

Healthcare Experience (HCE) in the MPAS Application

Why does Healthcare Experience (HCE) matter for applicants?

Healthcare experience helps us understand how you have been exposed to the realities of working in health care. Whether through direct patient care, clinical support, research, or observation, these experiences give you insight into patient needs, interprofessional teamwork, and the challenges of healthcare environments. They also help you confirm your interest in the PA profession and prepare you to contribute meaningfully as a member of the care team.

Applicants to the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program bring a wide range of healthcare experiences. We recognize that valuable preparation for a PA career can come in many forms. You do not need to already be a licensed provider to have meaningful experience.

How will I report my HCE?

You will be asked to enter your healthcare experience in the supplemental application form. This allows us to see the types of roles, responsibilities, and settings you have been exposed to.

What categories of HCE are recognized?

To make reporting easier, we group common HCEs reported by applicants into broad categories:

HCE Category	Description	Examples
Patient Care (Direct)	Roles with hands-on responsibility for patient interaction and care tasks. Requires ongoing patient contact and contribution to clinical care.	Nurse, paramedic, physiotherapist, personal support worker
Clinical Support (Indirect)	Roles in a clinical setting with exposure to patients and health teams, but not primary responsibility for patient care.	Unit clerk, medical office assistant, hospital porter
Health-Related Work (Non-Clinical)	Roles related to health systems, administration, policy, or research that support health care but do not involve patient interaction.	Public health analyst, health research, health policy
Observation	Observational experiences where the applicant learns by watching professionals, without direct or indirect responsibility for patient care.	Shadowing a physician assistant, physician, nurse
Other	Experiences the applicant feels are healthcare-related but do not fit neatly into the above categories. Applicants should provide a short explanation of why they consider it relevant.	

How are HCE categories used in admissions decisions?

We value many different types of healthcare experience, not just licensed provider roles. When you apply, you will enter your experience in broad categories through the supplemental application form. Important, individual experiences or categories are not weighted in admissions decisions – our file reviewers consider your experience as a whole.

Why share these categories with applicants?

By sharing these categories openly, our goal is to reassure prospective learners that there are many different ways to prepare for a PA career. You do not need to come from one specific professional background. Every applicant's experiences can contribute meaningfully to their readiness for PA training.

Condensed Summary

Healthcare Experience (HCE) in the MPAS Application

Applicants to the MPAS program bring many different healthcare experiences. You do not need to be a licensed provider to apply. Valuable preparation for a PA career can come from direct patient care, support roles, research, or even observation.

When you apply, you will enter your healthcare experience in the supplemental application form. To make reporting easier, we group experiences into broad categories such as **direct patient care, clinical support, health-related non-clinical work, observation, and other**.

Our admissions reviewers look at your experience as a whole. We do not assign weights to individual categories.

By sharing these categories, our goal is to show that there are many different ways to prepare for PA training. Every applicant's background can contribute meaningfully to readiness for the PA role.