: Answers to 16 Key Questions



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“Is there a resource to help me get started?”



So you want to be a doctor, but you don't know where to start? **Aspiring Docs** has inspiration and resources to help you figure out all the basics.

Our short fact sheets cover how to shadow a doctor, how to make the most of your gap year, what it's like to take the MCAT Exam, and much more.

Get updates by liking us on  [Facebook.com/AspiringDocs](https://www.facebook.com/AspiringDocs) or following us on  [@Aspiring_Docs](https://twitter.com/Aspiring_Docs).

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“How will I afford medical school?”

FIRST (Financial Information, Resources, Services and Tools)

The prospect of financing your medical education may seem daunting—but you have lots of options. **FIRST for Medical Education** offers resources and information that can help.

FIRST is AAMC’s financial aid and debt management program – and it’s packed with resources and tools to help you navigate your options. On the **FIRST** Web site, you will find:

- A customizable **Financial Aid Toolkit**, which helps you search for resources based on your selection of topic, your education level, or by information format
- A library of **financial aid fact sheets** that provide useful information on a variety of financial topics, such as: budgeting, understanding credit cards, debt management, and more
- **Videos and podcasts** that provide answers to many financial aid related questions
- **Medloans® Organizer and Calculator**, where you can store all your loan information in one secure, centralized place, and run your own repayment scenarios (FREE premium access to medical students of an AAMC member medical school)

With **FIRST**, you will find information to help make educated borrowing decisions and develop sound debt management skills.

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“How do I choose a medical school?”

Medical School Admission Requirements (MSAR®)

When you are deciding which medical schools are right for you, rely on MSAR – the ONLY comprehensive resource of accurate data on U.S. and Canadian medical schools and B.S./M.D. programs, including selection factors, such as MCAT and GPA data, medical school class profiles, research opportunities, and more. MSAR is accurate because AAMC has access to the actual application and MCAT data, and we verify the data with the schools, rather than relying on self-reported data. You’ll be able to compare schools “apples-to-apples” because the data from each school is configured identically (with a very few, noted exceptions).

Use [MSAR Online](#) to perform advanced searches, sort data, browse schools at a glance, save favorites, compare schools, save notes, and access more information and data than anywhere else!

Visit the [MSAR](#) for more details.

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“Do I have to submit an application to each medical school I want to apply to?”

American Medical College Application Service® (AMCAS®)

You will need to submit just one application to **AMCAS**—AAMC’s centralized application service available to applicants in the first-year entering classes at participating U.S. medical schools. Think of it as the Common Application®, but for medical school. While medical schools also require supplemental applications, the AMCAS application forms the basis of the information medical schools review when considering your application materials.

AMCAS collects, verifies, and delivers application information, letters of evaluation and MCAT® exam scores to each school you choose. Each participating school is then responsible for making its own individual admissions decision.

Visit **AMCAS** to download the Quick Start Guide, read Application Tips, watch tutorials, and take advantage of other **useful tools!**

Plus, stay up to date and get helpful tips by liking us on



[Facebook.com/amcasinfo](https://www.facebook.com/amcasinfo) and following us on



[@amcasinfo](https://twitter.com/amcasinfo).

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“How do I prepare for the MCAT® exam?”

Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®)

Practice, practice, practice. And what better way to practice than to go straight to the source.

AAMC has a wealth of resources to help you prepare for the MCAT exam, including:

- **The Official Guide to the MCAT® Exam:** Packed with information that you will not find in any other resource, including 146 questions from actual MCAT exams, followed by the solutions, common errors and how to avoid them, level of difficulty based on actual scores, and tips on how to get the right solution.
- **8 Practice Tests:** AAMC is the ONLY resource of full-length practice tests, which are updated, retired exams.
- **The Official MCAT® Self-Assessment:** Identifies your strengths and weaknesses in MCAT content to guide your test preparation, and uses questions not found on any of the current practice tests.

Go here to take a [FREE practice test!](#)

[Learn more](#) about the MCAT exam, what changes are coming to the exam in 2015, how to create a study plan, and more!

