

Interview Questions for Health Professions Programs

Why did you choose medicine as a career?

1. Why do you want to be a doctor?
2. What branch of medicine most interests you?
3. Why do you want to take care of people?
4. What are your specific goals in medicine?
5. Why did you apply to this medical school?
6. What other health care professions have you considered and why did you select this one?
7. Who was your greatest source of inspiration in deciding to pursue medicine?
8. Why do you want to pursue an MD-PhD instead of just a MD degree?
9. Why not just earn a PhD and be involved with clinically related research?
10. What will you do if you aren't accepted to medical school?
11. What do you see yourself doing in medicine 10-15 years from now?
12. What do you think will be your greatest challenge in completing medical school or learning how to be a doctor?
13. What do you think you will like most about medicine?
14. What do you think you will like least about medicine?
15. How are you a match for our medical school?
16. What do you intend to gain from a medical education?
17. What steps have you taken to acquaint yourself with what a physician does?
18. How do you think your role as a physician fits in with your role as a member of the community?
19. Why should we choose you?
20. Where do you plan to practice?
21. What makes you a better applicant than others?
22. What qualities would you look for in a doctor?

Research background and volunteer experience

1. Tell me about your research experience.
2. What do you like about research?
3. What weaknesses have you discovered about yourself during your research experience? In what ways have you worked on them?
4. How has your research experience prepared you to study and practice medicine?
5. What exposure have you had to clinical medicine?
6. Tell me about your volunteer work.

Personal qualities & accomplishments

1. What has been your biggest failure, and how did it change what you do?
2. What is your proudest accomplishment?
3. Tell me about yourself.
4. What do you do in your spare time?
5. Why would you be a good doctor?
6. What are your strengths?
7. What do you feel are the most important qualities in being a good doctor?
8. What are your hobbies?
9. Are you a leader or a follower? Why?
10. What are three things you want to change about yourself?
11. What do you have to offer our school?
12. What aspects of your life's experiences do you think make you a good candidate for medical school?
13. I note that you did not perform well in [course name, MCAT, etc.] Can you tell me about that?
14. If you were to do anything differently in your preparation for medical school, what would that be?
15. Which college class did you enjoy the most and why?
16. Who are your role models?
17. What causes your greatest frustrations in life?
18. If you could do anything different in your education, what would you do?
19. Describe the most unusual event in your life.
20. What are your hobbies? Do you plan to continue your hobbies while in medical school?
21. What is the toughest group that you have had to get cooperation from?
22. Have you ever had difficulty getting others to accept your ideas? What was your approach? Did it work?
23. Give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty.
24. Describe a situation when you were able to have a positive influence on the action of others.
25. How do you decide what gets top priority when scheduling your time?
26. Give me an example of an important goal, which you had set in the past and tell me about your success in reaching it.
27. Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to extricate yourself from a difficult situation.
28. Imagine we could interview your most honest critic and your most passionate advocate. What you each of them say about you?

Scenarios

1. Give an example of how, as a vet, you would help clients balance their financial abilities to pay from treatment with their emotional concerns for their pets.
2. In terms of aiding clients with difficult decisions about their animals, how would you respond to the following circumstances?
 - a) A young, otherwise healthy, but badly injured animal is brought in. It's clear from his injuries that he likely will never walk again, will be in lots of pain, and any treatment will cost thousands of dollars. The owner is distraught and wants you to "do everything possible."
 - b) An owner comes in with a healthy pet that has become a nuisance; peeing in the house, tearing up furniture, etc. He wants you to put the animal to sleep.
 - c) An owner comes in with an old breeding dog. She's an AKC champion and has had many litters. He wants to breed her again, but she has a heart condition that may kill her if she becomes pregnant again.
3. A client brings in a pet that has recently had surgery. The animal has severe complications, and you decide to open it back up. You are able to correct the problem, but you also determine that the original surgery was performed in a grossly incompetent manner.
 - a) The person who performed the surgery is a senior colleague in the practice you've just joined. What will you do?
 - b) The person who performed the surgery is a competing vet about whom you've heard other concerns as well. What will you do?
4. If there were an accident on the highway, would you stop and help the victims, knowing that doing so might lead to a malpractice claim against you?
5. As a first-year resident, you discover that an attending physician (who has a reputation for "eating interns for breakfast") appears to have made a mistake in prescribing medication. What will you do?
6. A pregnant 15-year-old unmarried teenager comes into your office asking for an abortion. What would you do?
7. You observe a fellow medical student cheating on an examination. What would you do?
8. A patient presents in your ER with a dangerous, but treatable, bacterial infection. You order the appropriate antibiotics but:
 - a) The patient is a child and his parents refuse to allow you to treat their child based on their religious viewpoints. What will you do?
 - b) The patient, who is an adult and appears mentally competent, refuses treatment. What will you do?
9. How would you tell a patient just diagnosed with cancer that he has only a few weeks to live?
10. A 17-year-old gay and promiscuous male comes to you to be treated for a STD. He mentions that he has been tested for HIV several times and would like to be tested again to see if he is still uninfected. How would you handle this situation?
11. How would you express your concern for a child who needs an amputation?

12. During a routine examination of a 10-year-old girl you discover evidence that she likely has been physically and sexually abused over a period of time. Both her parents are in the waiting room. How would you respond to this situation?
13. Two accident victims are delivered to your ER. Both present similar injuries in triage, and require immediate attention in order to survive. One patient is 20 years old; the other is 60 years old. Which one will you attend to first?
14. A terminally ill patient who is in a great deal of pain asks you to "help me die". How would you handle this situation?

Future goals / Other career options

1. What do you see yourself doing in ten or fifteen years from now?
2. Let us say that you are rejected for admission into all medical schools to which you have applied. What would be your second career option?
3. What will you do if you aren't accepted to medical school?

Views on medical, social and economic issues

1. In your view, what is the most pressing problem facing medicine today?
2. What are your views concerning ethics and healthcare (e.g., abortion, cloning, euthanasia)?
3. What are your views on managed healthcare and changes in the US healthcare system?
4. What role does a physician scientist play in the health care system?
5. What is the difference between an HMO and a PPO? Which system do you prefer and why?
6. Would you perform abortions as a doctor? If yes, under what conditions?
7. What are your views on the patients "right to die"?
8. What most recent advances in medicine have occurred that you believe will have the greatest impact on how you will practice medicine?
9. What concerns you about medicine?
10. How do you feel about HIPAA regulations?
11. How would you go about improving access to health care in this country?
12. Do you think physicians have the right to deny care to patients on Medicaid?
13. What are your views on alternative medicine?
14. What do you think should be done to control health care costs in this country?

Other questions that may be asked during the interview

1. What haven't we talked about?
2. Do you have any questions to ask me?
3. What do you think about (...some current event)?
4. Tell me about a book that you have recently read for pleasure.
5. Describe an experience you had helping others.
6. Who are your senators, congressmen, and governor?
7. What would you do next year if you don't get accepted into medical school?

8. What is the difference between sympathy and empathy?
9. Who was the best teacher you have had and why?
10. Describe an experience you have had in which you were misjudged. How did you respond?
11. What person, living or dead, would you most like to meet?
12. If I offered you a spot in our next class before you left this interview, would you accept?
13. If you could be any type of cell in the human body, which type of cell would you choose and why?
14. What was the last movie you saw? What did you think about it?
15. Give me an example of a time when you had to be quick in coming to a decision.
16. What do you do when your schedule is suddenly interrupted? Give an example.