Shadowing in Healthcare

Columbus Community Hospital
To prepare for Shadowing, you need to know:

- Information about what shadowing is and how to prepare for your shadow experience
- About Confidentiality and HIPAA
- Information about the hospital – including our Mission, Vision and Values
- Safety information
- Who to contact if you have questions
Shadowing in Healthcare

• Job shadowing can open a window into the wonderful world that healthcare offers. Did you know?
  – One in 6 jobs created in the United States is in healthcare.
  – The lowest rates of unemployment can be found in healthcare.
Shadowing in Healthcare

- Shadowing is typically an appointment that has been arranged for you to observe or “shadow” a healthcare professional as they perform their duties.
- Shadowing can occur for a few hours or several days depending on the nature of the occupation you are observing.
- Shadowing is available to students 16 years or older and who are in the 11th or 12th grades of High School.
- Students in college may also find shadowing useful to complete their career planning.
What you need to know

• It is a privilege to job shadow at any health care facility, clinic or hospital.
  – This is a learning experience.
  – You are expected to act in a professional manner at all times.
  – You must agree to follow CCH policies involving, appearance, patients and their privacy.
  – Safety and patient protection are important considerations in a health care facility
• There will be strict policies and procedures that you will be expected to follow during your shadow experience.
Occupations and Departments at the Columbus Community Hospital

• Dietitians
• Laboratory – 2 hours
• Nursing
  – Acute Care only
• Pharmacy – 2 hours
• Radiology – starts @ 6:30 am
• Rehabilitation Services
  – Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy
• Respiratory Therapy
• Social Workers
I want to shadow... now what do I do?

Do the Research

- There are many good websites where you can find preliminary information on health care occupations including:
Next

• Determine areas that sound interesting to you.
• Develop a list of questions
• Make the most of your time with the professional; ask key questions such as,
  – What other skills are needed in your job?
  – What is a typical day like for you?
  – What do you like most about your job?
  – Why did you select this type of work?
Apply

• You must complete and forward the following forms to the Educational Services Department to set up your shadowing appointment:
  – Job Shadow Application
  – Agreement to follow Hospital Policies Including Confidentiality Polices (Note: You must have this form signed by your parent or guardian if you are under 19 years of age)
  – Goals and Learning Experiences
    • Be clear and concise – What do you hope to learn? When are you available? Please be aware that we get MANY requests for job shadowing and it may take 2 – 3 weeks to make your appointment.
  – Dress Code
    • You must also print out and complete the “Shadowing in Healthcare Competency”
Look the part

• While shadowing you must follow the hospital’s dress code.
• Healthcare is a professional environment and you will need to dress appropriately.
• In addition to dress, always remember hair color, makeup, jewelry, perfume, etc.
  – We are here to provide comfort to our patients, not to stand out. We put our patient’s comfort first!
Dress the Part

• Flat comfortable closed-toed walking shoes are required.
  – Clean tennis shoes are a good choice
  – Sandals, flip flops are unacceptable
• Khaki (or other twill) slacks.
  – Shorts, jeans or capris are unacceptable
• Collared Shirt or Sweater
  – Polo shirts are a good choice
Dress the part

- Not allowed:
  - blue jeans
  - sandals or open-toed shoes
  - strapless or spaghetti strap tops
  - bare midriffs
  - hip hugger pants
  - Shorts or capris
  - exposed undergarments
  - nose, eyebrow, tongue, lip and body jewelry
  - body tattoos must be covered
About Confidentiality and HIPAA
What is confidentiality?

- Confidentiality is keeping information secret and private.
- **In healthcare, confidentiality goes a step further...**
  - HIPAA stands for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.
- HIPAA is a federal privacy law that health professionals follow in order to keep a patient’s medical information confidential.
- HIPAA regulations affect each and every staff member at a hospital, clinic or facility providing care to patients.
- Volunteers and visitors are also affected.
HIPAA also affects you!

- **HIPAA** These regulations apply to you, too.
- Realize that working at a health care facility is not like other places of work.
- It is crucial that a customer’s or patient’s information is kept confidential to maintain their trust and provide appropriate care.
What exactly does this mean?

- This means the staff at any health care facility has a legal duty to protect a patient’s privacy.
- It is a patient’s right to be treated confidentially in a health care facility or by a healthcare professional.
- It is also very important that a patient knows that his/her privacy is protected.
  - If patients feel that they can not trust us with their information, they may withhold important information for fear of it getting exposed.
Why is this so important?

- If a patient withholds this information, a doctor will not have all the information he or she may need to correctly diagnose the patient.
- This might interfere with our ability to provide appropriate care for them.
During your shadowing experience:

• You will be expected to keep confidential any and all information you learn about a patient.

• There may be some situations that you may not participate in because a patient does not wish to have his/her care “observed.”
• **DO NOT** discuss patient information with anyone.

• **In order to understand better and to put it in perspective...**
What if?

• You found out that you had a sexually transmitted disease.
  – How would you feel if your doctor told his son that went to your school, and the son told everyone at school?
What if?

• Your best friend was diagnosed with a terminal illness.
  – How would you feel if the doctor told his daughter that went to your school, and the daughter told everyone at school before this person told them?
What if?

