



Career Advising

A guide for MD students



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Medicine
OFFICE OF CAREER ADVISING AND MENTORSHIP
MEDICINE.USASK.CA

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Introduction

Student Services

Student Services works to ensure that undergraduate medical students are able to realize their full potential as learners and individuals. Our services are provided on a confidential basis, and we offer a safe place for students to seek support when they have academic or personal issues.

We give students the help they need to seek out resources and support around mental and physical health, mistreatment and discrimination, disabilities, financial planning and career advising. Student Services also strives to ensure an overall supportive academic environment that is conducive to scholastic achievement and personal growth.

Student Services encompasses a number of specific support and information groups including the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Career Advising and Mentoring. We work closely with Access and Equity Services (AES) at the University of Saskatchewan and the Physician Health Program at the Saskatchewan Medical Association.

Office of Career Advising and Mentorship (OCA&M)

The College of Medicine supports all elements of career planning, mentoring programs and the residency match process through the Office of Career Advising and Mentorship (OCA&M) for current undergraduate MD students.

The office provides everything from confidential advising appointments to events designed to facilitate mentorship relationships in the community.

We work in close collaboration with a variety of medical community partners such as the Saskatchewan Healthcare Recruitment Agency and the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) to effectively assist medical students in choosing elective courses, evaluating career options and applying to residency programs.

The OCA&M integrates the efforts of faculty members, directors of required clinical learning experiences and student services staff. We offer each student access to Careers in Medicine, a comprehensive online repository of curated tools, guides, databases and resources designed for medical students and residents.

Using the Careers in Medicine career planning model, students can collect and interpret information about themselves, explore their options, choose a specialty, and take action to meet their career and professional goals in each year of the program.

Visit medicine.usask.ca/students/undergraduate/career.php to access a wealth of career planning and mentorship resources. Book an appointment with the Office of Career Advising and Mentorship staff to access 30-minute appointments for:

- **career advising**
- **mock interviews**
- **elective planning**
- **CV and personal letter review**

For more information or to book an appointment, call 306-966-7275 or email med.careeradvising@usask.ca

MD student career planning

YEAR 1

UNDERSTAND YOURSELF



Conducting an honest **self-assessment** is the foundation of the career-planning process.

Begin shadowing

Complete Careers in Medicine (CiM) registration

Sign up for PM² Mentoring Program

Go to Career Dialogues speaker series

Attend your PLN small group sessions

Sign up for an SMA Roadmap experience

Explore specialty options at Career Fair

Seek volunteer and extracurricular opportunities using the Co-Curricular Record

Go to a career advising appointment

Apply for a Dean's research project

Complete the MSPI, SIS and PVIPs assessments on CiM

Start a draft of your CV

Explore leadership opportunities

Review the "Get to know Family Medicine for MD Students" guide on the OCA&M website

YEAR 2

EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS



Whether you already have a vision of your career or are still deciding, systemically **researching your options** helps you secure the optimal outcome.

Continue shadowing to explore different career paths

Be a mentor with the PM² Mentoring Program

Attend Career Dialogues

Sign up for an SMA Roadmap experience

Sign up for PREP via saskdocs

Sign up to be a PLN leader

Book a career advising appointment

Keep volunteering

Explore residency program events on CANPREPP.ca

Apply for another Dean's research project

Get a physician mentor with Synergy

Engage in leadership opportunities

Consider which specialties you want to explore in your Year 3 electives

YEAR 3

CHOOSE YOUR SPECIALTY



Integrating what you've learned about yourself with what you've learned about various specialties will lead you to the **specialty option(s) that will be the most fulfilling** and practical to you.

Begin researching residency programs

Investigate specialty competitiveness

Narrow your specialty options to two or three

Try to get research experience in your specialties of interest

Begin exploring electives when the AFMC portal opens

Keep a record of interesting patient encounters for your personal letters

Attend program events on CANPREPP.ca

Attend a CV workshop

Go to an elective planning appointment

Keep referees top of mind

Continue participating in PM² and Synergy mentorship programs

Engage in leadership opportunities

YEAR 4

PREPARE FOR RESIDENCY



Identifying and pursuing a residency program demands the same type of rigorous, knowledge-based inquiry process as your medical studies.

