

Rural Health Experience (RHE) Frequently Asked Questions

Is the RHE available in 2026?

Yes! The RHE Program is available in 2026. Please note the available dates for the RHE at some of our host sites in the RHE application and the RHE webpage: <https://ncrhp.uic.edu/programs/experiences/rural-health-experience/> These are the only dates that host sites are offering RHEs. If dates are not listed, then the host site is able to accept students at various times of the year but especially during winter and spring breaks of the college semester. Please keep these time frames in mind when sharing your availability in the RHE application.

The RHE takes at least four to eight weeks to plan the shadowing schedule. Please keep this time frame in mind when asked about your availability in the RHE application.

What will my days be like during the RHE?

Students spend the majority of their RHE shadowing a variety of health professionals in the hospital and/or surrounding community. These shadowing experiences include those of the students' disciplines as well as those that are not. This provides an opportunity to witness how interprofessional teams work together in a rural facility as well as how healthcare is delivered at multiple levels.

A typical day will begin at 8:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m., although some adjustments may be made depending on the rotation and other events available during your stay.

The RHE also provides opportunities for students to meet with hospital administration and/or human resources to discuss their professional interests and future opportunities at their site.

Where will I be staying?

Housing will only be provided to accepted students who do not live within 60 miles of the host site. The host sites will arrange housing which may include local apartments or hotels. Accepted students who are eligible for housing will receive detailed information on housing for their site in advance of the program.

Where will I get my meals?

Meals will be dependent upon the site. Some sites can offer in-house options while other sites may provide reimbursement or gift cards to locations within the community. Sometimes networking meals may be scheduled with administration or other hospital representatives. Accepted students are encouraged to budget for some additional costs for meals and other items to ensure that all preferences are met.

When will I complete my RHE?

Once a site has approved their match, students will be connected with their site contact(s) by email. Students will work with their site to schedule the dates of the RHE. Therefore, the schedule can be tailored to the needs of student. The majority of RHEs are scheduled Monday through Friday.

Please note that it can take up to eight weeks to schedule a RHE. Please keep this length of time in mind when entering your availability on the RHE application.

What should I wear?

Dress for your experience depends on the work environment. Plan to wear business casual attire unless notified otherwise. Scrubs may be available for certain rotations, so students who have these are welcome to bring them.

Examples of business casual attire include khakis and dress pants, button-up and/or collared shirts, knee-length skirts and dresses, and clean closed-toe shoes. No jeans, shorts, open-toed shoes, short dresses/skirts, tank tops, or t-shirts. Body tattoos must be covered and jewelry worn at a minimum.

Are there immunization requirements to complete a RHE?

Participating RHE hospitals may require immunization paperwork and other proof of recent vaccinations (including a recent COVID-19 vaccine and influenza shots). It is recommended that students plan for this accordingly in anticipation of acceptance into the program.