**Adams House Pre-medical/Pre-health Introductory Meeting**

**26 October 2014**

[**adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu**](mailto:adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu)

**Introduction**

I. Welcome!

II. Why do you want to be a health care provider?

III. Thinking about different degree paths (MD, DDS, NP/RN/etc, DVM, PA, PT) - meet Betsy & Toby & Joe!

IV. Goal-setting

1. Determine your goals both inside and outside of medicine
2. Determine when you would want to apply to medical school (time off vs. not)

**Resources**

I. Resident Tutors:

a. Marguerite Basilico, Kevin Liu, Katie Miller, Vinayak Muralidhar, Rumbi Mushavi

b. e-mail: **adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu**

c. WEBSITE: www.adamshouse.harvard.edu

II. Non-resident tutor (NRT) staff

1. Role of the NRT
2. Medicine as a career choice (especially useful for the undecided)
3. Application process: writing Dean’s letter

Bottom line: **Get to know your NRT!!**

III. Office of Career Services

a. Dr. Ellen Williams and Oona Ceder (premed@fas)

b. \*\*\*OCS website:

[**http://www.ocs.fas.harvard.edu/students/careers/medicine.htm**](http://www.ocs.fas.harvard.edu/students/careers/medicine.htm)

c. Medical school information – including alumni evaluations of schools

IV. Published books, other resources

a. Medical Schools Admissions Requirements and data

b. AMCAS website --http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/

c. Other – medical school websites

**Components of a successful medical school application**

I. Numbers – “Can this applicant succeed in a medical school curriculum?”

a. Pre-med requirements – Biology (with lab), Chemistry (with lab),

Physics (with lab), Math/Statistics, English: please see OCS website for list

b. Grades—yes, they are important [OCS Med School Admission Data]

c. Importance of science GPA

II. MCAT – “Can this applicant succeed in our curriculum (if we don’t know about their undergraduate program)?”

1. New MCAT
2. Prep coursework

i. MCAT practice manuals, old exams from AAMC

ii. Kaplan/Princeton (both ~$1500) vs. Premed Society (~$50)

1. Electronic, but not adaptive
2. Now offered very frequently, but dates fill up fast
3. Expires in ~ 3 years
4. **Fee Waivers are available – for students from economically difficult background fee waivers are available for the cost of the MCAT. A fee waiver for the MCAT also waives the costs of your primary application and secondaries (a savings of over $1000). Please reach out to the pre-med team if you think you qualify but are unsure about how to apply for these waivers.**

III. Extracurricular Activity – “Can this applicant commit to and complete projects? Can this applicant work well in diverse teams? Does this applicant care for others?”

a. Public service

- Talk to Adams House public service tutors!

- Public service organizations at Harvard:

http://www.fas.Harvard.edu/~pbh/join.html

b. Clinical experiences

- Mt Auburn/Youville/Cambridge, Project HEALTH,

- Harvard EMS

- Red Cross Disaster Relief

c. Athletics/ Music/ Other

d. Leadership positions

IV. Sustained scholarly project – “Can this applicant commit to and complete projects? Is this applicant interested in advancing medical knowledge?”

1. Medically-oriented research

i. Importance of basic science or clinical research, NOT a requirement!

ii. Selecting a laboratory to work in

1. Non-medical research
2. Duration of research
3. Relationship with professor or doctor
4. Research credit/funding opportunities
5. Senior Honors Thesis (in any field!)

V. Recommendations – **Important to not wait until last minute!**

a. Ask for one each semester

b. Know your teaching fellow/professor

c. Do not procrastinate, and ask when they will remember you

d. Explicitly ask if they can write a STRONG letter of recommendation

e. Provide letter writer with a cover letter and CV

f. If teaching fellow is writing, recommend that professor co-signs (this is a good strategy, especially for large classes).

g. Give them a waiver form (house form) and guidelines (OCS) for writing a

pre-med letter.

h. At least two science letters from course instructors, one letter from

concentration, and one extra-curricular. Try to find someone who could speak to your potential as a physician.

i. Can be emailed to the house (cstuart@fas.harvard.edu)

VI. Know your NRT

a. We’ll be having study breaks to get to know them.

b. Be proactive and contact them!