Attend the CaRMS presentation on the R-1 Match process

Create personal letter drafts

Attend your residency application review appointment

Check what reference letter format your programs of interest require and begin requesting letters

Explore CaRMS portal when it opens and review program descriptions

Schedule Casper and FMProC tests

Attend program open houses advertised on CANPREPP.ca

Submit residency applications

Schedule and attend a mock interview

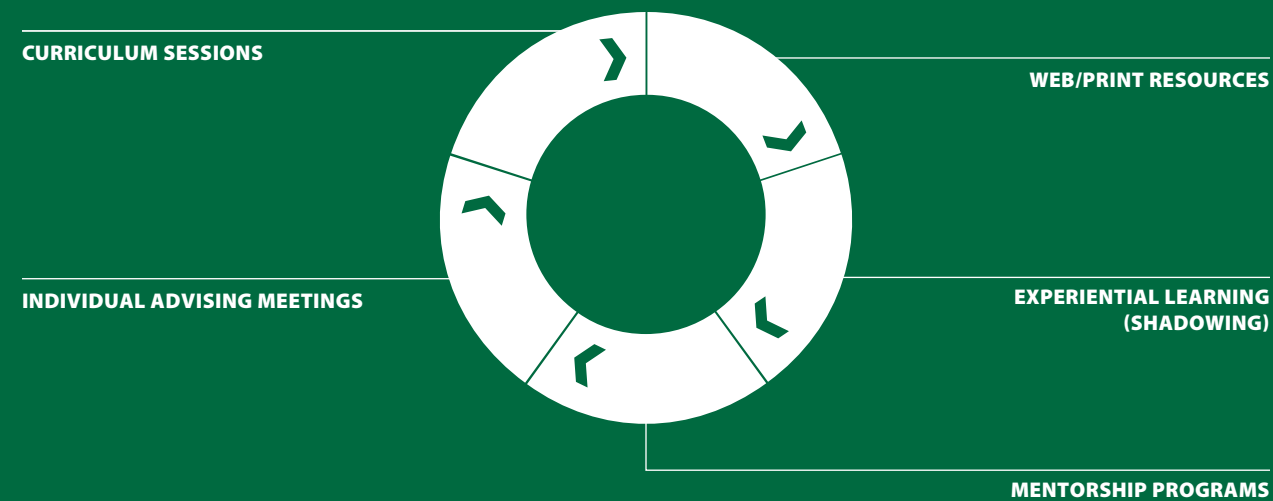
Attend your CaRMS Interviews

Attend the CMA/SMA's mock interviews

Submit rank order list

Match Day

What is the career advising system?



The College of Medicine has an effective and, where appropriate, confidential career advising system in place that integrates the efforts of faculty members, directors of required clinical learning experiences and student services staff.¹

The career advising system assists medical students in choosing elective courses, evaluating career options and applying to residency programs.

It provides appropriate, mandatory and confidential (optional) career advising activities to students in each year of the program. The OCA&M engages medical students in a variety of settings including: curricular sessions, events/seminars, one-on-one appointments, mentorship programs, and through web and print resources.

The OCA&M provides career advising to students in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, and Saskatchewan Longitudinal Clerkship (SLIC) sites, as well as to students who are away from the medical school campus.

1. CACMS Accreditation Standards and Elements (2016). Retrieved from cacms-cafmc.ca/accreditation-documents/2016-2017/standards-and-elements



