

JULY 2020

# FACT SHEET

## I Want To Be a Physician



### Introduction

A physician or medical practitioner/doctor is a professional taking care of patients in a variety of ways. The primary responsibility is the wellbeing of their patients. At times, it can be very stressful due to treating patients with life-threatening injuries or chronic illnesses. They can practice in various fields, including anesthesiology, family and general medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry, and surgery.

### Education

- Before medical school, students interested in becoming physicians take rigorous prerequisite courses and the Medical College Admission Test® (MCAT®).
- When applying for medical school, many medical school admissions officers use a holistic review process when considering applicants.
- After admittance into medical school, students complete four years of course work designed by each school.
- During the final year of medical school, students choose the type of medicine they will practice in the future and apply to residency programs.
- Individuals complete three to seven years of residency training.
- Lastly, physicians obtain a state license to practice medicine and for continuing education.

### Licensure Requirements

- A person must have a degree of doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy from a medical school located in the U.S or Canada approved by the board of medicine to be eligible.
- A person must have one year of postgraduate training in the U.S. or Canada in a program approved by the board of medicine.
- A person must have proof of the successful completion of a medical licensure examination satisfactory to the board.

There are exceptions when the individual:

- Is validly licensed as a physician in another state;
- Has practiced a minimum of ten years;
- Has no disciplinary actions imposed by any other state medical licensing board;
- Is certified by a specialty board recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties or by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and meets the requirement of section 50-02-11-02, regarding the time limit for examination attempts;
- And has a history free of any finding by the board, any other state medical licensure board, or any court of competent jurisdiction of the commission of any act that would constitute grounds for disciplinary action under North Dakota law.

### Types of Licensure

#### *Full License*

Full licensure is only granted on the day of regularly scheduled board meetings.

#### *Provisional Temporary License*

A provisional temporary license may be granted to an applicant who has met all requirements for licensure and is only valid until the time of the next regular board meeting.

#### *Administrative License*

Administrative medical licenses are issued for the purpose of practicing medicine only in an administrative capacity and does not allow a physician to practice clinical medicine.

#### *Provisional Temporary Administrative License*

This license permits the practice of medicine only in an administrative capacity and is only valid until the time of the regular board meeting.

#### *Locum Tenens Permit*

These permits are issued for a specific practice site and only for a period not to exceed 3 months.

### *Temporary Special License*

These licenses are granted in the interim of regularly scheduled board meetings to international medical graduates who are residents currently enrolled in a North Dakota postgraduate training program who have completed 24 months of ACGME accredited training. This license allows the resident to moonlight outside the scope of the residency program.

### *Special License*

After the board approves the temporary special license (TSL) at one of their regularly scheduled board meetings, the TSL is then considered a Special License.

### *Resident License*

Resident licenses are issued for the full duration of the North Dakota postgraduate training program. Residents cannot moonlight outside the scope of the residency training program with this license.

### *Special Emeritus Certification*

This certification is considered “honorary” only. There is no fee for this certification; however, the physician cannot practice or prescribe with a Special Emeritus Certification.

### **Barriers**

Physician training lasts between seven and 15 years. Medical school curriculum is continually changed and updated in a fluid manner to promote understanding of the latest medical knowledge, groundbreaking research, emerging and ongoing public health threats, and community needs.

### **Data**

North Dakota Board of Medicine (2020). Physicians (MD/DO) Licensing. Retrieved from [ndbom.org](http://ndbom.org)

Association of American Medical Colleges (2020). The Road to Becoming a Doctor. Retrieved from [aamc.org](http://aamc.org)