

## Keck School of Medicine (KSOM) Primary Care Program (PCP) Frequently Asked Questions

### What are the advantages of participating in the Primary Care Program (PCP)?

The Keck School of Medicine Primary Care Program (PCP) trains primary care-focused medical students by working with **low-income patients in community health settings with primary care providers (family medicine, general internal medicine, pediatrics, medicine- pediatrics)**. Students in the program are provided with opportunities to build **longitudinal relationships with patients and primary care faculty** throughout their four years of medical school. Under the supervision of faculty mentors, students become part of a **primary care student community**. They experience continuity of care with diverse, underserved patients, become part of a patient-center medical home, participate in an **interprofessional collaborative care teams**, have opportunities for **primary care research**, and develop **leadership skills**.

In the traditional Introduction to Clinical Medicine (ICM) pre-clerkship experience, medical students work with their ICM mentor and interview and/or exam patients only in a hospital-based setting throughout their first 18 months at the KSOM. The Primary Care Program offers the traditional ICM experience, but **also** has the medical students working alongside a primary care, community clinic-based mentor, where they will see patients in a clinic setting monthly. During the pre-clerkship phase, PCP students will receive **additional education in nutrition and exercise**, and help teach diabetic health education and exercise classes at the LA County-USC Wellness Center. Additionally, PCP students **are trained in inter-professional team care and geriatrics**. They work in elderly, community based, independent living facilities alongside faculty and health professional students from the schools of psychology, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and social work, providing team-based education and support. Students also receive **skills-based workshops and lectures** on a variety of primary care topics such as: sexual health, preventive care, family planning, newborn care. There are additional **optional curricular enhancement** opportunities to work with primary care physicians working with marginalized communities in **tattoo-removal with recently incarcerated and gang communities, HIV care, with breastfeeding, pregnant and postpartum women, people with substance use disorders in a harm-reduction clinic, and a street medicine team**. Students will spend additional training in their **senior seminar post-clerkship** in further, more advanced primary care training.

### Who should participate in the Primary Care Program?

This program is designed to enhance the clinical opportunities and interests of students who have a very strong interest in **primary care**, specifically, an interest in **family medicine, general pediatrics, general internal medicine** and well **women's health**. Further, this program **focuses on** outpatient, community-based training where they will see patients, physicians and office staff over time, in **urban, inner city, underserved communities**.

### Will I have additional work to complete that is independent of my regular ICM time if I participate in the Primary Care Program?

- **Pre-Clerkship:** During the first 18 months of medical school, students can expect to spend **about 6-8 extra hours a month**, on average, on PCP activities. This includes additional noontime educational workshops, teaching patients' nutrition and exercise at the Los Angeles Wellness

Center, primary care procedure training, community service-based projects, and geriatric interprofessional team care with an older adult.

- **Clerkship:** During the clerkship year, PCP students will have optional social events with the PCP community.
- **Post-Clerkship:** During the final 18 months of medical school, students participate in a 4-week advanced primary care senior seminar including a quality improvement project, can participate in multiple primary care community electives, and receive support for community-based primary care research.

The time spent in the Primary Care Program is worth it! Students who complete the program will receive a special PCP graduation sash and will have PCP noted on their graduation certificate.

**Will my participation in this Primary Care Program obligate me to apply for a primary care residency in the future?**

No, medical students are not obligated to apply for any specific residency program if they chose to participate in this program. Nonetheless, this experience is geared towards the students who have a desire to pursue a *primary care residency*, further stimulating their interests in primary care and the opportunities that exist for clinicians in these fields

**What opportunities may I have during my clerkship and post-clerkship to remain connected to my community clinic mentor, my community clinic and the patients that I have formed relationships with over the pre-clerkship phase?**

KSOM students may choose to do their family medicine clerkship and/or electives in the same community clinic in which they participated in their pre-clerkship phase, if working with a family medicine clinician, to further relationships that they have made with their patients. This is not obligatory. In the primary care senior seminar, students may also elect to go back to the clinic they were in in their pre-clerkship years.

**Will my participation in the Primary Care Program obligate me to be part of the primary care senior seminar during post-clerkship?**

PCP students will automatically be accepted into the primary care senior seminar but will be given an opportunity to select a different senior seminar if they so choose.

**Will my participation in this program obligate me to choose a primary care research project for the required scholarly project?**

Each KSOM student is required to complete and present a scholarly project during their time at Keck and present their research at the Medical Student Research Forum. Many students in the PCP choose to participate in primary care research and the PCP team connects them with faculty mentors and projects. There are primary care travel scholarships available to students to present their research at primary care local, state and national conferences.