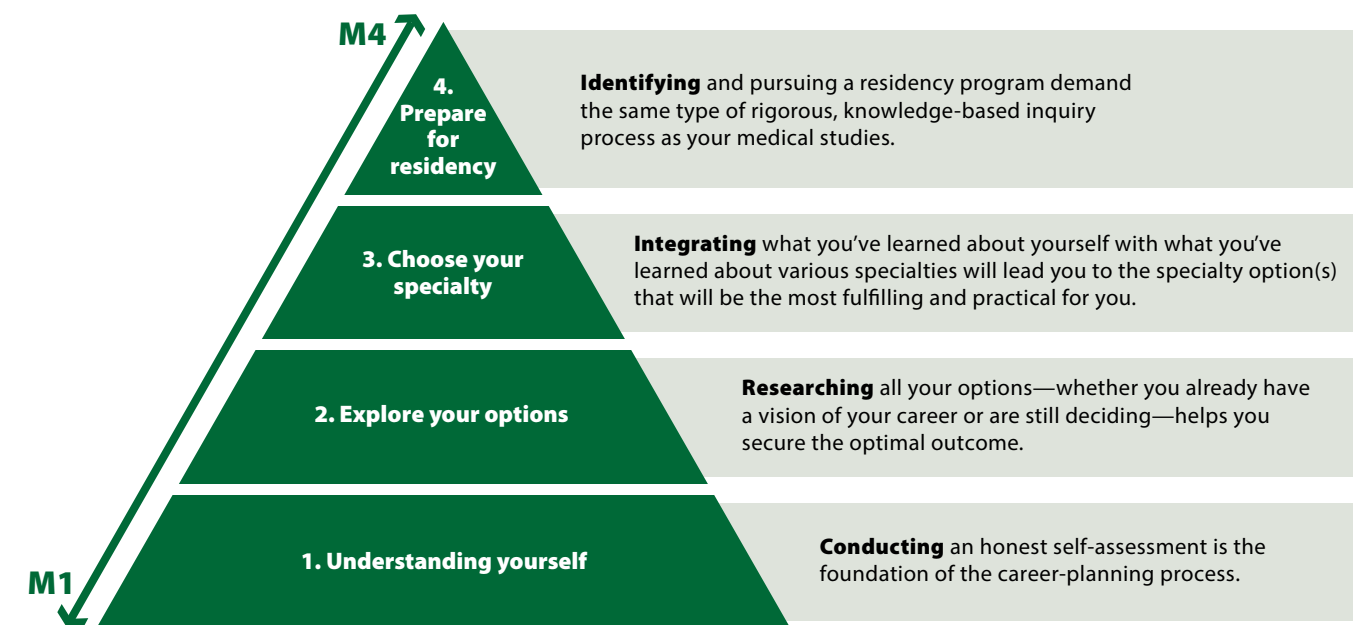
Professional Learning Networks (PLNs)

PLNs are intentionally designed groups that are actively engaged in learning with and from each other. First-year and second-year students come together to discuss topics relevant to emerging medical professionals throughout the year.

PLNs strive to foster a sense of community amongst students, building bonds and supporting one another, despite their differences - which is necessary - to learn, grow and show compassion students will need as physicians. It is the hope that learning in continuous connection within PLNs will facilitate students' professional identity formation.

Guiding Principles

1. Adherence to a model of adult education that is appreciative in nature, creates an environment with a focus on the assets of learners rather than deficits.
2. Collaborative learning provides the foundation to develop solid relationships and shared knowledge.
3. Crucial to the success of the PLN is the building of trust through relationship building.
4. Reciprocity in words and actions will establish a trusted and safe sense of community – giving will eventually result in receiving.
5. Self-Determination theory (SDT) will guide the deliverables within the PLNs.



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Career planning model

Careers in Medicine (CiM) is a career planning tool sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). The CiM online platform is built upon a structured four-year career planning model.

It provides students with a foundation for taking inventory of their strengths, skills, interests and personality to better understand themselves, and assists them with exploring their options, choosing a specialty or residency program and making career/life decisions. Students are assigned a CiM access code after orientation in Year 1 and the tool can be accessed at aamc.org/careersinmedicine.

Shadowing

Every medical student is required to complete 10 hours (five hours/term) per year of medical practitioner shadowing for MEDC 111 and MEDC 211 Success in Medical School courses in Year 1 and Year 2. You may shadow physicians or nearly any professional discipline in the health-care field.

