

A Toolkit for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating a Hospital-University Internship Based on the PedsAcademy® Model



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL FLORIDA

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Toolkit Introduction

PedsAcademy is a first of its kind hospital-university internship program aimed at meeting the educational needs of patients (Pre-K to 12th grade) during their hospitalization while simultaneously helping to prepare future teachers for working with children who have chronic and complex medical needs. PedsAcademy was established through a partnership between Nemours Children’s Health, Florida and the University of Central Florida. PedsAcademy works collaboratively with the existing

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hospital school program at Nemours Children’s Health, allowing it to expand the number of patients served and depth of service provided.

This toolkit is intended to provide guidance and sample documents for hospitals and/or universities seeking to establish a hospital-university internship program based on the PedsAcademy model. The toolkit includes descriptive content, advice and recommendations based on the experience of the PedsAcademy team, and resource documents. Most sections of the toolkit conclude with a Related Resources section that provides additional information in alternate formats (e.g., audio, video, infographics, slide decks). All items named as Related Resources can be found in the “Resources & Sample Documents” section at the end of this document or links are provided.

This toolkit does not provide guidance on setting up a traditional hospital school program because organizations such as [The Hospital Educator and Academic Liaison Association](#) have existing guides, resources, and opportunities for training and networking.

Please direct questions about PedsAcademy or using the toolkit to PedsAcademy@Nemours.org.

Note for Toolkit Beta Version Users- How to Provide Feedback

As you review and field test this toolkit, we welcome feedback.

- Please email PedsAcademy@Nemours.org with questions and suggestions on what should be added, altered, or omitted.
- If you’d like to suggest specific edits, we invite you to download items from the toolkit, add comments etc., and send them to us at PedsAcademy@Nemours.org.
- If you prefer to ask questions or provide feedback by phone or video, please contact us at PedsAcademy@Nemours.org to request a meeting.

Need

In the United States, more than 40% of school-aged children and adolescents have at least one chronic health condition¹. Despite the need for teachers with competencies in this area, traditional training does not fully prepare teachers to support children with chronic health conditions^{2,3}, who may experience problems with school performance, including reduced attention and concentration, poor motivation, and absenteeism. To ensure that teachers are prepared to meet the diverse needs of all children, scholars have highlighted the need for teacher preparation programs to provide coursework and field experiences focused on preparing future educators to work with chronically ill children in a classroom

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/chronicconditions.htm>

² <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ844270>

³ Irwin, M.K., Elam, M., Merianos, A., Nabors, L., & Murphy, C. (2018). Training and preparedness to meet the needs of students with a chronic health condition in the school setting: An examination of teacher preparation programming in the United States. *Physical disabilities: Education and related services*, 37(2), 34-59. <https://doi.org/10.14434/pders.v37i2.26254>

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setting. The PedsAcademy hospital-university internship model fills this gap in teacher training, while simultaneously benefiting hospitals, patients, and families, by expanding the capacity of a hospital school program to provide additional services.

History/Mission

PedsAcademy was established in 2018 through a partnership between Nemours Children's Health and the University of Central Florida. The mission of PedsAcademy is to meet the educational needs of patients (Pre-K to 12th grade) during their hospitalization while simultaneously helping to prepare future teachers for working with children who have chronic and complex medical needs.

Related Resources:

- [Podcast- *Champions for Children*, episode 127: PedsAcademy](#)
- [Video- PedsAcademy overview](#)
- PowerPoint- PedsAcademy Overview
- PedsAcademy Infographic
- Hospital School Program Flyer

Staffing Structure & Roles

Staffing Structure

PedsAcademy is a hospital-university internship that operates as a complement to, and in coordination with, the existing hospital school program. PedsAcademy works collaboratively with the existing hospital school program at Nemours Children's, allowing it to expand the number of patients served and the breadth and depth of service provided.

PedsAcademy's current staffing structure is included below as an example. The structure below assumes that a hospital school program is already in place and that the Hospital School Teacher will be shifting their role to take on the role of Supervising Teacher.

- Hospital School Teacher / Supervising Teacher (One; Full Time- 12 months a year)
- University Supervisor (One; Part Time- 10 hours/week, 9 months/year)
- Internship Coordinator (One; Part Time- 20 hours/week, 12 months/year)
- Student Teachers (Recommended ratio: maximum of 3-4 Student Teachers per each Hospital School Teacher, per day)

Staffing During the Start-Up Phase: Planning Advice Based on Lessons Learned

During the first few semesters of a hospital-university internship, it may be wise to limit to 1 Student Teacher per day, per Hospital School Teacher so that the Hospital School Teacher(s) and internship partners have time to learn their way through the process and make real-time adjustments. During a startup phase with limited Student Teachers, the Internship Coordinator role probably is not needed. The Hospital School Teacher can likely handle the administrative tasks involved with recruiting and hosting Student Teachers, and in doing so, will learn their way through the process. When partners agree that they are ready to expand the number of Student Teachers and add an Internship Coordinator, the Hospital School Teacher will have a sound understanding of the role, making it easier

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to create the job description and supervise the Coordinator, once hired.

