

ADDICTION MEDICINE

How to Get Started

in this new multispecialty subspecialty



What is an addiction medicine physician?

An addiction medicine physician is a physician trained and certified to provide comprehensive care for addiction and substance related disorders, including the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of such health conditions.

Who are the patients?

The addiction medicine physician cares for persons with addiction, for the individual with substance-related health conditions, for persons who manifest unhealthy substance use, and for family members whose health and functioning are affected by another's substance use or addiction. Co-occurring physical and psychiatric conditions are common and span a range of complexity.

What are the care settings?

Addiction medicine physicians are specifically trained in a wide range of prevention, evaluation and treatment modalities addressing substance use and addiction in ambulatory care settings, acute care and long-term care facilities, psychiatric settings, and residential facilities. Addiction medicine physicians work in clinical medicine, public health, educational, and research settings.

How would I practice?

The addiction medicine physician is a key member of the health care team and is trained to coordinate and provide consultation services for other physicians and to use community resources when appropriate. Some addiction medicine physicians limit their practice to patients with addiction or other patterns of unhealthy substance use. Others focus their practice on patients within their initial medical specialty who have substance-related health conditions.

How do I apply to study addiction medicine?

While completing medical school, you'll select a residency program at an accredited teaching hospital. These programs vary in length from 3 to 7 years, depending on your specialty. If you'd like to subspecialize in addiction medicine, you can choose from any of the 24 primary specialty residencies, though the majority of addiction medicine fellows are from family medicine or internal medicine residencies. After you complete your residency program, you are eligible to take your board certification exam.

Where should I apply for an addiction medicine fellowship?

Following your residency program, you can pursue additional specialized training in addiction medicine by applying for a fellowship at one of the more than 102 Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited programs, most of which are members of ACAAM.

How long is an addiction medicine fellowship?

The fellowship is one year in length and makes you eligible to apply for the addiction medicine certification exam offered by the American Board of Preventive Medicine.

Is there a need for addiction medicine physicians?

Yes. More than 100,000 American lives were reported lost to the overdose epidemic in the most recent annual data, and additional access to evidence-based care for those with substance use disorders is necessary. In fact, practice in areas of the highest need could qualify a physician to apply for a federal loan repayment program, easing the burden of medical debt on many providing this care.



Scan this code to access more information about addiction medicine training opportunities, finding and applying to fellowships, and fellowships by the numbers.

