

Graduate Medical Education

Additional graduate-level medical education follows medical school and is a prerequisite for independent practice and licensure. Graduates of the School of Medicine must spend the first year after graduation in an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited internship or its equivalent, designated as Post-Graduate Year-1 (PGY-1). Following this, graduates become eligible either for further specialty training or for a non-training assignment, which begins their period of obligatory service.

Graduate Medical Education-1

Graduates of the School of Medicine are required to apply for PGY-1 internships in approved programs in teaching hospitals of their respective services. They can choose from a range of medical specialty areas including internal medicine, pediatrics, surgery, family medicine, neurology, neurosurgery, psychiatry, pathology, emergency medicine, orthopedics, otolaryngology, or obstetrics and gynecology. Those undecided about their specialty or who do not require a specialty internship may choose a transitional year internship, in which the intern rotates through several different medical services over the course of the year. In general, officers in the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army are selected for the full length of the specialty program before the PGY-1 year. Internships are competitive; thus, a graduate of the School of Medicine is not assured a first-choice internship in a particular service's teaching hospital.

Residency Training

Following the PGY-1, candidates not already selected for continuous training and seeking further specialty training are selected on a competitive basis for residency assignments depending on the needs of the medical departments. Graduates may be required to serve in operational assignments as general medical officers before becoming eligible for specialty or subspecialty training.

Service Obligations

The service obligation for the four-year undergraduate medical program is seven years of active duty plus six years of listing on the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) roster. (See the topic Service Obligation in the section Medical Student Status, Pay, and Benefits.)

No additional service obligation is incurred for PGY-1 year, and time spent in this training is creditable in computing eligibility for retirement. It is not, however, creditable toward satisfying the seven-year obligation incurred from undergraduate medical studies.

Time spent in a residency does not count toward satisfying the service obligation incurred from participation in the undergraduate medical program of the School of Medicine but is creditable in determining retirement eligibility.

In general, students who take residency training in service medical teaching facilities do not accrue an additional service obligation for that residency training if they currently have an existing service obligation equal to or greater than the length of the residency. Therefore, to complete PGY-1 year and a residency program and fulfill all payback requirements, including the initial obligation for medical school, the average graduate spends approximately 11 years on active duty after receiving the M.D. degree. (See summary below for undergraduate and graduate medical education payback requirements.)

**Summary of Training, Obligatory Service Incurred, and Service
Creditable Toward Retirement Eligibility**

Training	Years
Medical school	4
Internship	1
Residency (in a uniformed service medical facility)	3 (avg.)
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Total	8
Obligation	
Medical school	7 (+6 IRR)
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Total obligation	15 (avg.)
Total service minus 4 years of medical school	- 4
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Years of service creditable toward retirement	11

National Capital Consortium

The School of Medicine is a charter member of the National Capital Consortium, which includes Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Malcolm Grow Medical Center, and Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. The consortium sponsors 65 internships, residencies, and fellowships in virtually all major disciplines.

Trainees in these programs are frequently graduates of the School of Medicine and provide new graduates with invaluable mentorship, teaching, and role models in the local teaching hospitals. USU graduates in other military teaching hospitals provide comparable support to new trainees during rotations through their facilities.