



Health Care Professions

Scouts BSA · Careers

Name

Started

Completed

Health Care Professions is about the many people who keep us healthy, from doctors and nurses to therapists and technicians. You'll research a wide range of careers, visit a professional at work, and volunteer in a health setting. It's a great way to discover where your interests might lead.

Requirements

Every official requirement, in plain language. Check the official wording when you sign off (scouting.org/merit-badges/health-care-professions/). Tips and examples are ideas, not extra requirements.

- ☐ **1** Pick 3 Group 1 professions that interest you: medical doctor (MD) or osteopathic doctor (DO), any specialty; nurse practitioner (NP); chiropractor (DC); podiatrist (DPM); optometrist (OD); audiologist (AudD); psychologist (PhD or PsyD)

Tip: Pick three Group 1 professions that sound interesting and look up the training, duties, and work settings for each.

Example: For each profession you research, make a one-page fact sheet: what they do, the training it takes, where they work, the hours, and one thing that surprised you. Doing all twelve the same way makes comparing them easy.

- ☐ **1a** Give your counselor a short description of the part each of your 3 Group 1 professions plays in health care

- ☐ **1b** Describe to your counselor the schooling and licenses each of your 3 Group 1 professions needs

- ☐ **2** Pick 3 Group 2 professions that interest you: physician assistant (PA); registered nurse (RN); licensed practical nurse (LPN/LVN); certified nurse assistant (CNA); certified nurse midwife (CNM); nurse anesthetist (CRNA); pharmacist (PharmD); pharmacy technician; EMT/paramedic

Tip: Choose three Group 2 professions, including ones you hadn't heard of before. A school counselor can point you to good sources.

- ☐ **2a** Give your counselor a short description of the part each of your 3 Group 2 professions plays in health care

- ☐ **2b** Describe to your counselor the schooling and licenses each of your 3 Group 2 professions needs

- ☐ **3** Pick 3 Group 3 professions that interest you: physical therapist (DPT); occupational therapist (OT); speech-language pathologist (SLP); respiratory therapist (RT); orthotist/prosthetist; medical appliance technician; medical assistant; dietitian (RD)

Tip: Research three Group 3 professions and compare how long each takes to train for.

- ☐ **3a** Give your counselor a short description of the part each of your 3 Group 3 professions plays in health care

- ☐ **3b** Describe to your counselor the schooling and licenses each of your 3 Group 3 professions needs

- ☐ **4** Pick 3 Group 4 professions that interest you: biomedical engineer (BME); medical technologist; radiology technologist; sonographer; phlebotomist; histotechnologist; cytopathologist; medical records specialist

Tip: Finish with three Group 4 professions and think about which of all twelve fits you best.

- ☐ **4a** Give your counselor a short description of the part each of your 3 Group 4 professions plays in health care

- ☐ **4b** Describe to your counselor the schooling and licenses each of your 3 Group 4 professions needs

- ☐ **5** Choose one career from the lists in requirements 1–4 and set up a visit with someone in that career at their workplace. Then discuss what you learned with your counselor (5a–5f)

Tip: Ask your own doctor, a pharmacist, or a family friend in one of the listed professions if you can visit their workplace.

Example: During your visit, ask to see the tools they use most and what a typical patient visit looks like. Afterward, write down three things you learned and whether you could see yourself doing that job.

- ☐ **5a** Discuss why the professional you visited picked their career

- ☐ **5b** Discuss what they like best about their job

- ☐ **5c** Discuss the biggest challenges they face in their work

- ☐ **5d** Identify tools or instruments they may use on the job

- ☐ **5e** Discuss what has surprised them most about their career

- ☐ **5f** Discuss the continuing education they need to keep their certification

- ☐ **6** Discuss with your counselor what you think the Physician's Oath means

Tip: Read the oath and talk with your counselor about what each promise means in practice.

Example: Pick two promises from the oath, like doing no harm and respecting patient privacy. Explain what each could look like in a real day, such as a doctor telling a patient honestly about the risks of a treatment.

- ☐ **7** Describe why confidentiality between patients and health care providers matters, and explain what HIPAA is

Tip: Think about why your medical information should be private and who should be allowed to see it.

Example: Think of a scenario: a nurse sees a classmate's parent at the clinic. Under HIPAA, she can't tell anyone why they were there. Explain who can see your health records and why those rules protect people.

- ☐ **8** Find a medical discovery or advance that's been in the news lately, and discuss with your counselor how it could change patient care

Tip: Find a recent news story about a new treatment or technology and think about who it helps.

Example: Choose something like a new vaccine, a robot-assisted surgery, or a wearable heart monitor. Explain how it works in simple terms, who it helps, and one question or concern people have about it.

- ☐ **9** With approval from a parent or guardian and your counselor, volunteer at a health-related event or place in your community, such as a blood drive, health fair, or blood pressure screening. Tell your counselor what you did and learned

Tip: Look for opportunities at a blood drive, health fair, hospital, or nursing home.

Example: Volunteering might look like handing out water and snacks at a blood drive canteen, setting up tables at a health fair, or helping with activities at a senior living center with your patrol.