If you are unsure if a particular discipline should qualify as a medical shadowing experience, please check with the UGME office. Shadowing experiences are an excellent opportunity to explore a variety of disciplines while networking with physicians in the field of practice that you are interested in. Always be professional and be sure to graciously thank them for their time.

Career planning curriculum

Curricular OCA&M hours can be found within Success in Medical School I, II, and III, within Selected Topics in Year 3, and in Preparation for Residency at the culmination of Year 4. Forty percent of the lectures will be delivered from Regina.

Lectures include didactic sessions, information panels with student and faculty participants, small group discussion sessions, and interactive workshops. Topics include elective planning strategies, CV and personal letter development, and practice opportunities within our province.

Summer opportunities

Research

Research stipends are provided from the Office of the Vice-Dean Research in the College of Medicine for students to participate on summer projects in all areas of health research (biomedical, clinical, social/population health projects). These funds are derived from both internal and external sources and represent the aggregate of funding available for this work. Students embark on a minimum of 10 weeks of research with a mentor in their area of research choice. Students are encouraged to engage with clinical faculty early in the fall term to determine if they are interested in supervising a research project. If students require assistance, please contact the research manager in the Office of the Vice Dean Research.

It has been typical that the complete timeline as well as information relating to the projects is presented to the students in late October to November. The application process is completed via an online application form which the students gain access to by sending a notification of interest to the research manager. Further details are distributed at that time.

While every effort is made to secure additional funding for these research projects, the funding pool for them is still primarily through the interest earned on endowed funds held by the college and university. These allow for stipends for approximately 80 students to participate in the program, with some of the funding being targeted to specific research areas. Additional detail on these is provided in the fall when the exact funding envelope is known.

The research training gained through summer research projects may be beneficial when applying to some residency programs.

Timelines and additional information are available from the College of Medicine research website at: medicine.usask.ca/research.

PREP summer externships

The Physician Recruitment Agency of Saskatchewan's Rural Externship Program (PREP) is a collaborative initiative delivered to USask medical students between their second and third years of study. saskdocs, the USask College of Medicine, the Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA) and the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) all play a part in delivering the program, which gives medical students a chance to participate in clinical work with an established family physician practicing medicine in a rural or remote community.

The goal of the program is to give medical students a chance to experience rural medicine in order to help them plan and prepare for their medical career. The program is also a great opportunity for medical students to gain experience in history taking, physical exams, minor procedures and working in a hospital or clinical setting under supervised conditions.

Medical students can apply to participate in a 4 to 10 week externship. Typically the program provides students with a salary of \$500/week (subject to applicable deductions) and living allowance. Following completion of PREP, participants receive preceptor feedback.

saskdocs, the SMA and other partners host an information session each year to provide program details and share experiences from past PREP participants. These information sessions are great opportunities for medical students to find out more information and also ask questions about available externship locations, preceptors, the health region and participating communities.

Additional information on PREP, including application forms, can be found on saskdocs' website saskdocs.ca/work/medical-learners.

Career events

Career Fair

Career Fair is a mandatory event for all Year 1 students. It allows students to gather essential information on the various specialties available to them in their future careers. Students have the opportunity to interact and ask questions about possible electives, residency, lifestyle, clinical practice, etc. They can also enhance their network and make valuable connections for research, mentorship, and shadowing.

The Career Fair is delivered in a hybrid model, including virtual and in-person components. The virtual component allows for students to network with faculty and physicians outside of their home site. The in-person component provides an opportunity for students to connect meaningfully with faculty and residents. There is typically specialty representation from all direct-entry CaRMS disciplines.

Career dialogues

The Student Medical Society of Saskatchewan (SMSS) in association with the OCA&M, has a seminar series titled Career Dialogues designed to present information to the students about specialty options. Each session features a department from a different discipline. The presenting department provides a description of their program, strategies for matching, competitiveness of the specialty, research opportunities, lifestyle, hours of work, and income. After the presentation, a question and answer period follows. Career Dialogues partner with the Saskatchewan Physician Recruitment Agency to provide employment outlook information on each of the featured specialties.

