

## Policy on Criminal Background Checks and Behavior that Might Impact on Continued Status at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPSOM) has a commitment to train competent and caring physicians who behave in a professional and ethical manner. Therefore, UPSOM has developed a policy regarding behavior that impacts on professionalism of the candidates being considered and accepted for admission. Full and prompt disclosure of all information about the applicant that may have bearing on the ability to become a caring and compassionate professional is expected.

Training at UPSOM requires rotations through various hospitals and medical facilities external to UPSOM, and such facilities may require a criminal background check, an Act 33/34/73 clearance, fingerprinting and in some institutions a drug screen to determine whether the student is qualified to do a rotation or to be admitted at that facility. Additionally, in order to become licensed, many states will inquire as to whether the applicant has been convicted of a misdemeanor, a felony, or a felonious or illegal act associated with alcohol and/or substance abuse.

Therefore, information is collected during the admissions process regarding unethical or illegal behavior.

### **AMCAS application**

The AMCAS application requires the applicant to indicate whether there has been any institutional action regarding unprofessional behavior, and provide an explanation.

AMCAS performs Criminal Background Checks (CBC) on all AMCAS applicants who indicate their application is to go to the UPSOM. CBC may be negative or positive for:

- Dishonorable discharge from the military
- Felony conviction
- Misdemeanor

### **The secondary application**

The secondary application contains a question asking each applicant to state whether he or she has a felony conviction. This question appears in the secondary application as below:

#### **Medical Malpractice Act of 1985 (Act 112 of 1985)**

**Effective January 1, 1986**

Section 22 provides that the State Board of Medical Education and Licensure, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, shall not issue a license or certificate to an applicant who has been convicted of a felony under the act of April 12, 1972 (P.L. 233, No. 64); known as the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; or of an offense under the laws of another jurisdiction that, if

committed in this Commonwealth, would be a felony under this act, unless certain qualifications have been met. Additional information may be obtained from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, State Board of Medical Education and Licensure, P.O. Box 2649, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649.

Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Senate Resolution (House of Representatives Concurring) No. 84, Session of 1985, the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine requires all applicants for admission to furnish the following information:

1. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? No
2. Have you ever pled guilty to a felony charge? No
3. Have you ever admitted guilt to a felony charge? No
4. Do you have a record of prison service? No
5. If you have answered "yes" to any of the above questions, please explain in the space below.

At the time of submission of secondary application, each applicant will be asked to indicate with a check mark that they agree to the below statement:

*I certify that all of the information contained in this application is factually correct, is honestly presented, and contains no significant omissions. If at a later date, it becomes clear that this is not true, I agree that the University may revoke any offer of admission it makes to me or dismiss me from the University.*

### **Consideration for admission to UPSOM**

Academic citations/infractions, institutional actions and positive CBC will be reviewed at the time of decision regarding invitation to interview but will not automatically preclude invitation to interview.

During interview with admissions personnel, further information will be gathered regarding either positive CBC or academic misbehavior if this is deemed appropriate. Additional information on outcomes of any adjudication may be requested in writing.

The UPSOM Admissions Committee, at the time of consideration of the candidate for admission, will be made aware of institutional actions and positive CBC and all information available concerning this matter. The UPSOM Admissions Committee members then will rank the candidate taking into consideration all aspects of the candidate's application.

### **Withdrawal of admission offer**

The admissions office must be informed promptly of any serious infraction including academic or legal actions sustained between the period of secondary application submission and matriculation. All accepted applicants are expected to notify the UPSOM Admissions Office immediately if charged with a felony or misdemeanor in the intervening period between acceptance and matriculation. Identification of inaccurate

information, misleading information, information reflecting poorly on the applicant's moral standards and/or omissions may also lead to reconsideration of the admissions decision.

A subcommittee consisting of the Associate Dean of Admissions, Assistant Dean of Admissions, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and a student representative will decide on whether the admission should be rescinded. The candidate will have the right to appeal to the decision of this committee. Such appeal will be submitted to the Dean of the medical school who will make the final decision.

### **At matriculation**

Any new information concerning felony, misdemeanors or unprofessional behavior subsequent to the AMCAS application must be revealed at this time. If new information concerning such activity comes to light, the admission may be revoked. This decision will be made by the above designated sub-committee. At the time of matriculation each matriculating student will be asked to sign the below statement.

*I attest that since the time of my application to UPSOM no further information has come to light which may influence the decision to admit me, including felony charges or misdemeanors.*

*Matriculation to UPSOM does not preclude hospitals and facilities from applying their own regulations toward students assigned to do rotations at such facilities. The UPSOM does not have control over the policies of such hospitals and medical facilities. Furthermore, I understand that a degree in medicine from UPSOM does not ensure that I will be able to obtain a license to practice medicine in any state where regulations might prohibit licensure*

### **After matriculation**

Any new information about felonies, misdemeanors, or use of illegal substances should be reported to the Office of Student Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh as soon as practical. This information would be reviewed by the Student Promotions Committee which has the authority to dismiss a student for unprofessional behavior.