Strategic Staff Development: Planning Advice Based on Lessons Learned

A successful Hospital School Teacher will have passion and expertise related to educating patients with chronic and complex medical needs. A successful Supervising Teacher will have passion and expertise related to mentoring Student Teachers. Given that these are two different sets of expertise and passion, the blending of Hospital School Teacher & Supervising Teacher positions should happen gradually and should include time and funding for the Hospital School Teacher to participate in professional development as needed to gain competencies related to supervising Student Teachers-taking courses, establishing a network of experienced Student Teacher supervisors, etcetera. The number of Student Teachers should start small and grow over time as the Hospital School Teacher's competence increases related to supervision and leading the hospital-university internship, overall.

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities below reflect PedsAcademy's current staffing structure. As noted in the Structure section above, it may be wise to start with a low Student Teacher to Hospital School Teacher ratio, during which time the Internship Coordinator's role and responsibilities below would remain with the Hospital School Teacher / Supervising Teacher.

Related Resources:

- Please see the **Services** section of this toolkit for a table summarizing services provided to patients, along with team roles and responsibilities for each service.
- Worksheet- Planning Responsibilities & Resources- provides tips on how positions can be funded through hospital and university resources
- Planning Tool: Hospital-University Partnership Discussion- offers important discussion topics for early feasibility discussions about establishing an internship program

Hospital School Teacher / Supervising Teacher

In addition to instructing patients, conducting assessments, and coordinating with families and schools, the role of the hospital-based supervising teacher is also to guide and assist the Student Teachers in developing knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential to the teaching profession. Additional responsibilities include:

- Orients Student Teachers to the hospital environment and ensures compliance with all hospital policies and procedures (e.g., hand hygiene, proper use of personal protective equipment, patient confidentiality and privacy)
- Models effective teaching techniques for Student Teachers, shifting to observing Student Teachers as they take on the teaching role with patients
- Facilitates the professional learning and growth of the Student Teachers. This should include modeling, co-planning, and ongoing observation/feedback
- Provides continuous feedback and analysis of Student Teacher daily teaching performance

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- Helps Student Teachers implement recommendations received during daily feedback/mentoring input
- Collaborates regularly with the university clinical coordinator to support each Student Teacher's professional growth and development

Related Resources:

- Sample Weekly Schedule- Supervising Teacher

University Supervisor

The University Supervisor plays an essential role in the internship experience and works closely with the Supervising Teacher and university faculty to ensure the success of each teacher candidate. The University Supervisor visits the hospital on a regular basis, conducts formal observations, and evaluates the effectiveness of each teacher candidate's teaching practice. Additional responsibilities include:

- Coordinates promotion of the internship opportunity and application timeline among eligible college students
- Reviews applications and selects Student Teachers
- Meets with Student Teachers during internship orientation
- Holds an initial welcome meeting with the Supervising Teacher and Student Teachers within the first two weeks of internship
- Observes the Student Teachers and provides feedback as appropriate, including analysis of written unit and/or lesson plans
- Conducts midpoint and final evaluation meetings with Supervising Teacher and each teacher candidate
- Confers regularly with the teacher candidate during the semester to:
 - Provide encouragement
 - Assess progress of the internship
 - Provide opportunities to meet and discuss the internship experience
- If necessary, works closely with the Supervising Teacher to complete Student Concerns process if performance remediation is required

Internship Coordinator

The Internship Coordinator manages all phases of the recruitment and selection process for Student Teachers including the receipt and processing of applications, scheduling interviews, and maintaining applicant and participant databases. Additional responsibilities include:

- Conducts interviews with potential Student Teachers
 - **TIP:** When the Internship Coordinator is new, the Hospital School Teacher will likely need to participate in interviews, which takes significant time from teaching. Once the Internship Coordinator gains experience, the Hospital School Teacher should not need to participate in interviews.
- Oversees the onboarding process for all new Student Teachers including the collection of all required paperwork and uniform distribution