• You are a star athlete. The state championship is a day away and you were just injured.
  
  – What would happen if someone at the hospital told the media that you weren’t playing and your team was now going to lose?
Confidentiality is important...

• That is why healthcare facilities have policies like HIPAA.

• Luckily, you now know that if YOU ever needed to be treated for something you would not like anyone to know about, the people that treat you are legally required to protect that information.
  – They would not share that information with anyone, not even their family members.
This policy applies to everyone!

- Everyone who works at a healthcare facility knows the importance of the confidentiality of patients.
- Even the staff workers who do not regularly interact with patients understand that if they do obtain information for whatever reason, it is to be kept confidential.
"It is sometimes difficult to..."

- understand that you may learn information that you can not even tell your mom, dad, or best friend.
  - But, it is extremely important that you understand and comply with this policy in order to be a part of any shadowing program.
Here are some possible situations that you could encounter while shadowing in healthcare.
• A girl that you went to junior high with is in the maternity ward because she just had a baby.

• You see a classmate’s mother who is being hospitalized and treated for depression.
• You see the daughter of a teacher at your school getting help for problems with an eating disorder.
• You see Tom Osborne walking down the hall in a hospital gown.
• You see a friend from church that looks really sick, and think that it would be nice to tell the minister at church to visit him during his hospitalization.

• You see a neighbor that is hospitalized because he is getting a liver transplant.
Any of these situations could very likely happen...

- Even though it may be very tempting to tell someone else who may know the patient about what you saw, you cannot share or talk about this information with anyone (other than the person you are shadowing with at the hospital).
"Even if you think that..."

- Even if you think that you may be helping by sharing a patient’s information with someone else, you still are not able to disclose any information.
• Often times, patients do not want anyone, even their own families, to know they are in the hospital.

• **Always remember**…
  – It is a patient’s right to receive treatment or care and that the visit be kept confidential

• **You must keep a patient’s information confidential.**

There are no exceptions!
It is human nature to be curious and to want to share interesting information, but when dealing with patients’ information, there are no exceptions!
• Even if you really trust your best friend, and you make your friend promise not to tell anyone, it is still violating the confidentiality of a patient.

• Who knows how many people your friend will tell after making other people promise not to tell?
• Also, refrain from giving all the details about someone, and thinking that you are not breaking any rules because you withheld the person’s name.
• It is not difficult to hear specific details about someone and figure out who they are.
• Someone could hear you talking and think,
  – “that sounds just like Ben’s mom.”
DO NOT TALK ABOUT THE PATIENTS, THEIR INFORMATION OR SPECIFIC PROCEDURES AT ALL, AT ANYTIME.
If you have any questions about what is and what is not appropriate to share and talk about, please ask.

Healthcare practitioners and facilities want to make sure that you have the proper information to deal correctly with all the situations you will encounter.
There are Consequences!

- The healthcare facility where you are shadowing is required by law to keep a patient’s information confidential.
- More importantly, as someone shadowing at that facility, YOU are required by law to keep a patient’s information confidential.
• There are serious consequences for violating a patient’s confidentiality.
• Consequences for violations can range anywhere from $100 in fines to jail time.
Just remember...

- Don’t tell anyone who you saw while shadowing.
- Don’t share patient information.
- Learn from your experience.
- Consider healthcare as a profession.
- Have a good time!
Mission, Vision and Values
The Columbus Community Hospital has a proud history:

- Serving the community since 1879

Our Mission

- To Improve the Health of the Communities we Serve

Our Vision

- To be the first choice in quality and service
The employees at the Columbus Community Hospital demonstrate their dedication to their community through:

- **Integrity**
  - Demonstrating honesty, dedication and reliability

- **Compassion**
  - Behaviors show a positive attitude, dependability and using teamwork to achieve long term success

- **Accountability**
  - Being responsible, trustworthy and committed to follow-through

- **Respect**
  - Showing regard for dignity, confidentiality and the golden rule

- **Excellence**
  - Maintaining high standards, continually striving to improve and committed to creating an environment of excellence
In the event of an emergency or other unusual occurrence, the hospital has developed several code words to alert staff that a specific action or procedure must be implemented immediately.

The code words are simply referred to as CODES and are announced over the hospital’s PA system.

In the event a CODE is announced, the person that you are shadowing will direct you either to a safe place or direct you to take specific actions.
Safety Codes

During your shadow experience you might hear one of the following “Codes” announced over the PA system:

- CODE BLUE
- STANDBY CODE BLUE
- CODE BLUE BROSLOW
- SECURITY TO .... STAT
- DR SEARCH
- DR RED
- DR LOUISANA
- CODE PINK
- CODE SILVER
- DR. WATCH
- TORNADO WARNING

In this event, follow the specific instructions of the person that you are shadowing.
We are very excited to offer a job shadowing opportunity to you and hope we can help you on your journey to become a successful healthcare worker!

• If you have any questions, or need more information, please contact:
  – Reye Snitily, Educational Services Coordinator, PO Box 1800, Columbus, Nebraska 68602-1800
  – 402-562-3321
  – rlsnitily@columbushosp.org

• Remember to complete and send the applications forms to the Education Services Department to initiate your Job Shadow Appointment request. Please remember that it may take two – three weeks to process your request.