THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE WITH HISPANIC PATIENTS:
A Clinical Elective Rotation

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**Background**

In keeping with our mission to provide trained health care providers within the Island of Puerto Rico and also in the mainland United States, PSMHS has developed a clinical clerkship elective course that will help our nation’s upcoming physicians provide care in a way that addresses the need of a growing Hispanic population.

Hispanics are the fastest-growing minority group in the nation. According to the U.S. Census, there are 48.4 million Hispanics in the United States as of July 1, 2009, making people of Hispanic origin the nation’s largest ethnic or race minority in the country. By July 1, 2050, the projected Hispanic population of the United States will be 132.8 million or 30% of the nation’s population. With these facts and our vision in mind, PSMHS hopes to help prepare our country’s physicians and health care providers by making available an elective clinical clerkship that is perfect for English speaking medical students who intend to practice medicine anywhere that there are Spanish speaking populations, whether in Puerto Rico, the mainland, or elsewhere in the world.

**Course Description**

The Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences (PSMHS) offers The Practice of Medicine with Hispanic Patients as an intensive four-week elective clerkship rotation designed for visiting English speaking students who would like to develop and improve their ability to provide patient care to the growing Spanish-speaking Hispanic population in US.

The course begins with a preparatory online course called Canopy Language Mate Online Training System. Students will utilize this online coursework which offers 36 modules, of one to one and half hour lessons organized in three levels of 12 modules each. The online component will be completed before the onsite clinical experiences begin.
Each module or lesson covers most medical specialties common complaints and diseases, pronunciation exercises and comprehension listening skills through short soap opera. Students will have access to the online course for one year before and after finishing the rotation.

The four weeks practical onsite activities include experiences of one week each in following Departments: Pediatrics, Family Medicine, OB-Gynecology and Internal Medicine, where the student will be in hospital and outpatient settings listening to morning reports, attending ward rounds, patient clinics, simulated patient encounters, and getting feedback from students, residents or faculty about comprehension, cultural issues and having practice interviewing native Spanish–speaking patients. At the end of the rotation students should be able to make themselves understood using their developed Spanish-proficiency to the fullest.

Coursework and Learning Methods

1. Complete the 36 lessons of the Canopy Medical Spanish Program in advance of the onsite rotation.

2. The student will be assigned for one week to the following activities offered to the third year medical students': small group discussions, lectures, case presentations, morning reports, ward rounds, clinics, standardized patients exercises and community activities of the clerkships of Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics-Gynecology and Family Medicine.

3. A bilingual third or fourth year medical student rotating in each clinical department will be assigned as an escort /companion/ mentor who can help the visiting student to arrive at every educational activity and give some general input about topics discussed.

4. The visiting student should keep a log of activities attended and patient encounters where he/she will write in English or Spanish a brief (2-4 sentences) summary of his/her understanding of topics discussed and patient main complaints.

5. The visiting student will share with an assigned faculty at every department the activities and patient log for clarification of understood information.

6. The student will observe, listen and perform patient interviews at clinics according Spanish proficiency level under the supervision of attending physician.

7. After performing the patient interviews the visiting student should hand in to the patient a short Patient Satisfaction Survey, instructing patient to fill and return it to the secretary or nurse. The visiting student will collect all the surveys at the end of the clinic.

8. Each week the visiting student will meet with a faculty member at each department to discuss progress, difficulties, patient surveys and activities and patient logs.

9. Visiting student will have independent study periods where he/she is expected to review and access the Canopy Lessons and watch the assigned videos.

Course Outcomes

Students will learn vocabulary, grammar; develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. A special emphasis will be given to health science vocabulary and its application to the clinical setting for the development of basic health assessment and patient interviewing skills. A third of the student’s time will be spent in clinical activities. Students will develop fundamental clinical skills by gaining exposure to patients, under the supervision of a medical doctor, in a variety of healthcare settings in order to conduct medical assessments of Spanish speaking patients. Students will be given exposure to and an awareness of health care practices and cultural beliefs related to illness in Hispanic communities.
**Educational Goals and Objectives:**

To empower the student to give excellent care to Spanish speaking patients

1. Recognize the essential components like vocabulary, syntax and grammar of Spanish language.

2. Listen attentively and identify the main complaints and problems brought to the consult by the Spanish-speaking patients.

3. Examine the Spanish process of communication.

4. Distinguish the Spanish medical terms utilized by patients and physicians during health assessment process.

5. Obtain a medical history from a native Spanish-speaking patient.

6. Orient Spanish-speaking patient about possible diagnostic possibilities, recommended tests and overall management plan in a manner that patient can understand.

7. Counsel Spanish-speaking patients about basic healthy lifestyle (diet, exercise, injury prevention, etc.).

8. Evaluate/Examine and compensate through study, inadequacies in the linguistic abilities to communicate in Spanish.

9. Use information technology to improve verbal communication in Spanish.

**Cultural Competence**

1. Justify the rationale for providing culturally competent health care.

2. Identify health beliefs in the Puerto Rican patients that affect their health.

3. Examine potential areas of cultural conflict between the values, beliefs, and customs of patients and a healthy lifestyle.

4. Describe the barriers that affect the ability of the patient to obtain health care services.

**Requirements for enrollment**

1. You must be a third or fourth year medical student in good academic standing with your current institution in order to enroll in this course.

2. Fill in the required fields under the registration tab on this website.

3. Download the PDF application form, fill it out, and return it either by fax or via scanned email to Martha Rodriguez.

4. Pay your tuition. Note, that since this course is a credited clinical clerkship elective, you must receive authorization from your school in order to enroll and receive credit at your current institution.

   Tuition fee: $2,425

**To Enroll**

To find out more about enrolling or to enroll in THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE WITH HISPANIC PATIENTS, please contact Ms. Martha Rodriguez, Clinical Coordinator via email at mrodriguez@psm.edu or by calling 787-840-2575 extension 2271.