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- Serves as the primary point of contact for all incoming Student Teachers to communicate pertinent internship information as well as answer questions and address concerns
- Assists with the orientation and training of all Student Teachers
- Disseminates current information related to the PedsAcademy internship program (e.g., posting on social media, creating quarterly newsletters)
- Collects and maintains internship participation data and provides reports for stakeholders
- Shares program vision, mission, and statistical information with potential donors
- Attends university, school, and departmental meetings as required
- Other duties as assigned

Related Resources:

- Worksheet- Planning Responsibilities & Resources- provides tips on how positions can be funded through hospital and university resources
- Planning Tool: Hospital-University Partnership Discussion- offers important discussion topics for early feasibility discussions about establishing an internship program

Student Teacher(s)

At the start of the internship, Student Teachers shadow and observe the Supervising Teacher during interactions with patients and families. The observation period enables Student Teachers to become familiar with the hospital environment, the educational needs of individual patients, availability of instructional resources, and procedures for documentation. As Student Teachers demonstrate comfort and competence in their roles, they gradually assume full instructional responsibility under the supervision and guidance of the Supervising Teacher. Eventually, under supervision, a Student Teacher:

- Administers assessments to determine academic strengths/needs
- Provides individualized instruction to meet patient's academic needs and write notes on sessions
- Assesses patients' progress towards educational goals

Services

For Patients, Families, and Student Teachers

As stated above, PedsAcademy is a hospital-university internship model that operates as a complement to, and in coordination with, the existing hospital school program. PedsAcademy works collaboratively with the existing hospital school program at Nemours Children's, allowing it to expand the number of patients served and variety and depth of service provided. The expanded services made possible by the model will vary according to the needs of key stakeholders (patients, patient families, hospitals, universities, student teachers) and according to funding and other resources available- including grants and donations Nemours Children's and/or the University of Central Florida have been able to leverage because of increased staffing and capacity. The descriptions below reflect the services Nemours Children's Health, Florida is able to provide with PedsAcademy in place.

The Services section concludes with a table summarizing services provided to patients, along with team role and responsibilities for each service.

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For Young Children & Their Families

PedsAcademy serves patients from all inpatient units, birth to 12th grade, and patients' siblings. Services are provided in dedicated classroom space or at bedside.

Many patients of Nemours Children's have developmental delays or disabilities, making early intervention with infants and young children essential for later success in school. PedsAcademy:

- Provides developmentally supportive play and activities to promote stimulation and growth across key developmental domains with an emphasis on early literacy.
- Educates families about the importance of early shared reading.
- Provides access to developmentally appropriate children's books
 - Examples include the Little Readers Program and the annual Read-a-Thon on the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)

Related Resources:

- PowerPoint- PedsAcademy Overview

For School-Age Children & Their Families

For school-age children and their families, PedsAcademy provides:

- Individualized instruction and educational enrichment, developed in consultation with the child's school and classroom teacher, to replicate what the child would have received in the classroom. This ensures that children can successfully complete the assignment packets sent by schools and that they are not behind upon return to school.
- Return to school planning
- School re-entry support- helping patients, parents, and classroom teachers understand barriers to learning that the child may face when returning to the classroom as a result of their illness or its treatment
- Assistance to families in securing instructional accommodations and support services
- If the child is unable to return to school, assistance to families in securing homebound instruction via the local school district
- Summer STEM-based camp for patients and families

Related Resources:

- PedsAcademy Infographic
- Hospital School Program Flyer

For Student Teachers

Student Teachers receive professional development and specialized training that prepares future teachers to meet the educational needs of students with chronic and complex medical conditions. For Student Teachers, PedsAcademy provides:

- Supervision and coaching from the Supervising Teacher and University Supervisor as Student Teachers design and implement individual evidence-based instruction for patients

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- UCF Coursework designed to align with onsite teaching experiences at Nemours Children’s (e.g., because many patients at Nemours Children’s are minimally verbal or non-verbal and use forms of communication other than oral speech, UCF faculty have designed co-requisite courses to include content on alternative methods of communication)
- Professional development sessions from the Supervising Teacher on how specific medical needs can impact a child’s ability to learn

Related Resources:

