

continued from reverse

During our busiest months, we may operate up to seven days a week with both day (8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.) and afternoon/evening (3:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.) shifts. You would need to be available for these hours, though not every day. In the busiest months, all SPs are expected to work at least some weekend and evening shifts when needed. The more you are available at the times we need you, the more likely you are to work. Once you are scheduled, you must work that shift. A minimum of three days availability per work week is required.

How do you choose who will be hired?

This is not a typical job. We need people who understand the unusual requirements of this program.

- You should be comfortable with your own health and in dealing with health care professionals. You must be completely comfortable with undergoing repeated physical examinations.
- You must have good English reading and verbal communications skills.
- You must have good recall and the ability to concentrate.
- You must not have any biases against anyone based on their gender, race, religion, national origin, physical characteristics, and so forth.
- You must be reliable and punctual.
- You must always maintain confidentiality, even if you go on to work for another institution. You must sign an agreement that you will not discuss, share, or disclose any written or web-based material you see in the center or anything you learn or memorize about this exam as a result of your employment. Failure to follow this policy may result in dismissal and prosecution.
- You must be able to pass a background check for security purposes.

I've had a couple of health problems in the past. Can I still be an SP?

Probably yes, if you are suitable in every other way. Everyone has a medical history. Sometimes an SP has a medical condition that does not affect the portrayal of a particular case; sometimes an SP is excluded from portraying a particular case due to a medical condition. SPs are carefully matched with suitable cases on an individual basis.

Do I need to know a lot about medicine?

No. We would teach you what you need to know. We actually prefer people who have not had medical training, and we do not normally hire medical professionals, nor do we hire medical students or graduates who may themselves be required to take this examination in the future.

How much does the job pay?

Currently, starting pay for training is \$16 per hour. Once you have successfully completed the full training and are scheduled as an "Approved for Live" SP, your supervisor will raise your pay to the current rate of \$18.50 per hour.

I'm still interested. What do I do next?

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG®) collaborates with the National Board of Medical Examiners® (NBME®), one of the parent organizations of the USMLE, in the development and administration of Step 2 CS. Step 2 CS is administered at regional Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration (CSEC) centers. Currently, there are test centers in Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. As part of its collaboration with NBME, ECFMG hires and trains SPs for the exam. In addition to Step 2 CS, SPs may also be involved with pilot examinations involving new technology or new client exams.

If you have read and understood the information in this brochure and are interested in applying for a position as a standardized patient, please visit the Careers page on the ECFMG website (<http://ecfmjobs.iapplicants.com/>) and click "Search for a Job" to see open positions at any of our five locations. Click on the appropriate position title to reach the job description and click the "Apply Now" button to apply.

Depending on our needs, we will call you to attend an application session. We may then arrange an interview and physical assessment. You will also be required to sign an agreement of confidentiality and a release and consent form stating that you understand the nature of the work and agree to it. We will then schedule training sessions in consultation with you. You will be required to successfully complete an extensive training process and an SP Final Exam. All training and exam time is paid.

Even if we do not employ you right away, we will keep your application on file for one year.

Thank you for your interest in our program.

CSEC CLINICAL SKILLS EVALUATION COLLABORATION

Test Centers

Atlanta

1745 Phoenix Boulevard
Suite 500
Atlanta, GA 30349

Chicago

8501 West Higgins Road
Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60631

Houston

400 North Sam Houston Parkway East
Suite 700
Houston, TX 77060

Los Angeles

100 North Sepulveda Boulevard
13th Floor
El Segundo, CA 90245

Philadelphia

3624 Market Street
3rd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19104

3700 Market Street

2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19104



Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates

www.ecfm.org

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Working as a
Standardized Patient (SP)
for the Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration



Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates



Step 2 Clinical Skills (CS) is the clinical skills component of the United States Medical Licensing Examination® (USMLE®), a three-step examination program for medical licensure in the United States. The examinees who take this test interact with standardized patients (SPs). SPs are trained to portray real patients with medical problems.

