



medicine

Changing Lives

YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD



Medicine is the general term used to describe what doctors (also known as physicians) do to assist you to care for your health and well-being. Medical doctors prevent, diagnose, treat and cure illness, injury and disease and provide health care whenever required. Doctors choose to work in one or a combination of many roles including clinical medicine (patient care in General Practice, Surgery, Psychiatry, Paediatrics and many more), medical research, teaching and administration (in Hospitals, Medical Schools and Government Ministries). There is no denying the hours worked by doctors are long and the need for continuing study is demanding. But the role of a doctor is rewarding and there is potential for great personal satisfaction.

"As a doctor you are there for the high points of life, like giving birth, as well as the more challenging and difficult times in people's lives. I get to make a real difference..."

Keryn Taylor MBChB

UNIVERSITY OF
Otago

Division of Health Sciences

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What is Medicine?

Medicine is a scientific, research and evidence based profession, which covers many areas of specialisation, including general practice, public health and hospital-based specialties such as surgery, psychiatry, cardiology and many more. If you are considering a career in medicine, you should be prepared for lifelong learning to maintain your practising standards. Society expects a high level of technical competence. Patients expect to be treated with patience, kindness and humanity. Ethical behaviour and rapport with people are necessary so patients can trust you with problems of their body and mind.

What will I study?

After selection from Health Sciences First Year or graduate entry, you commence Second-year of the six year Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB).

Second- and Third- year Medicine offers an integrated course based on various body system modules and core clinical cases. The Clinical cases run throughout the programme and act as a framework for learning, as well as bringing relevance to the underlying clinical and basic science. Learning clinical skills and a focus on Health in the Community start at the beginning of Second- year and feature prominently throughout both years. Learning is achieved through a variety of modalities including experiential practise (laboratories, clinical skills, talking with people), lectures, small group discussions and independent learning. At the end of the Third- year you have the option of choosing between Otago's campuses in Dunedin, Christchurch or Wellington for the remainder of your course.

Fourth- and Fifth- year Medicine offer increased interaction with people and are centred around clinical work in hospital wards and in outpatient clinics in teaching hospitals, in smaller rural hospitals and general practices, and completing components of Public Health and Community Medicine.

Sixth-year Medicine is an apprenticeship-style year; also known as the Trainee Intern (TI) year. You assume greater responsibility in hospital wards and general practices. During this final year, you select a three-month 'Elective'. This involves project or clinical work usually in another hospital, or overseas, where you will gain experience of alternative health care, usually in an area of personal interest.

There are research opportunities within the medical programme including the option of taking one year off after third or fifth year to complete a Bachelor of Medical Science (Hons) degree. Some medical graduates choose to concentrate on a career in research and may enrol in a higher degree such as a Master of Medical Science or PhD.

Before you can practise as a doctor in New Zealand, you must register with the Medical Council of New Zealand and complete one year of supervised practice in a hospital. There are limited, if any, New Zealand hospital places available for international students who will normally complete registration requirements in their home country.

Background Required

There are no subject requirements for entry into the Health Sciences First Year programme, but we strongly recommend you take chemistry, physics and biology at Year 13. HSFY must be your first year of university study. If you are considering tertiary study before enrolling, you are strongly advised to contact the Health Sciences Admissions Office beforehand.

Admission to the programme

Admission to Medicine is competitive, and there are only 210 places available each year. There are different categories of admission to Medicine, but the majority of places are offered to students who have completed the HSFY programme at the University of Otago.

Selection into Medicine from HSFY is very competitive. Selection is based on your grades in the HSFY papers and results in the Undergraduate Medical and Health Sciences Admission Test (UMAT). High grades are required and no compulsory paper grade can be less than a B. The UMAT is a test which measures non-academic attributes, for more information go to www.acer.edu.au/umat.

Applications are also considered in the Competitive Graduate category (UMAT required) and Other category (allied health professionals, those with mental health professional experience and mature graduates). Additional places are available for international students who return to their home country after graduating. Applicants who are of Māori or Pacific Island (Polynesian) descent or who have had a rural NZ upbringing and/or education may request this be taken into account as part of their application.

How do I apply for admission to Medicine?

Application information for admission into the Health Science professional programmes from all categories is available online, at www.otago.ac.nz/healthsciences.

Clinical Requirements

Some aspects of teaching in the Health Sciences professional programmes require students to partially disrobe and take part in activities that include physical contact between students. This training is closely supervised and all students are required to participate. Students who anticipate situations sensitive to their culture or beliefs should contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs of the relevant school for advice.

Immunity Status

Students seeking admission to Medicine must provide evidence of their serology status to the following infections: Hepatitis B and C, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella.

International Applications

Persons who do not hold New Zealand citizenship or permanent residence should address their enquiries to the University's International Office, PO Box 56, Dunedin, 9054, New Zealand.

profile

KERYN TAYLOR

Keryn Taylor always wanted to be a doctor. As a House Surgeon at Dunedin Hospital, she relished the extra responsibility of using her medical skills daily in a clinical setting. "The more I am in a hospital environment learning and practising the more I get a true appreciation of what the work is like and I think that will continue to grow as I learn more. In fact, I don't ever think I'll stop learning," Keryn says. Now in the UK, Keryn chose to study at Otago because of its international reputation, top quality medical education and unique student lifestyle. She completed a science degree in psychology before entering medicine through the graduate entry criteria. She thinks her science degree honed her critical thinking and time management and study skills – all essential for medical students. "There is a lot expected of medical students. You have to want that kind of challenge in your life if you want to do medicine. It's not easy – but it's extremely rewarding."



Career Opportunities

Medicine is a respected and rewarding profession. Graduates can work within New Zealand in the public and private sectors, or register to practise overseas. There are further training opportunities for specialisation in a wide range of disciplines including Medicine (Cardiology, Geriatrics, Oncology and many others), Surgery (Orthopaedic, Neuro, Cardiothoracic), Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Psychological Medicine, Sports Medicine, Pathology, General Practice and more. Training for these specialties occurs as you work, and takes a further five or more years. Medical graduates can also enter research in fields from the biomedical sciences through to applied clinical research, in the laboratory, in the hospitals and community practices and on populations.

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For questions about Medicine
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