Past participants have included, but are not limited to: anesthesia, cardiology, emergency medicine, family medicine, internal medicine, medical imaging,

neurology, neurosurgery, obstetrics/ gynecology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, pathology, pediatrics, psychiatry, plastic surgery, physical medicine/ rehabilitation, respiratory medicine, rheumatology, surgery, urology and ENT.

Choose your electives

Advising for elective planning is available to all students, but particularly geared towards Year 2 and 3 MD students.

Students may contact the Office of Career Advising and Mentorship (OCA&M) to book an appointment in Saskatoon or Regina. Students can book a virtual appointment with any of the clinician career advisors by contacting the OCA&M or by visiting the career advising website. Career advisors stay abreast of the UGME Office policies and procedures in order to provide accurate elective advising. Several elective types exist that career advisors are able to advise on:

- rural electives
- urban electives
- international electives
- francophone settings
- Indigenous health electives
- global health electives
- wilderness electives

In an elective advising appointment, career advisors work with the student to outline a plan for their Year 3 and 4 electives, discuss elective decision-making strategies, assist the student in beginning to refine specialty options, and discuss preliminary preparations for residency application.



Indigenous health electives

Indigenous Health Electives provide clerkship students with unique experiential learning opportunities through placements in Saskatchewan-based urban and rural Indigenous communities and/or sites.

These electives help medical students to understand the present and emerging health needs of Indigenous peoples within our province. A focus will be on providing a culturally safe and relationship-centered care model for First Nations and Metis patients, their families and communities.

The elective work is with Indigenous and non-Indigenous community health care professionals and traditional healers (depending on availability) in the provision of care. Depending on the site, clinical experiences may be available.

A comprehensive approach will be taken through these guiding objectives:

1. Adjust personal communication style to patient and community needs considering knowledge level, background, culture etc. Demonstrate culturally safe communication and be flexible to meet the needs of the patient, families, agency or community.
2. Identify advocacy measures relevant to the health promotion of their patients, families, and communities.
3. Manage workload effectively.
4. Demonstrate self-directed learning utilizing the appropriate resources.
5. Demonstrate professional behavior informed by ethical/legal standards such as: informed consent, confidentiality, capacity, patient autonomy.

Description

These electives in Indigenous Health are offered, subject to availability, at:

1. All Nations Healing Hospital in Fort Qu'Appelle
2. First Nations and Metis Health (Saskatchewan Health Authority, St. Paul's and RUH)
3. Dakota Whitecap First Nation
4. Metis Addiction Counselling Service of Saskatchewan Inc. (MACSI)

The Clerk can choose to do his or her elective at any of these sites. Before an elective is approved, the Clerk will be required to meet with Val Arnault-Pelletier to discuss his or her goals for the elective. Clerks will be under the supervision of a preceptor at their chosen site who will determine the Clerk's schedule. If the student is coming from another university, the orientation meeting can be set up via WebEx or Teams.

Minimum length

1–2 weeks or longer depending on student and community capacity

Application timeline

2 months prior to start date preferred

Physician oversight for the college:

Dr. Veronica McKinney

Contact

Val Arnault-Pelletier,
Senior Lead, Indigenous Initiatives and Programming
College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan
306-966-5901

Family medicine electives

The Department of Family Medicine has 25 University faculty in the core sites of Saskatoon and Regina and 450 dedicated community faculty distributed over our 13 health regions in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan has trained more than 1,000 family doctors for Saskatchewan and Canada.¹

The department is known for its high quality medical education and offers students the choice of selecting electives from a variety of sites and urban, rural, and remote locations. Saskatchewan is the home to over one million people; we have a richly diverse geography and population with many Indigenous people and much multicultural diversity.²

The need for family physicians in our province is ever increasing.³ As such, embarking on Family Medicine electives here in our province guarantees a rich and diverse experience. Electives can be customized based on your interests and offers a broad scope of practice including different types of outpatient clinics, patient populations, inpatient and ER.

Explore special interest areas within family medicine: rural, northern, marginalized populations, sexual health, abortion care, obstetrics/prenatal/postpartum care, addictions medicine, palliative care, geriatrics, men's health, 2SLGBTQ+ health, sports medicine, family practice anaesthesia, family practice surgery, and more.

