

**OBSERVING REQUESTS FOR STUDENTS & PHYSICIANS**

**Physician Requests to Observe**

The University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education Program does not offer or provide the opportunity for any physician externships or observing experiences. Due to restraints imposed by the Claims Commission Act of 1985, the University of Tennessee GME Program is unable to provide any sort of liability coverage (for the visiting individual or the institution) to cover this type of activity. In addition, Erlanger Health System cannot provide liability coverage.

Only \*Residents from **other ACGME or AOA accredited programs** may be approved to participate in a visiting clinical rotation in a UT Program by submitting a “Visiting Resident Application” for a Clinical Rotation at the University of Tennessee. (See GME Policy #180 – Visiting Resident Approval.) Detailed requirements are included in the application form included in GME Policy #180.)

**Student Requests to Observe Physicians**

Typically, the University of Tennessee and Erlanger do not offer extended observing experiences for students wanting to observe physicians within the hospital. However, under the umbrella of our FUTURE Docs program, the University and Erlanger have agreed that students may be approved for brief observing experiences given they meet all Erlanger requirements and provide all requested documentation. Erlanger has requested that the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga process requests from students to observe physicians who hold UT faculty appointments and are members of the Erlanger Medical Staff. This program is ideally for students who have already identified a physician (or physicians) who have agreed to allow the students to observe them within Erlanger. These brief observing experiences are not intended for medical students, particularly those who have already begun formal clinical rotations (*i.e.*, students in the last two years of medical school).

The FUTURE Docs Program is the label for two programs managed by the local Chattanooga-Hamilton County Medical Society that provide information and observing experience for students age 18 and over who are interested in careers as physicians but are not yet in the clinical years of medical school:

- **Youth Leadership Program** – a four to five day informational and observing program each summer (sponsored and directed by the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Medical Society, involving several area hospitals). Questions should be addressed to the Medical Society at (423) 622-2872 or [info@chattmd.org](mailto:info@chattmd.org). Applications should be sent to [info@chattmd.org](mailto:info@chattmd.org).
- **Medical Explorations Program** – a structured program of didactics and clinical observing (two weeks) also sponsored by the local Medical Society. Dr. Mukta Panda, UT Assistant Dean for Medical Student Education for the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga, is the contact and program leader. Participants must be at least 18 years old at the time the actual program. Questions and completed applications should be emailed to [info@chattmd.org](mailto:info@chattmd.org).

For both programs, applicants must meet requirements established by Erlanger Health System and agree to abide by the policies and procedures of the Medical Society, the hospitals, and the University of Tennessee.

Erlanger Health System has asked the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga to manage a limited **“Sponsored Clinical Observing Program”** to permit non-medical students, at least 18 years old, who want to observe or shadow a faculty physician for one or two days within our primary affiliated training site, Erlanger Health System.

**Guidelines for Clinical Sponsored Observing:** The University Graduate and Medical Student Education Department is not required to seek or identify a physician willing to sponsor the observing student. If a student does not know the name of a physician with whom he or she is requesting to observe, the Graduate and Medical Student Education Department will ask a department if a faculty physician is available, but the request may be denied. At the discretion of the supervising physician, this could include time in the physician's private office; however, the University has no jurisdiction over observing in a private physician's office.

Each clinical department in the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga may consider an application from a high school or college student who is 18 or older for a limited one half-day up to usually no more than a two-day observing experience. Approval and availability of any observing experiences are subject approval or non-approval from each individual department. The department may deny the request due to other medical student and resident demands as well as faculty schedules.

"Observing" means that the individual cannot actually be involved in giving direct patient care, may not conduct a history or physical, or may not assist the physician or staff with a procedure. The individual can only "observe". Malpractice insurance cannot be provided by either institution for observing students nor is it available for these observers.

Observing students have requested these brief experiences and are volunteering to participate, so in no way is there a real or implied employer/employee relationship between the University or Erlanger with the individual observing. The faculty physician agreeing to supervise the student's observation assumes responsibility for the actions of the observer.

**Also, due to state regulations, no one under the age of 18 can go into hospital operating rooms, emergency departments, and intensive care units. Most approved clinical observing experiences are for high school or college students age 18 or over.**

**Again, individuals who are already physicians, including non-licensed physicians, are NOT permitted to participate in clinical sponsored observing experiences.**

Links and information about the Youth Leadership Forum and Medical Explorations are available via the FUTure Docs web pages on the main UT College of Medicine Chattanooga website at: [www.comchattanooga.uthsc.edu/futuredocs](http://www.comchattanooga.uthsc.edu/futuredocs).

The following procedure must be followed for students to participate in the Sponsored Clinical Observing Program:”

- An application would be requested from the UT Graduate and Medical Student Education Department ([MSE@erlanger.org](mailto:MSE@erlanger.org)).
- The completed application should be submitted to that email address ([MSE@erlanger.org](mailto:MSE@erlanger.org)) no less than two weeks prior to the observing experience in order that all documentation and requirements can be met and approval can be received back from the supervising physician.
- The student must indicate a start and end date that he or she can be available to observe.

- One of the Erlanger requirements for approving observing students is that these students must, prior to the observing experience, complete online, prescribed regulatory education and documentation to ensure that the student understands the confidentiality of Protected Health Information and HIPAA Privacy and Security regulations.
- Once the application has been submitted, required supporting documentation must also be emailed to [MSE@erlangergroup.com](mailto:MSE@erlangergroup.com), including:
  - Immunization records, including proof of MMR, Chickenpox immunity, & a negative TB skin test within 12 months
  - Color photo of the applicant (head shot – shoulders up, in .jpg or .png format)
  - Letter of recommendation and good academic standing from a teacher, university counselor, or dean – on the school's letterhead – sent directly to [MSE@erlangergroup.com](mailto:MSE@erlangergroup.com) from the official
- In order to approve the observing experience, a supervising physician must agree to the observing experience and must identify the beginning and ending date since that will be required for the Erlanger photo ID badge.
- Once a supervising physician has approved the observation, the UT Graduate and Medical Student Education will be sent the online HIPAA training information so they can review.
- Once the observer has completed HIPAA training and notifies us that the training has been completed, it will be valid for one year.
- The observer must email that they have completed the HIPAA training to: [MSE@erlangergroup.com](mailto:MSE@erlangergroup.com).
- The Graduate and Medical Student Education Department will authorize Erlanger Human Resources to create a photo ID badge with the Erlanger logo. The badge will identify the individual by name, denoting the student as an Observing Student, and including the start and end dates for the experience.
- The Erlanger-issued badge must be worn at all times during the observing experience and must be given to the supervising physician at the end of the experience. The student cannot keep the badge and must leave it with the supervising faculty physician at the conclusion of the experience. The faculty member will send it to the Graduate and Medical Student Education Department.
- Both the observing student and the supervising faculty physician must sign an acknowledgement that the student will not be unaccompanied within the hospital and will be with the faculty member. Also they must acknowledge understanding that the observing student is shadowing only and cannot have hands-on clinical patient care experience. That statement must be signed by both individuals and emailed to [MSE@erlangergroup.com](mailto:MSE@erlangergroup.com) or faxed to (423) 778-3673.
- The student and physician's office will coordinate when, where and whom they will meet for their first day of observing.
- If the observing experience involves time in an Erlanger or Children's operating room, the observer should request a "red" scrub hat when in the OR. Scrubs for observing students will be coordinated by one of the UT College of Medicine Chattanooga Surgery staff. All scrubs, including the red hats, must be returned before leaving the operating area.

\*The term, "Resident" refers to both Resident and Fellow trainees.

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