

MARCH 30

DOCTORS' DAY

**Thank You
to our healthcare heroes**



SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2024 | THE MORNING JOURNAL

Unlocking the Power of Public Health: Redefining Healthcare Careers

In modern healthcare the administrative demands on physicians can overwhelm the pursuit of patient care. At the Erie County Community Health Center and Erie County Health Department, we believe it's time for a paradigm shift – a reimagining of healthcare careers that prioritizes patient well-being without the weight of bureaucratic complexity.

Public health and healthcare serve as both guardians and architects of community well-being. These are domains where prevention takes prece-

dence, where the roots of health disparities are unearthed, and where innovation blossoms to tackle emerging challenges.

At the ECHD/ECCHC, we offer a sanctuary for healthcare professionals weary of administrative hurdles. Here, physicians can refocus their energies on what matters most: their patients. By entrusting the intricacies of healthcare management to our capable hands, physicians can reclaim their time and passion for healing.

But our commitment goes beyond easing the



Perseverance is part of becoming a doctor

Doctors aspire to keep their communities healthy and safe. According to the 2018 Survey of America's Physicians Practice Patterns & Perspectives, the average primary care doctor sees 20.2 patients per day. Indeed, estimates suggest each doctor has roughly 2,000 people under his or her care and spends about 22 minutes with a patient during the average appointment.

Medical students travel a long road of study and practical application before they become doctors. Physicians diagnose and treat diseases, illnesses and injuries. They also interpret diag-

nostic tests and may counsel patients on preventive health care and healthy living. This requires immense knowledge, so it should come as no surprise that the road to becoming a licensed doctor is so challenging and lengthy.

There are few professions with higher stakes than the field of medicine, which is one reason why the process of becoming a doctor requires years of hard work and tremendous patience. Requirements for becoming a physician vary by country, so for the purpose of this article, the

SEE PAGE 4

burdens of paperwork. We foster an environment where collaboration thrives, where interdisciplinary teams address the multifaceted needs of patients. With a robust support system in place, physicians can innovate, advocate, and deliver patient-centered care that transcends the confines of conventional medicine.

Join us in our mission to redefine healthcare careers. Let's unlock the power of public health/healthcare together, where physicians can focus on healing, patients can thrive, and the promise of a healthier future becomes a reality.



National Doctors' Day

MARCH 30 • HONORING OUR DOCTORS

Thank you to all the doctors for your dedicated service, compassionate care, and the difference you make in our patients' lives.



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The Free Clinic always accepts new patients, give us a call at 440-277-6641

For many years, the home of the Free Clinic was in the basement of Christ Lutheran Church at the corner of 33rd Street and Pearl Avenue, which was converted into a clinic by volunteers that included physicians, clergy and an array of others who had the needed skills. The only paid employee was a part-time coordinator, and all the medical care was and still is provided by volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, dentists, and optometrists. Patients were seen by appointment at the clinic and referred to volunteer specialists as needed. In 1996 and 1997, satellite clinics were opened in Elyria and in Oberlin. A full-time director and additional paid office staff were added to the organization as the client base and range of services grew.

Support from the existing medical institutions in Lorain was essential to the success of the Free Clinic. St. Joseph's Hospital, Community Hospital, Amherst Hospital, Elyria Memorial Hospital and Allen Hospital in Oberlin took turns providing the needed diagnostic and in-patient services. That support continues today with Mercy Health, University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center, and the Cleveland Clinic. Since the Free Clinic's inception, Drs. Russel Berkebile & Associates has read diagnostic imaging for clinic patients. An early realiza-



tion that patient compliance with medications was affected by their ability to afford them necessitated the recruitment of volunteer pharmacists and the procurement of donated drugs. Southside Pharmacy served as the clinic's pharmacy for many years. Financial Support from foundations, donations from generous citizens and corporations, and fundraising volunteers made all this possible.


Christ Lutheran Church donated the use of its building to the Free Clinic for 31 years, allowing the clinic to operate with little overhead except for utilities; but the one-hundred-year-old building needed repairs, and there had been a long-time discussion in the clinic board of directors concern-

ing the need to provide an attractive and welcoming environment for patients.

In December of 2016, the clinic purchased the Boy-doe medical building on Oberlin Avenue, and the current chapter of its history began. New services continue to be added as the needs of the community evolve.