**Considering dual degrees**

I. MD/Ph.D.:

a. These programs can be NIH funded (MSTP); there are ~40 programs around the country with funded MD/Ph.D spots.

b. The savings from the fully-funded status must be weighed against the years (3-5) that the Ph.D. takes to complete.

c. Talk with one of our MD/Ph.D. tutors (Kevin + NRTs) for advice

d. Think carefully about what you are trying to achieve with the two degrees.

As an alternative to the PhD, many students engage in 1-2 years of research during medical school through various funding agencies (HHMI, NIH, Doris Duke, etc).

II. MD/MBA, MD/MPH, MD/MPP or other combinations

1. Many schools now offer these programs

* Usually just add one year to your training (5 years vs. 4 years)

1. Think carefully about what you are trying to achieve with the two degrees.

Do you need both? Which one do you most want and which is secondary?

**Costs**

1. Medical School is expensive, but there are many scholarships and financial aid opportunities. You will also make more than enough to pay back any loans you accumulate in medical school.
2. The process of applying is also expensive, with the most expensive portion being flights to schools for interviews.
   1. Please don’t hesitate to talk to us (early) if you are concerned about the cost of applying. You must be proactive in order to make full use of the financial resources available to you.
   2. Fee waivers – act early (before taking the MCAT) to make the whole application process smoother
   3. Talk with your financial aid officer about loans for the application cycle
   4. We recommend applying broadly with primaries and secondaries and being more selective with interviews (trying to see multiple schools in 1 visit, declining interviews when you have an acceptance)

**Apply to medical school as an International Student (non-US Citizen i.e. non-green card holder)**

1. Applying to US Medical Schools as an international student can be a daunting process as numerous schools will not admit or provide financial assistance for international students. As such, applying to medical school as an international student requires a lot of planning and much more tailored advising.
   1. Please contact Rumbi Mushavi at [rcm33@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:rcm33@hms.harvard.edu) or email adams-medical if you are applying to medical school this cycle as an international student.

**Application year calendar**

\*OCS has useful workshops as well—see their webpage for schedule

\*Ongoing: be sure to register for the MCAT!

I. December 2015

For those applying in the next cycle, you should meet with NRT by this time!

II. February/March 2016

Mandatory Meeting for all applying students this current cycle.

***\*This meeting is also required for seniors who are not applying, but leaving the house***

III. March 2016

1. Ask for Recommendations from previous semesters (if not already done)
2. Intention to apply to medical school form

* When you submit this form, you will be given access to a secure iSites page where you upload all future documents (see below) during your application process.

1. Check in with NRT to discuss premed packet and application by March

IV. April 2016

1. Premedical Packet due **to your iSites page**

- Provides extensive information to us / NRTs in writing the Dean’s letter

- Helps you better define interests and goals in pursuing medicine as a career

- Includes a complete list of recommendation letter writers

1. Materials must be submitted on time in order to take full advantage of the mock interviews (see below)
2. Missing letters of recommendation WILL delay your application.
3. Mock interviews: mid-April

- Opportunity to experience interview in a no/low-stress setting

- Helpful comments from our NRT staff on the interviewing process.

1. Personal statement and Interview workshop: late-April

V. May 2016

**End of May: all completed materials for your application are due!!!**

VI. July 2016

* Your AMCAS application should be completed by early July.
* Online application and details can be found on AMCAS website.
* MCAT must have been completed by late June (at the latest).

**QUESTIONS? Please look at the Adams Premed and OCS WEBSITES first.**

Then e-mail adams-medical@hcs.harvard.edu if you cannot find the answers!