- PedsAcademy Infographic
- PowerPoint- PedsAcademy Overview

Services for Patients x Team Roles & Responsibilities

Task	Role/Responsibilities	
	Supervising Teacher	PedsAcademy Student Teachers
Introduce School Program to patient and family	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Enter note in EPIC (patient’s electronic medical record)		
Conduct <i>Educational Needs Assessment</i>	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Obtain signed <i>School Program Authorization</i> form from parent/guardian	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Call or email school to establish school/academic/special education contact	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Attach signed authorization form		
Add information for student, school, and district to School Program Tracker	Primary Role	Student Teachers have access to view School Program Tracker spreadsheet in shared drive.
Make a copy of authorization form for Health Information Management system (aka electronic medical record)	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
If needed, administer assessments to determine academic strengths/needs	Supervision	Gradually take over responsibility w/ supervision from Supervising Teacher
Based on assessment data and/or input from school, formulate appropriate educational goals for patient	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Provide individualized instruction to meet patient’s academic needs	Supervision/Evaluation of Student Teacher Performance	Gradually take over responsibility w/ supervision from

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Enter a progress note after each session in EPIC (patient's electronic medical record)		Supervising Teacher
If needed, administer bi-weekly assessments (e.g., Curriculum-Based Measurement tools) to measure patient's academic growth and progress toward educational goals	Supervision	Gradually take over responsibility w/ supervision from Supervising Teacher
Attend any team meetings for student (e.g., rounds, care conferences, discharge meetings, etc.)	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Provide bi-weekly updates to school via email Include therapy notes from physical therapy, occupational therapy, etc. as applicable	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Create School Re-Entry Plan Compile instructional, behavioral, and environmental recommendations from all members of Nemours Children's care team Translate into school-friendly language and send to school contact on Nemours Children's letterhead	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Determine if a transition meeting is needed, If yes, schedule with school-based team and Nemours Children's care team	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Hold transition meeting Send follow-up notes to invitation list (even if some were unable to attend)	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe
Complete Discharge Note in EPIC	Primary Role	Shadow/Observe

Related Resources:

- [Podcast- *Champions for Children*, episode 127: PedsAcademy](#)
- [Video- PedsAcademy overview](#)
- PowerPoint- PedsAcademy Overview
- PedsAcademy Infographic
- Hospital School Program Flyer
- Sample Weekly Schedule- Supervising Teacher

Benefits

Benefits to Patients & Families

The benefits below are specific to the services provided via the PedsAcademy hospital-university internship between Nemours Children's Health, Florida and the University of Central Florida. Hospitals

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and universities partnering to establish an internship based on the PedsAcademy model will have different benefits based on the array of services they provide.

- **Keeps Students on Track:** The individualized educational services provided by PedsAcademy keep infants/children on track with developmental and academic milestones during hospitalizations
- **Personalized Support:** PedsAcademy offers instruction tailored to each patient or sibling's specific needs.
- **Fills Education Gaps:** PedsAcademy ensures that children who are not eligible for hospital/homebound services from their public school district (such as children enrolled in private school or hospitalized for fewer than 15 consecutive school days) receive instruction and educational enrichment
- **Siblings, Too:** PedsAcademy Model offers instruction to all patients and their siblings regardless of age.
- **Reduces Stress on Parents:** Because PedsAcademy coordinates with schools, parents have one less thing for parents to worry about- allowing them stay focused on their child's health
- **Fosters Healthy Early Development:** Using the expanded capacity of the hospital school program, PedsAcademy also offers literacy promotion programs and early developmental enrichment services for infants and toddlers

Related Resources:

- PedsAcademy Infographic

Parent Testimonials

"This was a great experience for my daughter and helped her from backsliding on her educational needs while in the hospital." – **Parent of Patient (age 13)**

"The teacher we had was hands down the best and was able to get on my son's level to help him with his school-work so he does not get behind while his stay in the hospital." – **Parent of Patient (age 11)**

"PedsAcademy made our stay at Nemours so much more enjoyable. It gave us something fun to look forward to. Everyone was super friendly." – **Parent of Patient (age 6)**

"This program is really awesome, and my child looked forward to doing projects and reading books everyday with the staff." – **Parent of Patient (age 4)**

Benefits to Universities

The benefits below are specific to the PedsAcademy hospital-university internship partnership between Nemours Children's Health, Florida and the University of Central Florida. Universities may have different benefits based on how their partnership and internship program is designed.