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“How can I get medical experience before medical school?”

Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP)

The Summer Medical and Dental Education Program is a FREE six-week academic enrichment summer program for qualified freshmen and sophomores from racial and ethnic groups that have been historically underrepresented in medicine and dentistry—African American, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian. The summer program is hosted at 12 participating institutions across the country with 80 students at each site. Participating in this program helps you to:

- Connect with medical students, faculty, and administrators – opening doors to more opportunities such as mentorship and research
- Gain confidence from working in a rigorous academic setting
- Discover what you need to attend medical or dental school

Find out what it's like to participate in SMDEP [here](#).

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“How do I manage all of my college records, test scores, and important data?”



Take advantage of the Pivio system as you prepare for medical school – begin compiling information for the MCAT and AMCAS applications, upload your presentations from college, and keep track of your volunteer and work experience. You can use your personal information to create a resume and/or CV.

You will have the ability to input, import, and review information and documents, securely stored in an online system, where you can manage your:

- Current biographical data
- Education, research, and work history
- Exam scores, such as MCAT and others, required by medical schools

The system includes a platform to capture clinical and volunteer experience. In the future, the Pivio system will also assist you with populating specific fields in the MCAT and AMCAS applications. Visit Pivio.org to learn more.

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“Which career in medicine is right for me?”

Careers in Medicine® (CiM®)

Choosing your medical specialty is one of the most significant decisions you will make!

Careers in Medicine® (CiM®) can help you determine where you fit in the field of medicine. Plus, learn how to make good career decisions during medical school and throughout your career. CiM provides:

- Descriptions of and data for more than 130 specialties,
- Career assessments to help you determine which specialty and practice options might fit you,
- A database of residency programs, and
- Advice for researching, applying to, interviewing at, and ranking residency programs.

Get started today on identifying your career goals, exploring specialties and practice options, and selecting and applying to residency programs! The service is FREE to all U.S. M.D. and Canadian medical students and to some D.O. students. By late 2013, subscriptions to CiM will be available to others for a fee.

Follow us on:  @careersinmed

 [Facebook.com/careersinmed](https://www.facebook.com/careersinmed)

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“How do I apply for residency?”

Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS®)

Being a fourth year medical student is exciting! You’ve passed the MCAT, successfully gained admission to medical school, and completed most of the challenging coursework required to graduate from medical school. Now it’s time to focus on your specialty choice. You’re well on your way to being a doctor, but before you are able to become a fully licensed physician, you must complete a residency program.

Residency is part of your medical training that enables you to practice medicine under the supervision of fully licensed physician. As you travel the road to residency, the [Electronic Residency Application Service \(ERAS\)](#) is here to help make your residency program application process easy.

ERAS is a web-based application that streamlines the residency program application process by electronically transmitting your applications to residency programs that you select.

Currently 95 percent of all residency programs use ERAS to evaluate applications to their programs.

When you’re ready to begin applying to residency programs, ERAS will support you in that process. Good luck!

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“How will I apply for senior “away” electives?”

Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS®)

Save time and energy trying to research each host institution’s elective offerings and application requirements yourself. With VSAS®, the [Visiting Student Application Service](#), you will discover elective offerings from many different schools and hospitals, and submit one application for all participating institutions. VSAS applicants’ success rate is high! Last year, 87% of applicants received at least one elective offer. And 84% of those received an offer for a first choice elective.

With VSAS, you are able to:

- Submit only one application for all participating institutions
- Reduce paperwork, miscommunication, and time
- Access a centralized location for managing offers and tracking decisions

Currently, 126 U.S. LCME medical schools and teaching hospitals use VSAS to accept visiting student applications – and this number is growing.

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“Where can I get help to understand my student loans?”