General elective objectives are:

1. Obtain a patient-centered history and physical examination on a patient presenting with common disorders/presentations encountered in family medicine.
2. Develop a differential diagnosis, clinical approach and initial management of a patient presenting with common disorders/presentations encountered in family medicine.
3. Adjust personal communication style to patient and extra professional team needs considering knowledge level, background, culture, age etc.
4. Identify advocacy measures relevant to the health promotion of their patients, families, and communities.
5. Manage workload effectively and demonstrate self-directed learning utilizing the appropriate resources.
6. Demonstrate professional behavior informed by ethical/legal standards such as: informed consent, confidentiality, capacity, patient autonomy, legal documentation.
7. Set your own!

The clerk will be expected to have an in-depth clinical knowledge about commonly encountered disorders/presentations in family medicine which may include but are not limited to: excisions, suturing, applying casts, placing of IUDs and performing endometrial biopsies, joint aspirations and injections, vasectomies, IM injections, and vaccinations.

Urban Locations

Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert

Rural Locations

Moose Jaw, Weyburn, Estevan, Swift Current, Outlook, North Battleford, Ile a la Crosse, La Ronge, Athabasca, Melfort, Wynyard, Yorkton, Melville, Humboldt, Rosthern, Pelican Narrows

If you have questions about elective opportunities in specific special interest areas or specific locations or to explore elective opportunities in family medicine further, book an appointment with Dr. Megan Clark at: share.usask.ca/medicine/ugme/OcamAdvBook/Pages/Advisor-Booking.aspx

[1] and [2] The Department of Academic Family Medicine, medicine.usask.ca/department/clinical/family-medicine.php#AboutUs

[3] Planning Tool for Physician Resources in Saskatchewan, saskdocs.ca/web_files/tool.pdf

Electives in Royal College specialties

USask's College of Medicine offers a wide range of excellent training opportunities where students can take advantage of unique educational opportunities in a diversity of communities right here at home.

Explore electives in the Royal College specialties and sub-specialties around our province. Year 4 of medicine is a choose-your-own adventure and allows students to gain hands-on experience to see if a specialty is right for them.

There are many different elective opportunities, such as but not limited to: Anesthesia, Clinical Ultrasound, Community Health & Epidemiology, Emergency Medicine, Integrative Medicine, Internal Medicine, Diagnostic Radiology (Medical Imaging), Obstetrics & Gynecology, Occupational Health, Palliative Care, Pathology, Pediatrics, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R), Psychiatry, Research, Solid Organ Transplant, Surgery, and Ophthalmology.

See the *MEDC 407.34 syllabus* for formal details and lists of sub-specialties: medicine.usask.ca/documents/ugme/syllabi/MEDC-407.pdf

Career assessments

The CiM program provides various self-assessments and exercises to assist in students understanding themselves. Each one addresses a different aspect of their characteristics and attributes.

Considering all self-assessment results together, with the help of a career advisor, creates a total picture of who the student is and what specialty is best suited to them. It will help students think more clearly about their career options. Given this self-understanding, students will be establishing personal criteria for selecting their preferred specialty and residency programs.

Interests

The Medical Specialty Preference Inventory (MSPI-R), available through CiM, helps students identify their interests in medicine and recommends specialties that reflect those interests within 16 major medical specialties. This free assessment provides two sets of scores, including Specialty Choices Probabilities and Medical Interest Scales.

Values

The Physician Values in Practice Scale (PVIPS), available through CiM, helps students understand what's important to them in their career and how they want to practice medicine.

Strengths

The Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment available online increases students' self-awareness of their unique strengths.

Skills

The Physician Skills Inventory (PSI), available through CiM, helps students explore their strengths in selected areas important to the work of a physician.

Decision-making

The Specialty Indecision Scale (SIS), available through CiM, helps students consider various specialty choices. It can help them overcome barriers that may prevent them from making a specialty decision.