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- Differentiates the University of Central Florida teacher preparation programs: Teachers are likely to have many students with serious chronic conditions over the course of their career and the PedsAcademy internship is uniquely situated to prepare future teachers to work with chronically ill children in a classroom setting.
- Builds the Research Literature: PedsAcademy has led to research collaborations between Nemours Children’s Health and the University of Central Florida, expanding the evidence on how to prepare future teachers to work with chronically ill children
- Enhances the Competitiveness of the University’s Education Programs: The opportunity to participate in a first-of-its-kind internship attracts high caliber students to the University of Central Florida teacher preparation programs

Related Resources:

- [Podcast- Champions for Children, episode 127: PedsAcademy](#)
- [Video- PedsAcademy overview](#)
- PowerPoint- PedsAcademy Overview
- PedsAcademy Infographic

Student Teacher Testimonials

“I’ve learned to become a more culturally and emotionally responsive educator who is adaptable and flexible based on my students’ needs. But most of all, I’ve seen firsthand how meaningful this program is, whether it’s reading to the babies in the NICU or doing sensory bins with the in-patient rehab kids, it makes me extremely proud to have a PedsAcademy chapter in my undergraduate story.” – Karla S, UCF student

“Professionally, this opportunity allowed me to see what schooling looks like for children who are hospitalized or spend most of their time in and out of hospitals. It pushed me to think outside of the box when creating lesson plans and activities for different kinds of students and gave me valuable information that I can use in a traditional classroom setting. I made so many connections with not only the patients but the student teachers I had the pleasure of working with. It truly felt like I was working with a team that had the education and well-being of patients first.” – Hadassa J, UCF student

Benefits to Hospitals

The benefits below are specific to the services provided via the PedsAcademy hospital-university internship between Nemours Children’s Health, Florida and the University of Central Florida. Hospitals may experience different benefits based on how their partnership and internship program is designed.

- PedsAcademy is a differentiator for children’s hospitals, bolstering the hospital’s reputation
 - PedsAcademy meets, and in many cases exceeds, state requirements for hospital school programs. For example, some states may allow for hospital school program eligibility to start after a specified number of days as an inpatient. Because PedsAcademy allows Nemours Children’s Health, Florida to expand services provided via its hospital school program, all patients are immediately eligible.

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- The services provided by PedsAcademy are a value-add to families. In family satisfaction surveys, parents/guardians indicate consistently high satisfaction with the services provided as well as the way PedsAcademy operates and engages with them and their child/children.
- PedsAcademy helps hospitals meet the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation that pediatric providers promote early literacy development for children beginning in infancy
- Increased Capacity: By leveraging Student Teachers, PedsAcademy allows hospitals to expand their capacity to provide educational support to patients and patient siblings beyond what a hospital-based teacher could do independently.
- Research: PedsAcademy offers a wealth of research opportunities to hospitals and their university partners.
- Mission- Good health depends on many factors besides access to healthcare, a fact that is often recognized in hospital mission statements. PedsAcademy is an example of the non-clinical services and supports hospitals can put in place to build patient health and wellbeing.
- Competitiveness- The opportunity to participate in a first-of-its-kind internship attracts high caliber Student Teachers

Related Resources:

- [Podcast- Champions for Children, episode 127: PedsAcademy](#)
- [Video- PedsAcademy overview](#)
- PowerPoint- PedsAcademy Overview
- PedsAcademy Infographic

Planning

Trademark and Naming

PedsAcademy is a registered trademark. Please use the following language to when citing or crediting PedsAcademy in presentations, publications, manuscripts, etcetera: *(Name of internship program) is a hospital-university internship based on the PedsAcademy model co-created by Nemours Children's Health and the University of Central Florida.*

Hospitals and universities that establish internships based on the PedsAcademy model may not use the trademarked name in their own naming or branding.

For questions about how to credit or cite PedsAcademy, please email PedsAcademy@Nemours.org.

Formalizing the Hospital-University Partnership

Exploring Feasibility

Establishing a hospital-university internship based on the PedsAcademy model first requires identifying a university partner willing and able to collaborate. Two documents in the "Resources & Sample Documents" section of the toolkit are provided to guide feasibility and early planning discussions.

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Related Resources:

- Worksheet- Planning Responsibilities & Resources
- Planning Tool- Hospital-University Partnership Discussion
- Photos (2) of PedsAcademy classroom at Nemours Children’s Health, Florida

Planning Responsibilities & Resources

Once a partnership seems feasible, the “Worksheet- Planning Resources & Responsibilities” can be used to identify resources needed and work to create a plan for securing the resources required for running an internship program based on the PedsAcademy model.

Formalizing the Partnership

Hospitals and universities seeking to establish an internship based on the PedsAcademy model are encouraged to document the roles and responsibilities of each party and other essential pieces of information via a formal agreement of some type- an affiliation agreement, a memorandum of agreement, etcetera.

Partners are advised to review and update the contract annually. This will be particularly valuable in the early years of the internship when partners are more likely to shift aspects of the agreement based on needs, resources, and what is working.