Today, the clinic continues to operate with the help of volunteer professional medical providers along with the help of our three hospital systems- Mercy Health, University Hospitals-Elyria and Cleveland Clinic.

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- When:** Once a month (3 hours max)! Times are flexible! Mornings, Afternoons, Evenings
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Email paul@lcfreeclinic.org



BECOMING A DOCTOR FROM PAGE 2

process outlined refers to licensure in the United States.

Undergraduate degree

The path to being a doctor starts at a four-year undergraduate program, says Indeed. Students may get their degrees in Biology, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Psychology, or even Nursing. Data assembled by the American Association of Medical Colleges showed that, in 2019, 58 percent of those who took the Medical College Admissions Test majored in biological sciences. Medical schools have a significant number of academic prerequisites and likely will require premed classes in college, so it's essential to find a college that can accommodate this career path.

Participate in extracurricular activities

The road to medical school is competitive, so applicants should set themselves apart with résumés that include activities that go beyond study. These activities will help candidates appear well-rounded.

Take MCATs and get into school

The Medical College Admission Test are akin to the Graduate Record Examinations (GREs) for aspiring medical students. Med schools use

the MCAT to screen applicants, so it is essential for premeds to do well.

Medical school is an additional four-year commitment. Aspiring physicians can attend research-oriented institutions or those that focus on primary care. They also can choose between Medical Doctor or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degrees. Both programs include a mix of clinical rotations and medical science courses.

Residency

The University of Medicine and Health Sciences says newly licensed doctors need to go through several additional years of post-graduate training in specialties of their choosing, called medical residency, after graduating from medical school. This program takes place in a hospital or academic setting. Residency can be an additional three to seven years, depending on the specialty.

Exam

Following a residency, doctors need to take exams for the states in which they plan to practice medicine.

It can take 11 to 15 years to become a physician. Patience, knowledge and perseverance is required to become a licensed doctor.

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Why do doctors wear white coats?

Certain uniforms have become synonymous with particular professions. Men and women who share the word of faith don clerical collars and habits. Police officers on patrol typically wear dark blue slacks and shirts with a badge affixed to the front. Construction workers are often recognizable by their hard hats. Perhaps no profession is more widely spotted by the clothing they don than doctors, whose white coats tend set them apart from other health care workers.

Most medical schools conduct some sort of white coat ceremony for their students. It often is a poignant moment when medical students receive their coats after many years of education and training. In the largest study of its kind, researchers at the University of Michigan surveyed 4,000 patients at 10 academic medical centers in the United States and found that a physician's clothing affects how patients view their doctors and how satisfied they are with their care. Physicians who wear white coats as opposed to business attire were deemed more trustworthy, knowledgeable, caring, and approachable, most notably among patients age 65 and older.

The American Medical Association Journal of Ethics says the physician's white coat has served as a symbol of doctors for more than 100 years. The white coat can be traced to the word "candidus," which in Latin means "white." Initially all ancient Romans



seeking public office as "candidates" (a word derived from candidus) wore white togas. The symbol for justice also shows a white toga.

Notably, prior to the nineteenth century, physicians dressed themselves in black, as it was considered formal attire similar to the clergy or how one might wear a black tuxedo to a special event. But the association with uncleanness and death that surrounds the color black, as well as the concept of antisepsis that was taking hold in Europe after the discoveries of Joseph Lister, changed this. Medicine was moving in a different direction. To promote a greater sense of cleanliness and sterility, doctors began wearing white coats and nurses wore white caps and aprons. Eventually the white coat became a symbol of medical authority, respect and trust.

Many doctors wear white coats to symbolize the noble calling to medicine. It is a recognizable piece of clothing, and one that continues to be seen more than a century after its introduction.

DID YOU KNOW? When visiting a doctor, patients may be curious about the letters next to the doctor's name. Doctors may be listed as either MDs or DOs. According to the Cleveland Clinic, an MD is a Doctor of Medicine and a DO is a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. Allopathic medicine, which is practiced by MDs, employs medication, surgery and other interventions to treat illnesses. Osteopathic medicine will focus more on the relationship between the mind, body and spirit and treating the person as a whole, although medication and surgery also may be used. According to the Mayo Clinic, a DO also may use manual medicine as part of treatment, which can include massage and hands-on work on joints and tissues. Both MDs and DOs receive similar medical education and training. Both also must pass the same licensing exam before they can treat people and prescribe medicines. An MD actually established the first DO training program in 1892. Andrew Taylor Still, MD, started the program when his philosophy about medicine changed after losing three of his children to spinal meningitis. In the aftermath of those tragedies, Still developed the concept of osteopathic medicine. Osteopaths are not naturopaths, who are different medical professionals who serve to heal with natural substances. Both MDs and DOs also may be functional doctors, who look more deeply into whole body systems and root causes rather than just anatomy and symptoms.