As a component of the USMLE examination sequence, Step 2 CS helps to protect the safety of the public by asking examinees to meet a minimum national standard for clinical and communication skills. SPs play a central role in this important exam. However, working as an SP is not a typical job, and many people have questions about this type of work. Some of the most common questions follow. The answers to these questions will help you decide whether working as an SP for this exam is right for you.

Who are the examinees?

Examinees are typically medical students and graduates who want to become residents or fellows in U.S. programs of graduate medical education or training. Doctors enter these advanced training programs after graduating from medical school. The examinees we test come from medical schools in the United States and other countries. As an SP, you may also encounter experienced, licensed U.S. doctors who conduct research for the exam. The examinees have varying levels of experience. Some may be inexperienced in performing physical examinations, and some may be very proficient.

What types of physical examinations are done?

They are common examinations that you might have as a real patient in a doctor's office. For example, examinees may listen to your heart and lungs with a stethoscope; press on your abdomen, looking for tenderness or swelling; look into your eyes, ears, and throat; take your blood pressure; assess your muscle strength; check your reflexes; or check your pulses. Examinations that are NOT permitted are female breast examinations, rectal examinations, genital examinations (including "pelvic" examinations), and corneal reflex tests. Examinees are told that these examinations are not allowed. None of the examinations involve taking blood or other samples. SPs are never given any drugs.

Will I need to get undressed?

Yes. SPs wear hospital gowns so that the examinees can perform physical examinations. They wear underwear underneath the gown. In some cases, the examinee may check pulses underneath the patient's underwear, but the underwear does not need to be removed. Female SPs may be asked to loosen or move their bras for some examinations, such as listening to the heart, and they are expected to do so. They may even be asked to remove their bras completely, but SPs are trained to handle this sensitive situation. Since breast, genital, and rectal examinations are not permitted, there is no reason for total nudity.

Is it safe?

Yes. There is no reason for anyone to experience anything that might be harmful. The examinations are very basic and do not cause any harm to SPs. At most, there may be some brief discomfort. All encounters are recorded and are observable via video monitors as they happen, in part for the safety of the SPs. There is standard insurance coverage for employees in the event of injury as a result of work.

Is this like being a research subject?

No. Medical research subjects are given drugs or are placed on certain diets in order to study their reactions. We are testing the medical students or graduates (the examinees), not the SPs. We use SPs to simulate situations for the examinees: typically, meeting a patient for the first time in a clinic or emergency department, interviewing the patient about his/her medical problem, and doing a physical examination. The examinees are evaluated on what they do during these encounters.

How do I know what to say when the examinee interviews me?

You would be trained to portray a particular patient with a very complete history. This includes the reason the patient is coming to see the doctor; the patient's past medical history; the patient's emotional state; and social details such as the patient's job, family, and activities. Through our training process, you would learn to become that person, and to speak to the examinee just as that patient would. We would also show you how to move like the patient, and how to react to the physical examination. For example, if you were portraying someone with back pain, we would show you where it would hurt and what you could or could not do because of your bad back.

That sounds like acting. Do I have to be an actor?

No. Some SPs are trained and experienced actors, but most are not. You can be a very good SP without ever having been on stage. There are some similarities to what actors do, but there are differences too. If you are an actor, you may find working as an SP to be good experience, but it will be much more difficult than working from a script or within dramatic improvisational outlines, and you may find it frustrating. This work has nothing to do with finding dramatic moments or playing to an audience. It has everything to do with disciplining yourself within the needs of the patient's case and the exam. It is very repetitive, since exactly the same simulation must be done for every examinee.

Note that the cases must remain confidential. SPs sign an agreement that they will not disclose details about the cases they portray to others. They are not permitted to use the material in any public or private performance or to include case details (including the fictional patient's name) on resumes. They are also prohibited from sharing any information about cases through social media or other means.

Do I have to decide whether the examinee passes the test?

No. SPs record the events of the encounters on a checklist and evaluate the examinees on their interpersonal skills and their proficiency in spoken English. These marks are used, along with other indicators of the examinee's performance, in determining the examinee's final score.

How often would I work?

That is uncertain. The work is part-time, as needed. We schedule SPs based on examinee demand for the exam, the need for the case that each SP is trained for, and availability to work. Due to these variables, it is not possible for us to guarantee a minimum number of hours.