Related Resources:

1. Worksheet- Planning Responsibilities & Resources
2. Planning Tool- Hospital-University Partnership Discussion
3. Photos (2) of PedsAcademy classroom at Nemours Children’s Health, Florida

Implementation

Each section below includes a description of PedsAcademy’s approach. Where relevant, recommendations based on lessons learned are also included.

Preparing for the Internship

University of Central Florida students enrolled in an education program (see text box) are eligible to apply for the PedsAcademy Internship Program if they meet the University of Central Florida’s internship requirements related to GPA, departmental course completion, and submit two University faculty recommendations with their application.

Engaging Student Teachers Across a Broad Array of Education Programs

PedsAcademy accepts Student Teacher applications from Undergraduate students enrolled in a wide variety of education programs at the University of Central Florida:

- Early Childhood Development and Education
- Elementary Education (K-6 Certification)
- Elementary Education (Non-certification Track)
- Exceptional Student Education (K-12 Certification)
- Secondary Education (6-12 Certification)

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- English Language Arts Education
- Mathematics Education
- Science Education
- Social Studies Education

Application and Interview Process

University of Central Florida students interested in consideration for the PedsAcademy Internship Program must complete and submit formal applications by a set of deadlines that are earlier than typical teacher internship application deadlines at the University in order to accommodate the additional time needed for onboarding at Nemours Children's.

Applications to the PedsAcademy Internship Program are submitted to the PedsAcademy Internship Coordinator, who then reviews application materials and schedules candidate interviews. Both the Internship Coordinator and University Supervisor participate in the interviews.

Staffing Internship Interviews: Planning Advice Based on Lessons Learned

In the early years of the PedsAcademy Internship Program, the Supervising Teacher also participated in candidate interviews. Over the course of the collaboration, the University Clinical Coordinator became familiar with the unique skills, experiences, and qualities sought by the Supervising Teacher and now selects candidates who are good fits for the PedsAcademy internship program with limited consultation with the Supervising Teacher. As a result, the Supervising Teacher now has more time available to devote to teaching patients and implementing enrichment activities.

PedsAcademy has crafted interview questions that differ from traditional Student Teacher interview questions by focusing whether candidates would be a good fit for the unique hospital environment. The interview questions focus on gaining an understanding of candidates' experiences working with children with special needs or in hospitals settings, as well as assessing qualities and skills that would make a candidate a good fit for the needs of patients and families. PedsAcademy intern interview questions include:

- What do you know about PedsAcademy and what is it about this internship opportunity that most interests you?
- What prior experiences do you have working/volunteering with children? (Prior experience working/volunteering with children is preferred, but not required.)
- What do you consider your top 3 strengths when working with children and their families?
- What experiences have you had working with students of diverse backgrounds and abilities? What have you found helpful when working with these diverse populations?
- You start to work with a patient for the first time. His parents told you he was in third grade. You have designed a learning activity appropriate for the patient's grade, but after a few minutes you discover that the work is too difficult. What would you do?
- What strategies could you use to encourage/motivate a reluctant student?
- How could you build rapport with a child and their family?
- What challenges do you anticipate in teaching in a hospital environment?
- What do you hope to gain from participation in the PedsAcademy internship program?
- Do you have any questions for us?

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Following the interview period, the PedsAcademy Internship Coordinator contacts each candidate via email to inform them of their status. Selected candidates are provided with detailed information about the onboarding process and how to order the required uniform. (See Onboarding Checklist in “Resources & Sample Documents” section). The Internship Coordinator also provides a list of selected candidates to the University’s Office of Clinical and Field Experiences.

All Student Teachers are required to complete the standard Nemours Children’s Health onboarding process, including background check, drug screen, completion of web-based training on safety and compliance procedures, and proof of vaccination status. The Student Teacher onboarding process is overseen by Nemours Children’s Health Human Resources and the Employee Health Office. Students must complete all health screenings and onboarding requirements prior to the PedsAcademy Orientation.

Student Teachers must also submit proof of Professional Liability Insurance to Nemours Children’s Health. Students who are enrolled in a post-secondary teacher preparation program can obtain Employment Educators Liability Insurance by purchasing an Aspiring Educator Membership via the National Education Association (NEA).

