

An Overview of Clinical Rotations and Their Importance

WHAT IS A CLINICAL ROTATION?

A clinical rotation is a real-world educational experience for medical students and graduates during which the individual participating will observe and possibly work alongside a supervising physician.

Rotations may be inpatient or outpatient with time divided between the hospital and clinical/private practice setting. Those offered through AMO are a combination of inpatient and outpatient, the amount of each being dependent on the physician's patient load.

Rotations offered through AMO are short term and generally last four weeks unless requested otherwise.

Clinical rotations are required to graduate medical school and can give students a competitive edge when applying to the Match. AMO offers 200-plus rotations across more than 40 specialties and subspecialties that can provide IMGs with letters of recommendations from U.S. physicians.

WHO ARE ROTATIONS GEARED TOWARDS?

The type of rotation an individual enrolls in will determine their level of participation in the experience. Clinical rotations fall into one of two categories—observerships and hands-on clinical rotations. Observerships are supervised clinical rotations that do not include direct contact with patients. Individuals participating in these clinical rotations will shadow their physician and may participate in case presentations and practicing differential diagnosis. All graduates or current medical students who already have a visa, are a U.S. citizen, or are a green card holder are eligible for observerships.

Hands-on clinical rotations include patient interaction with the supervision of a physician. Individuals may perform physical examinations or record the medical histories of patients. While all current medical students are eligible for hands-on clinical rotations, graduates are not eligible unless they have completed USMLE Step 1.

Regardless of the rotation an individual participates in HIPAA and Joint Commission Regulations must be observed.

WHY ARE ROTATIONS IMPORTANT?

Current medical students generally elect to participate in a clinical rotation to fulfill an educational requirement for their university while graduates participate to gain experience and letters of recommendation, both of which may improve their chances of matching with a residency position in the U.S. For individuals planning to practice medicine in their home country, a rotation in the U.S. will provide diversity and set them apart from other applicants.

While the rotation experience is important in the type of education it provides, the letter of recommendation that individuals may receive at the end of the rotation hold weight. The content of the letter and the physician it comes from are the most important factors of an LOR.

For additional information regarding AMO rotations please contact partnerships@amopportunities.org