Mentorship programs

The OCA&M mentorship programs are a part of the career advising system, dedicated to enhancing and supporting an academic community of mentorship.

There are three mentoring levels that exist to serve undergraduate MD students, integrate community based faculty, and provide role models to elementary grade students in Saskatoon. They are:

- **student-to-student: (PM)2 Peer Mentorship Program, wahkohtowin**
- **physician-to-student: Synergy, 2SLGTBQIA Mentorship group, CANPAD Mentorship Program (CMP)**
- **student-to-community: BBBS**

The Indigenous Mentoring Program, wahkohtowin, a collaboration between the College of Medicine's Indigenous Student Services and the OCA&M, has mentorship programs in all three levels.



Student-to-student

PM²Peer Mentoring Program

The mission of the PM2 Peer Mentoring Program is to guide first-year students through a successful transition to the College of Medicine, to connect all students to the college's supportive helping resources, and to help create community amongst the diverse, creative group of future physicians.

Peer mentors (upper-year medical students) serve as role models of successful students who promote the College of Medicine's mission through their ongoing, positive leadership both inside and outside the classroom.

wahkohtowin

The Indigenous Mentoring Program is a collaboration between the Indigenous Student Services and Office of Career Advising and Mentorship. Participants can be matched with a physician, a fellow MD student, a prospective medical student, or a high school student based on their preferences.

Physician-to-student

Synergy Mentoring Program

The goal of the Synergy program is to match one current medical student at the College of Medicine with one practicing physician. The mentoring relationships from Synergy can last a lifetime, but it begins with an expectation for mentors and mentees to meet one hour per month from August to May. This program is open to students at all sites and physician mentors from any location.

2SLGBTQIA+ Mentorship group

The 2SLGBTQIA+ Mentorship Program is a student-run initiative for 2SLGBTQIA+ medical students, residents, and physicians. It aims to create a safe space for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals in medicine to meet, share experiences, and provide each other with mutual support.

Members are encouraged to use these meetings to arrange informal one-on-one mentorship if they so choose.

CANPAD Mentorship Program (CMP)

The USask BMSA (Black Medical Students Association) in partnership with the Canadian Association of Nigerian Physicians and Dentists (CANPAD), is excited to introduce the CANPAD Mentorship Program (CMP). This program is meant to foster professional development and academic opportunities by establishing new connections between mentees (students and members in early stages of their career) and mentors (more established CANPAD members).

Student-to-community

Big Brothers Big Sisters In-School Program (BBBS)

USask MD students have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child in Saskatoon or Regina and to contribute to the community outside of the university. The program involves mentoring in a student's elementary school and being a positive role model in their life. Mentors are asked to commit to a visit once a week, but it can be flexible if something prevents a mentor from attending on a regular day. A mentor's chosen time during the week can also vary based on their availability and what is arranged with the student's teacher. A mentor can be placed at a variety of schools across the city, based on their preferences.



Residency application supports

The Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS) is a national, independent, not-for-profit, fee-for-service organization that provides a fair, objective and transparent application and matching service for medical training throughout Canada.

Residency application preparation

- Meet with a career advisor to review drafts of your CV, personal letter and to discuss a competitive match strategy
- Mandatory 45-minute appointments scheduled in Year 4
- Available in-person, via video conference, or via phone

Data and statistics

The R-1 Main Residency Match Report is made available to the public by CaRMS for informational purposes related to the first and second iterations of the match. The R-1 match report provides information to faculties of medicine and applicants on match trends and results, as well as results from previous years' matches.

Book an appointment

med.careeradvising@usask.ca

med.mentoring@usask.ca

306-966-7275

Online at

One-on-one appointments

- Career advising
- Mock interviews
 - CV review
- Personal letter review
- Elective planning
- Residency application review (Year 4 students only)

Web and print resources

- OCA&M website
- Careers in Medicine
- USask MD student CV guide
- USask MD student personal letter guide
- USask MD student interview guide
- Get to Know FM for MD students guide

For more resources, visit our website using this QR code



BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Medicine

OFFICE OF CAREER ADVISING AND MENTORSHIP
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