Related Resources:

- Student Teacher Onboarding Checklist

Orientation

All Student Teachers are required to attend an in-person, full-day orientation prior to the start of their internship. Orientation is held at the start of each academic term. The Supervising Teacher facilitates the internship orientation and reviews PedsAcademy policies and procedures related to working in the hospital setting. Topics include:

- Identification Badges
- Dress Code
- Emergency Codes
- Hand Hygiene
- Isolation (Transmission-Based) Precautions
- Cleaning and Disinfection of Materials
- Confidentiality of Information
- Abuse Reporting

Related Resources:

- PedsAcademy Internship Application- for Prospective Student Teachers
- Student Teacher Onboarding Checklist
- Student Teacher Orientation- PedsAcademy
- PedsAcademy Student Teacher & Faculty Handbook

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The Internship Experience

Gradual Release of Responsibility

Over the course of the semester, after Student Teachers spend time shadowing and observing, the Supervising Teacher will gradually transition responsibilities related to patient instruction and assessment. This process takes place in three phases:

- **Phase 1 (Modeling)– Shadowing**
During phase 1, Student Teachers shadow and observe the Supervising Teacher during interactions with patients and families. The observation period enables Student Teachers to become familiar with the hospital environment, the educational needs of individual patients, availability of instructional resources, and procedures for documentation.
- **Phase 2 (Guided Practice) – Co-Teaching**
During phase 2, Student Teachers engage in co-teaching with the Supervising Teacher. The Student Teacher and Supervising Teacher share responsibility for planning, delivery, and assessment of instruction. The co-teaching period provides Student Teachers with the opportunity to practice instructional strategies with the guidance and support of the Supervising Teacher.
- **Phase 3 (Independent Practice) - Assuming Instructional Responsibilities**
During phase 3, Student Teachers assume full responsibility for instruction and assessment. During this final phase, the Supervising Teacher conducts formal observations and provides continuous feedback and analysis of Student Teachers' daily teaching performance. If a Student Teacher is not yet ready to assume full responsibility, additional opportunities for shadowing and co-teaching are provided.

Professional Development Trainings

The Supervising Teacher also plans and leads professional development training on a variety of topics determined by the needs of the Nemours Children's patient population. PedsAcademy professional development topics have included:

- Brain Injury and Implications for School and Learning
- Pediatric Cancer & Blood Disorders
- Classroom Support for Children with Chronic Pain
- Hospital Setting Support for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Pediatric Pulmonary Diseases and Disorders

Assessment of Student Teachers

To determine when a Student Teacher is ready to take on greater responsibility and independence in instructing and assessing patients, the Supervising Teacher and University Supervisor will observe the Student Teachers as they interact with patients and families to determine their readiness to progress. The Supervising Teacher and University Supervisor also conduct formal evaluations using evaluation

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tools provided by the University of Central Florida mid-way through the internship and at the completion of the internship.

- Observations
 - Prior to a formal observation, the Student Teacher is required to submit a written lesson plan to the Supervising Teacher. The Student Teacher is expected to revise their lesson plan according to feedback and suggestions provided by the Supervising Teacher. During the observation, the Supervising Teacher rates each area of competency using the Observation Instrument. Areas of competency include (1) instructional design and lesson planning; (2) the learning environment; (3) instructional delivery and facilitation; (4) assessment; and (5) professional responsibility and ethical conduct. Following the formal observation, the Supervising Teacher meets with the Student Teacher to facilitate the intern's reflection and provide specific and meaningful feedback. Post-Conference discussion topics include:
 - Patient engagement in learning and participation in the lesson
 - Use of research-based instructional practices
 - Use of formative assessment to inform instruction
 - Use of adaptations and/or accommodations to meet patients' specific learning needs
- Mid-Point and Final Evaluations
 - A formal mid-point and final conference takes place during the internship experience. These are comprised of the Student Teacher, Supervising Teacher, and University Supervisor sitting together and discussing progress in each area of competence using the Evaluation Rubric. Each area is rated jointly by both the Supervising Teacher and University Supervisor.
- Student Issues Protocol
 - If any serious concerns arise about a Student Teacher's professional dispositions and/or overall performance, the Supervising Teacher conducts a formal counseling session with the Student Teacher and develops a plan for improvement. When a plan of action does not satisfactorily resolve the Student Teacher's professional dispositions and/or performance concern(s), the Supervising Teacher notifies the University Supervisor, who will convene a faculty committee meeting for the purpose of recommending, deferring, or denying the Student Teacher's further progression in the internship program.

Related Resources:

- PedsAcademy Internship Application- for Prospective Student Teachers
- Student Teacher Orientation- PedsAcademy
- Student Teacher Orientation Checklist
- Student Teacher Onboarding Checklist
- PedsAcademy Student Teacher & Faculty Handbook

Evaluation

Methods of program evaluation have evolved over time. Presently, evaluation focuses on three areas: Gains made by Student Teachers; Gains made by patients/students; and Satisfaction with the PedsAcademy experience. Details on each are included below.