FIRST (Financial Information, Resources, Services and Tools)

Get a full range of FREE tools and resources from [FIRST \(Financial Information, Resources, Services and Tools\)](#) – AAMC’s financial aid and debt management program. On the [FIRST Web site](#), you will find:

- A customizable [Financial Aid Toolkit](#), which helps you search for resources based on your selection of topic, your education level, or by information format
- A library of [financial aid fact sheets](#) that provide useful information on a variety of financial topics, such as: budgeting, understanding credit cards, debt management, and more
- [Videos and podcasts](#) that provide answers to many financial aid related questions
- [Medloans® Organizer and Calculator](#), where you can store all your loan information in one secure, centralized place, and run your own repayment scenarios (FREE premium access to medical students of an AAMC member medical school)

With FIRST, you will find information to help make educated borrowing decisions and develop sound debt management skills.

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“How do I manage all of my educational and professional records and clinical experiences?”

Pivio™

As you journey through medical school, the Pivio system will provide you with a consistent destination to:

- Maintain an online record of your educational and professional competencies and clinical experiences
- Create and export CV/Resumes using templates within the system
- Prepare for the ERAS application process
- Pre-populate registration screens for the USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 exams, and import the USMLE score reports

The Pivio system also serves as a repository for your biographical information, MCAT scores, past AMCAS application information, and provides you the opportunity to review and store important documents for your medical career.

In the future, the Pivio system will include a case and procedure log platform so users can document and learn from their clinical experience. Visit Pivio.org to learn more.

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“How do I find final year opportunities abroad?”

Global Health Learning Opportunities (GHLO™)


If you plan to seek international opportunities in your final year, you'll be interested to learn about an exciting new AAMC service called Global Health Learning Opportunities - GHLO™ (pronounced “glow”).

GHLO facilitates clinical and research elective rotations globally for final year medical students. If you're enrolled at a participating GHLO institution, you will be able to:

- Search, apply to, and track elective opportunities and offers
- Receive guidance and support prior to, during, and upon completion of the elective
- Obtain Home Institution approval prior to engaging in an international elective

Look [here](#) to find out if your institution is engaged in GHLO. If not, ask your Dean's office to contact us at: ghlo@aamc.org!

Connect with us:

- [Subscribe to GHLOscope](#) – a free monthly e-newsletter
- Like us on Facebook 

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Residents

How do I manage all of my residency data, certifications, licensing and credentialing processes, and more?

Is there a job board specializing in medical careers?

How will I manage my loans during residency?



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Residents

“How will I manage my loans during residency?”

FIRST (Financial Information, Resources, Services and Tools)

The smart financial choices you make today will positively affect your quality of life for years to come. FIRST offers a full range of resources and tools that can help. In addition to a [Financial Aid Survival Kit for Residents](#), you will find:

- A customizable [Financial Aid Toolkit](#), which helps you search for resources based on your selection of topic, your education level, or by information format
- A library of [financial aid fact sheets](#) that provide useful information on a variety of financial topics, such as: budgeting, understanding credit cards, debt management, and more
- [Videos and podcasts](#) that provide answers to many financial aid related questions
- [Medloans® Organizer and Calculator](#), where you can store all your loan information in one secure, centralized place, and run your own repayment scenarios (FREE premium access to medical students of an AAMC member medical school)

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Residents

“How do I manage all of my residency data, certifications, licensing and credentialing processes, and more?”

Pivio™

Once you enter residency, the Pivio system can:

- Assist you with the licensing and credentialing processes
- Support and monitor your professional development needs
- Track earned certifications such as specialty board and advanced life support
- Provide a space to import your ACGME case logs for new opportunities to learn and benchmark activity over time

The Pivio software also serves as a repository for your biographical information, past exam scores, and provides you the opportunity to review and store important documents for your entire medical career.

In the future, the Pivio software will include an enhanced case and procedure log platform so you can enhance your learning by capturing more detailed information and having access to it during and after residency. Visit [Pivio.org](https://pivio.org) to learn more.

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“Is there a job board specializing in medical careers?”

CareerConnect

CareerConnect is FREE to job seekers, providing you with access to the best employers and jobs in the industry!

AAMC’s exclusive niche community includes hundreds of accredited medical schools, teaching hospitals, and medical centers throughout the United States and Canada, as well as thousands of individuals within our academic and scientific societies and professional development groups.

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