

Frequently Asked Questions: Medical Fellows Program

1. How do I apply?

To apply simply send your resume and a cover letter to info@gpsa.org

2. What are the start and end dates for the program?

There are three possible start dates for the program in Guatemala and Belize: June, July or August. These programs last a minimum of 12 months.

The program in West Virginia has flexible start dates and the minimum commitment is 3 months.

3. Do I get to choose my program location or is it assigned by GPSA?

Applicants can list a preference in location in their cover letter. Alternatively, they will be asked their preferred location during the interview process. GPSA will try to place fellows in their preferred location.

4. Do any of the programs have language requirements?

No, there are no language requirements for any location. However, fellows assigned to Guatemala need to take Spanish lessons (covered by the program) until they reach intermediate level of Spanish, before they can use their Professional Development funds for other training.

5. Do you do any direct patient care while on the program? If so, do you need to have any certifications before the start of the program?

Yes, all fellows are trained to provide basic health screenings such as blood pressure and blood glucose screenings. They are expected to provide free screenings multiple times per week.

You do not need to have any certifications before the start of the program. However, having a CPR certification would be helpful.

6. What are the typical day-to-day duties of a Medical Fellow?

The day-to-day duties of Medical Fellows include:

- Providing support to clinical staff (screening patients, collecting patient data, organizing health fairs, etc.)
- Providing support on community outreach projects (doing home visits, health education campaigns, etc.)

- Teaching health lessons at local schools
- Partnering with other organizations on health related projects
- Support Program Coordinators before, during and after service learning programs for high school students.

7. What does the academic service learning program for high school students entail?

In addition to the Medical Fellows program, which is a long-term volunteering position, GPSA also receives short-term volunteers during our academic service learning programs for high school students. During those short-term programs, Medical Fellows act as Team Leaders under the supervision of the Program Coordinator. This means that they live 24/7 with a group of students, teach them to perform health screenings, supervise them during their volunteering work, in addition to other program related tasks.

8. What is the expected work schedule and vacations schedule?

Fellows are expected to work full time Monday through Friday. Fellows can take local holidays. Fellows committed to 12 months or longer also receive one week of vacation for every month of completed work.

9. Is it possible to apply to med/grad school while on the program?

Yes, it is possible to apply to medical or graduate school while on the program. However, this will require that you plan ahead of time as much as possible. It's recommended that you complete the MCAT or GRE exams prior to arriving on-site, as the exams are not offered in the host countries. In the event that you must take an exam or conduct in-person interviews while on service, GPSA offers days off, in addition to vacation days, to study, prepare, take the exam or interview. Please note that GPSA will not cover any expenses related to medical or graduate school interviews and exams. GPSA will, however, make every effort to accommodate your schedule. It will be easier to do so if you provide adequate advance notice and support your request with a list of tasks that you need to complete.

10. What are the costs associated with the program?

The program has no cost for fellows, however fellows receive no compensation either. The program covers the following expenses:

- Two roundflights from USA to GPSA site
- Housing, 3 meals per day, and wi-fi access
- Transportation as needed for GPSA business
- Budget for incidental and clinical expenses
- Visa fees

The following expenses are NOT covered by GPSA:

- Health insurance
- Gifts and souvenirs
- Other expenses

11. What are the differences between the Medical Fellows program and the Global Medical Fellows program?

The chart below lists the differences between programs:

	Global Medical Fellows	Medical Fellows
Length	9 months	3 months for West Virginia 12-13 months for Guatemala and Belize
Location	Multiple. Every 3 months would move to a new location (either Belize, Guatemala, West Virginia or Thailand).	Long-term stay in Belize, Guatemala or West Virginia, with potential travel to other sites (including Thailand).
Work with high school students	Yes	Yes
Volunteer at a clinic/health center/home visits/health fairs, etc.	Yes	Yes
Partnership Building	No	Yes
Community Needs Assessment	No, instead might be asked to conduct small research projects.	Yes
Community Project	No, but might be able to support others on their own projects.	Only for those who commit to 13 months.
Costs covered by GPSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One round flight from USA to GPSA site • Housing, 3 meals per day, wi-fi access • Transportation fees as needed for GPSA business • Budget for incidental and clinical expenses • Visa fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two round flights from USA to GPSA site • Housing, 3 meals per day, wi-fi access • Transportation fees as needed for GPSA business • Budget for incidental and clinical expenses • Visa fees

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Costs NOT covered by GPSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health insurance• Gifts and souvenirs• Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health insurance• Gifts and souvenirs• Others
Professional Development Fund	No	Yes. In Guatemala must be used for Spanish lessons until intermediate level is achieved.
Language Lessons	When available during programs with HS students.	When available 80 hours of Spanish or local language, plus additional hours during programs with HS students.