

Medical CVs

Developing a Medical CV

Your CV is a building block for many aspects of career development, such as:

- Your own CPD
- Addition for job applications
- Career networking

In short, a CV is an advertisement for you. A good advert makes you want to know more about a product. In a CV, **you** are the product.

Getting Started

Developing your CV is often the most difficult and there are certain details that should always be included such as – personal details, education & employment history.

A key part of drafting your CV is aligning the skills and interests you have developed with the specific career options you are aiming to explore. Think hard about the skills you have developed from medical school, electives, your training so far, other work experience (paid and unpaid), even relevant hobbies and interests.

Focus on presenting the skills and attributes from your past experience which show evidence of your suitability for the specific role. For example:

- Specialty training – skills, aptitudes and experiences relevant to the person specification for the specialty
- Academic medicine – research experience, publications
- Portfolio careers – combined an interest from a similar or unrelated field.

If you are exploring several career options, you should tailor and create a CV for each, tailoring the evidence to match which can be found in the Job Description and Person Specification information

Key elements of a medical CV

- Personal details: name, address, telephone or email address. Details about age, family, marital status are unnecessary and are protected characteristics.
- GMC number and any other information relating to eligibility e.g. residency status, PLAB/IELTS results.
- Career plan/ambition: your career aim and how this job will fit into the plan
- Professional qualifications: usually in reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- Education: mention prizes, distinctions, electives, special study assignments
- Career experience: include job title and location in reverse chronological order. Give a sentence or two giving an overview of your role and responsibilities, Put more information about recent posts.
- Practical skills: Summarise specialty experience, also key technical/clinical skills.
- Additional courses.
- Research: plus any related publications and presentations.
- Teaching: to who and in what topics.
- Audit: include your role in the process, the outcome and quantifiable improvements.
- Management/Leadership: include roles outside work.
- Quality Improvement: projects you've been involved in or lead.
- Other relevant skills: non clinical skills e.g. language and particular IT skills.
- Interests: Include a couple of your interests that add value to your application.
- Referees: At least two and make sure you ask your referees beforehand.

Avoid long lists of posts, courses, presentations etc. Cluster and group items and include brief explanation or bullet points highlighting key points or achievements

Language and style

How you say something can be just as important as what you say. The same is true when writing a CV. You need to be positive, professional and enthusiastic in your CV.

- Choose words with an impact that will convey your ability to achieve. The best words to use are ACTION words. Examples are:-

Achieved	Managed	Produced
Persuaded	Presented	Organised
Implemented	Developed	Researched
Negotiated	Created	Conducted

- Start your sentences with these action words; don't overuse the word "I".
- Keep sentences short, avoid narrative. This will make your CV concise.
- Always use positive language. Consider your unique selling points.

Presentation tips

Presentation and layout also matter:

- The words "Curriculum Vitae" as a front page is not always necessary
- Avoid leaving too much white space on any page.
- Highlight key information at the beginning of every section, this draws the recruiting teams attention to the most important and up to date information.
- Keep the formatting such as tabs, indentation and bullet points in a consistent style and use a font that is easy on the reader's eye. Plain fonts such as Arial or Tahoma work well.
- Use emboldened type to highlight information, rather than capitals or underlining.
- Remember to keep the point size readable.

Medical CVs tend to be much longer than the 2-page document. An early career doctors CV should be no more than 3 – 4 pages and no longer than around 8 – 10 pages for higher trainees.

Personal Profile or Career Aim

This can be an excellent way to gain the attention of the recruiting team and to give the reader an idea of your career plan and future ambitions. It should project positivity and ambition for the next 5-6 years.

- The statement should be no more than two or three short sentences outlining what your career aim is, what you offer, what you are looking for now. This can be adapted to match different specialties or job applications.
- If you include a personal profile, ensure that the skills that you highlight are reflected throughout your CV.

If you are applying for work outside the UK, check the standard CV format for that country and adapt your CV accordingly. In the USA, for example, the emphasis is on a summary document and in some countries a photograph is expected; others expect a portfolio of supplementary evidence.

CVs in the established career path

Throughout your medical career you will have a wealth of work and life experience that can be valuable to future employers. If considering a change of career or specialty direction you should focus on the transferable skills gained in previous posts. Knowing how to map these to other opportunities is the key to meeting the shortlist. Consider all your roles and not necessarily your most recent experience.

You will still need to account for periods of absence.

However, you can create several headings which highlight the skills and qualities you want to apply in a new direction, then outline a key achievements and experiences for each e.g.

- Leadership and Management
- Research/Academic
- Project management
- Teaching/Education
- Multi-disciplinary work
- Types of patient care/contact relevant to the option you have in mind (e.g. emergency/chronic, older or younger patients etc)