Combined Dermatology and Clinical Research Post-Baccalaureate Premedical Fellowship

DermCare Experts is a busy independent dermatology practice treating medical, surgical, pediatric, and cosmetic patients. Beacon Clinical Research is an independent clinical research site which conducts Phase I - IV clinical trials for new drugs and devices sponsored by major pharmaceutical companies.

DermCare Experts and Beacon Clinical Research offer their Combined Dermatology and Clinical Research Post-Baccalaureate Premedical Fellowship, an innovative two year program designed to help college graduates gain extensive patient and clinical research experience as well as clinical skills (e.g., phlebotomy, vitals, ECGs, suturing) necessary to strengthen their medical school application in this extremely competitive environment.

Successful applicants will become certified medical assistants deeply engaged in outpatient dermatology, one of the most competitive medical specialties to enter. In doing so, they will learn core clinical skills applicable to all areas of medicine, as well as an understanding about the fundamentals of patient management and clinical decision-making. By working alongside the physician, fellows experience the importance of continuity of care, as they are often the first point of contact the patient has with the clinic, and continue to be the patient’s primary contact during the course of treatment. Fellows also enhance their interpersonal skills working with the clinic's culturally and socioeconomically diverse urban patient base.

Program participants also work as certified clinical research coordinators fully responsible for leading a variety of trials sponsored by multinational pharmaceutical companies, and will have a first look at therapeutics in the pipeline. Under the supervision of the principal investigator, fellows serve as the main contact for the pharmaceutical study monitor, while managing all aspects of patient recruitment and trial execution. Although many studies are dermatology trials, Beacon also works on rheumatology, internal medicine, and urology trials. Fellows are expected to attend fully-funded research training conferences for the trials they run.

Fellows will also be asked to engage after hours in academic pursuits related to what they are learning in clinic. They are asked to read widely, ranging from textbooks to medical journals, as well as the popular press about hot button issues in medicine. Clearly, they will be expected to gain dermatology knowledge, and they may be responsible for leading discussions about issues they encounter in clinic by delivering presentations to their peers. Additionally, they have the opportunity to attend the clinic's lecture series on a variety of medical topics by invited speakers; grand rounds; educational dinner lectures at restaurants in metro Boston; and dermatology conferences both in-town and out-of-town, the latter for which housing and transportation would be funded. Fellows are also encouraged to write publishable work when the opportunities arise.

Through the program's contacts, they also have the chance to shadow and network with physicians in other fields of medicine, thus expanding their understanding of different specialties. In addition, fellows work side by side with medical students who at times rotate through the clinic.

Fellows also spearhead the clinic's community and public health outreach, by arranging free skin cancer screenings and a variety of programming at community organizations.
Finally, fellows may join the physician on international medical mission trips, which would be paid time with possible partial funding for expenses such as flights and hotel. Personal spending is the fellow's responsibility.

With this holistic training approach, those who graduate are uniquely poised to excel in medical school, having (1) gained first-hand experience in patient history taking, (2) assisted in the physical exam, and (3) observed the assessment and plan -- all in the context of comprehensive and ethical patient care. In particular, we anticipate that participants will be quite well-prepared to undertake future dermatology rotations in order to enter the extremely competitive dermatology residency match.

Applicants who are looking only to scribe from 9 to 5, and who are reluctant to invest the effort and hours this highly demanding and fully immersive fellowship requires, may find this position an imperfect fit. Candidates are asked to submit a cover letter, resume, transcript, and a list of references or at least one actual letter of recommendation, either directly to the clinic at info@dermcare.expert, or through their school’s career center listing. Interviews are conducted first online via video chat, and then followed with a required on-site visit.