



## Emergency Medicine Clerkships

### STUDENT PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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AAEM/RSA Medical Student Council President



The unique milieu of the waiting room and steady stream of patients arriving via ambulance makes for a hectic and intense learning opportunity for rotating medical students. During clinical shifts, you will need to recall information gleaned from any and all of the following specialties: internal medicine, surgery, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology. To further test your medical and interpersonal skills,

you will see patients from all socioeconomic classes, ages, genders and race, all while being interrupted by traumas, codes and other thrills. The breadth of medical knowledge needed and the independence many departments give students are two reasons why many medical schools and emergency departments reserve clerkships for fourth year students.

Working in the emergency department will be different from all of your previous rotations. Often, you will be given more responsibility and will interact directly with your attending. Before you start rotating, do some investigative work. Find out which attending physicians have a reputation for being "good teachers," and try to schedule your shifts with them. Make sure that your presentations are precise and thorough. If your attending is not too busy, show interest by asking questions and volunteering to do any and all procedures. Each patient encounter is rich with teachable moments, and usually your clerkship director and the teaching faculty are more than willing to share their expertise with you.

Some residency programs also have a block during which senior level residents are scheduled to be in the department solely for teaching medical students. This is a phenomenal opportunity, and you should take advantage of it! In addition to asking them questions about your patients and working on your presentation skills, ask them questions about the residency program and the application process. Maximizing your experience during your initial rotation will prepare you for success during your other "audition" rotations.

If you are reading this, there is a good chance you're applying for residency in emergency medicine. Make a good impression on all of your emergency medicine rotations by showing up early, staying late and working hard during your shifts. Make friends with the nursing staff early, and they will be great allies! They have often worked in the department for years and can help you with anything from getting supplies and preparing for procedures to making a diagnosis!

Emergency medicine clerkships are unique due to their timing in medical school as well as when they occur in the application process. You will likely rotate early in your fourth year with many other students seeking spots in emergency medicine residencies. Do not worry about other students; stay focused on maximizing your educational experience. Competition is inevitable, but effort is not. Work hard, but also ensure that you enjoy the environment of the emergency department before applying! Good luck and have fun!

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