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Student Teachers

1. Observation Instrument
 - a. Areas of competency include (1) instructional design and lesson planning; (2) the learning environment; (3) instructional delivery and facilitation; (4) assessment; and (5) professional responsibility and ethical conduct. The following scale is used to rate each observed indicator:
 - i. 4: Exceeds expectations
 - ii. 3: Meets expectations
 - iii. 2: Developing expectations
 - iv. 1: Does not meet expectations
2. Evaluation Rubric
3. Pre- and Post-Test
 - a. This test is designed to measure changes in Student Teachers' knowledge of how to support students with special health care needs as a result of participation in the PedsAcademy internship program.
 - b. 50 multiple-choice questions; online format
4. Topics include state and federal legislation that govern the education of students with exceptionalities, techniques for differentiating, accommodating, and modifying classroom instruction to meet the needs of individual students, intervention strategies for students who display challenging behaviors, the use of assistive technology and alternative communication systems, etc.
5. End-of-Internship Written Reflection
 - a. 5 open-ended questions
 - i. How did this internship impact you personally? As an educator?
 - ii. What were the most challenging aspects of this environment? How did you overcome them?
 - iii. What is your #1 take-away from this experience?
 - iv. How do you anticipate the PedsAcademy internship experience influencing your future career in education?
 - v. What are some ways we can improve this internship experience for other Student Teachers?

Student/Patient Progress

1. Diagnostic Assessment is used to determine patients' specific instructional needs. Examples of diagnostic assessments used include the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) and the Primary Spelling Inventory (PSI).
2. Progress Monitoring (usually weekly or biweekly) is used to assess individual student progress towards a learning goal and evaluate effectiveness of instruction. The type of progress monitoring measure used is dependent upon the patient's instructional level and specific learning goals. For example, a patient who is receiving instruction to improve reading speed and accuracy might be administered an oral reading fluency measure on a weekly or biweekly basis.

Satisfaction

1. University Partners

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2. Hospital Partners
3. Student/Patient
4. Parents/Guardians
 - a. Parent/Guardian Satisfaction Survey includes seven Likert scale questions and a section for open-ended comments/feedback.

Relevant Publications

Published Articles Related to PedsAcademy

The list below includes relevant publications as of Spring 2022. Please contact PedsAcademy@nemours.org with questions about publications.

1. Kelley, M., Spalding, L., & Grysko, R. (in press.) PedsAcademy: Using an alternative clinical model to foster teacher candidate development and identity. In B. Zugelder (Ed.), *The Educator Continuum and Development of Teachers*: IGI Global.
2. Kelley, M. & Grysko, R. (in press). PedsAcademy: A professional development community school that connects preservice educators and chronically ill children. In Ferrara, J., Nath, J. & Beebe, R. (Eds), *Professional Development School (PDS) and Community Schools: The Nexus of Practice*. The National Association for Professional Development Schools.

Additional Relevant Resources & Publications

Resources at the links below are likely to be of interest to those planning, or operating, a hospital-university internship model similar to PedsAcademy.

- [The Hospital Educator and Academic Liaison Association](#) has existing guides, resources, and opportunities for training and networking.
- For more information on returning to school and laws that help protect children, see Leukemia and Lymphoma Society booklet [Learning & Living with Cancer: Advocating for Your Child's Education Needs](#). *Staying Connected* is a FREE, online professional development program for teachers, school nurses, social workers, school counselors, and other school and college personnel focused on the needs of children, adolescents and young adults (AYAs) who have survived or are being treated for any type of cancer. This interactive educational program offers 6.5 continuing education credits. [Click here](#) for more information.
- <https://www.biausa.org/brain-injury/about-brain-injury/children-what-to-expect/children-brain-injury-impact-on-education>
- https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/sicklecell/documents/tipsheet_supporting_students_with_scd.pdf

Resources & Sample Documents

1. [Podcast- Champions for Children, episode 127: PedsAcademy](#)
2. [Video- PedsAcademy overview](#)
3. PowerPoint- PedsAcademy Overview
4. PedsAcademy Infographic
5. Hospital School Program Flyer

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6. Worksheet- Planning Responsibilities & Resources
7. Planning Tool- Hospital-University Partnership Discussion
8. Photos (2) of PedsAcademy classroom at Nemours Children's Health, Florida
9. Sample Weekly Schedule- Supervising Teacher
10. PedsAcademy Internship Application- for Prospective Student Teachers
11. Student Teacher Orientation- PedsAcademy
12. Student Teacher Orientation Checklist
13. Student Teacher Onboarding Checklist
14. PedsAcademy Student Teacher & Faculty Handbook

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