The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine is recruiting **Standardized Patients** (SPs) who will help us to accurately reflect our local population. SPs are individuals who are trained to *portray* “patients” in a consistent, reliable manner.

University of Pittsburgh medical students, as well as other Health Science programs, need practice with SPs who represent diverse backgrounds in order to develop their interpersonal skills and cultural awareness.

We want to make sure that qualified candidates are a good match for the program and provide clear expectations to candidates upfront.

The **skills** that SP candidates should possess include:
- excellent communication skills
- the ability to receive direction
- the motivation to help learners develop interviewing techniques and interpersonal skills
- Self awareness/Emotional Intelligence
- the ability to realistically role play a variety of patient “cases”

**SP responsibilities** include:
- preparing for events by studying case material; attending training for specific events
- providing effective learner centered feedback to medical students
- retaining information in order to complete checklist evaluations
- tracking personal schedules; punctuality and attendance for all scheduled dates

**Qualifications** of successful SPs are:
- High School Degree or the equivalent *(University requirement)*
- basic computer skills such as typing and data entry required, and reliable email access is necessary for communication and scheduling purposes
- no specific experience level is required, yet communication and feedback skills are essential

**Issues that SPs may need to be comfortable with:**
- Weight counseling, sexual histories, social issues, drug and alcohol counseling
- Basic physical exam (optional). Some events are interview-only.

The **SP Program offers employees:**
- competitive hourly rates, paid trainings, and flexible hours
- a central location: most events are in Oakland
- Standardized Patients gain knowledge about the healthcare community, develop accurate and precise feedback skills, and network with other SPs in the program.
- many of our SPs tell us they enjoy feeling as if they are giving back to the community by helping future and current healthcare professionals develop or improve upon their skills
- personal growth through awareness and knowledge of detailed communication skills
- all SPs have the right to say no—either for scheduling conflicts or case content reasons
Example Scenarios of Interview Cases:

**Interview, Parent of Child w/ ADHD:** A mother or father of a child being treated for ADHD. The child’s medication is not working as well as when it was initially prescribed. The parent is overwhelmed and anxious about the child’s future. They are frustrated with the situation and can’t understand why there isn’t a clear solution. Additionally, the parent researched online and is inquiring about potential diagnoses and reasons for the child’s behavior problems that had not been addressed in the past.

**Interview of At-Risk Binge-Drinker:** 24 year-old grad student who presents to a new family physician for a yearly physical. The patient consumes 4-6 drinks/day on weekends and special events. The patient has not identified that they are using an “at risk” quantity of alcohol, so they would be surprised and a bit defensive if a student approached their alcohol use clumsily or judgmentally.

**Interview of patient with Diabetes:** This is a follow-up with a Primary Care Physician. The patient has a long history of diabetes, and secondary retinopathy which has led to the patient being deemed “legally blind”. The patient's vision is very poor, but the patient is refusing to use a cane. The patient wears sunglasses because bright lights bother their eyes. The patient can make out shapes, but has difficulty navigating the world without assistance. Even though the patient has been dealing with these conditions for a long time, their understanding/health literacy is very low (which probably caused a worsening of their condition). The patient is also struggling financially. With all of that being said, the patient does not want to be pitied or judged; rather, they just want to speak with someone who listens and cares.

*For more information on the University of Pittsburgh’s Standardized Patient Program:*

[http://www.omed.pitt.edu/standardized/](http://www.omed.pitt.edu/standardized/)

Or, email Adam Kukic, SP Administrator: akukic@medschool.pitt.edu

*For additional information on Standardized Patients:*


[www.aspeducators.org](http://www.aspeducators.org)