**The Physician Assistant Life’s**

**Countdown to PA School Checklist** PA School Application Deadlines and Planning

There are two places to explore Physician Assistant program online. You can use my geo-based web search at paschoolfinder.com or the PAEA directory.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School Name | Application Deadline |
|  | Click here to enter a date. |

By attending the open house you get insight into the program. By listening to the program speakers you can get a good feel for the philosophy of the program, which can be helpful when writing your essay or interviewing. You also have the opportunity to meet some of the current students and faculty. You may even have the opportunity to chat with someone who’ll be interviewing you later.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Attend the Open House | Date of open House |
|  | Click here to enter a date. |

**Speak with the Program Director**

Whether you attend the open house or not, speak to the school’s program director at least once before you apply. If you live nearby or plan on visiting the area, set up a face0to face-appointment.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program Director  | Day and time of appointment |
|  |  |

**Visit Local Hospitals or Clinics**

Stop by the local hospital or clinic and see how many of the program’s graduates are employed there. Ask the physicians and nurses how they feel about the Pas who work there, and especially the graduates of the program you are interested in.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Hospital Name |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

General Requirement Checklist

[ ]  **Join the AAPA as an affiliate member**

[ ]  **Join my state chapter of the AAPA as an affiliate member (**[**clickable map**](http://www.thepalife.com/state-chapters/) **of state chapters)**

Continue to take classes that would prepare me for PA School

[ ]  **Take the GRE and meet the required minimums**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| GRE | Date of Exam |
|  | Click here to enter a date. |

[ ]  **Find Three PAs to Shadow**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| PA | Date of Shadow |
|  | Click here to enter a date. |
|  | Click here to enter a date. |
|  | Click here to enter a date. |

[ ]  **Hands on Patient Care Experience**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Total Hours** |
|  |  |

[ ]  **Letters of Recommendation**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Date of Letter** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

[ ]  **Locate and Speak with 3 graduated Pas from school’s I am applying to.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name and number** | **Date of conversation** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

[ ]  **Send for College Transcripts**

[ ]  **Attend a meeting of the state chapter of the AAP**

[ ]  **Attend the AAPA National Conference**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Conference Location** | **Date of Conference** |
|  |  |

[ ]  **Create an application fund**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Goal Amount per month** | **Total amount saved** |
|  |  |

**Goals vs. Purpose: Understanding your Values and Defining Your Purpose**

Why do you want to be a PA?

Versus what do you want to do with your life?

Why do I want to be a PA? = Purpose

I want to be a PA = Goal

Many people want to be rich, famous and successful. Yet these things are goals, not values.

To get to the values underlying a goal, you need to ask yourself:

 *‘What’s this goal in the service of? What will it enable me to do that’s truly meaningful?*

So if you’re feeling miserable because you haven’t yet achieved a particular goal, here’s what to do.

First find the values (purpose) underlying your goal and then ask yourself, ‘What’s a small action (the one thing) I can take (do) right now that’s consistent with those values?’

**What is this goal of being a PA in the service of?**

If you have downloaded this checklist I suspect you have the long-term goal of being a PA.

Suppose you are a sophomore in college and we both know the training will take some time.

You can spend the next 5-7 years of your life doggedly focused on this goal, thinking you can’t be happy until you’ve achieved it.

Now, ask yourself:

‘What is this goal in the service of? What will it enable me to do what’s truly meaningful?’

Let’s say you answered, ‘I’d be able to help people.’ Now you’ve identified a core value: helping others. And helping others is something you can do right now, in a myriad of ways: you can visit an elderly relative, contribute money to a worthy cause, help a fellow student with their homework or even do some volunteer work.

This doesn’t mean you give up your goal of becoming a Physician Assistant.

What it means is, for the next several years, while you’re completing this checklist and working toward this goal of becoming a PA, you have the ongoing satisfaction of living by your values—in this case, helping people.