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The medical field is comprised of many professionals working in concert to keep patients healthy, which involves treating any conditions that arise. Individuals may be treated by various types of doctors in their lifetime, and each is an expert in his or her field. According to Medical News Today, most physicians are categorized as primary care or specialty care.

Navigating the health care system can be confusing. Recognition of the specialties of various types of doctors can make it easier to make it through that system.

• **General practitioner:** Also known as a family physician, or primary care doctor, these are the doctors patients are likely to encounter most often. They care for patients during routine checkups and screening tests; provide immunizations; and manage ongoing medical conditions. GPs also may be internists, treating both common and complex illnesses.

• **Pediatrician:** Pediatricians specialize in the care of children from birth and up. Although there is no set age when patients will transition from a pediatrician to an adult doctor, Kids Health says the switch is typically made between the ages of 18 and 21.

• **Geriatric medicine specialists:** These doctors focus on treating elderly patients and the medical conditions that can develop as a person ages. Geriatric doctors work in private offices, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, hospitals, and some even make house calls.

• **Endocrinologists:** An endocrinologist is an expert in the study of the body's hormones, says the Cleveland Clinic. They diagnose and treat many different conditions that affect the endocrine system, including diabetes, reproductive issues and thyroid conditions.

• **Dermatologist:** Skin, hair and nail conditions are handled by a dermatologist. Dermatologists routinely treat conditions like acne, moles, scarring, rashes, and more.

Recognition of the specialties of various types of doctors can make it easier to navigate the health care system.

• **Nephrologists:** Individuals with kidney diseases as well as high blood pressure and fluid and mineral imbalances will likely see a nephrologist.

• **Ophthalmologist:** Although many conditions of the eye can be diagnosed and treated by optometrists, ophthalmologists are medical doctors who can treat every kind of eye condition. They also can operate on the eyes, according to WebMD.

• **Oncologist:** Oncologists specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of



cancer. They have subspecialties in specific types of cancer, and also may serve as radiation oncologists, who provide radiation cancer treatments.

• **Otolaryngologists:** Commonly referred to as ear, nose and throat doctors, these professionals treat diseases in these areas of the body. They also treat conditions that affect

the neck and respiratory system.

• **Pulmonologists:** Those with conditions related to breathing issues, such as pneumonia, asthma, emphysema, and lung cancer, can seek out pulmonologists.

These are just some of the many different types of doctors people may visit in their lifetimes.

WELLNESS WORD SEARCH

A	O	L	V	N	E	E	F	K	S	V	H	E	A	R	T	H	G	B	D
C	C	T	W	A	Y	C	U	O	R	T	E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E	M
M	I	U	W	I	V	N	D	L	A	K	R	B	X	U	Y	K	R	L	E
U	B	O	X	C	F	A	N	O	L	O	R	E	T	X	E	N	L	R	D
S	O	K	E	I	G	L	S	C	U	I	X	A	N	N	V	E	T	O	I
C	R	R	N	S	N	A	U	D	C	W	S	V	O	G	L	S	C	Y	C
L	E	O	D	Y	I	B	R	E	S	A	S	O	I	A	T	G	M	D	A
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H	M	L	W	A	Y	I	T	S	Y	N	I	E	M	P	M	I	N	F	P
C	B	K	K	O	W	P	I	Y	N	Y	N	R	U	U	T	G	O	A	C
L	I	F	E	S	T	Y	L	E	F	E	G	U	X	H	A	W	I	V	R
P	L	M	C	C	O	M	P	O	S	I	T	I	O	N	L	B	E	Y	H

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

AEROBIC
BALANCE
BODY
CARDIOVASCULAR
CHECK-UP
COMPOSITION
ENDURANCE
EXERCISE
FITNESS
GYM
HEART
INTENSITY
ISOMETRIC
LIFESTYLE
MEDICATIONS
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