

## **Family & Community Medicine Clerkship Survival Guide: Des Moines**

### **The Schedule**

This clerkship is split into two sections. Four weeks will be spent 1:1 with your assigned family medicine physician and two weeks will be spent at a Regional Medical Education Center (RMEC). Throughout the entire six weeks, one afternoon (usually Wednesdays) are reserved for educational sessions you attend either in person or remotely via Zoom. These will be either lectures or CBL sessions led by faculty in Iowa City or at the RMEC site where you are assigned. You should prepare for the CBL sessions beforehand by completing the assigned readings and answering the associated questions.

During your two weeks at the RMEC in Des Moines, you will be paired with one or two family medicine physicians that you will spend most of your time with. At the RMEC sites you may also work and interact with residents. The typical schedule with your preceptor is 8 am – Noon and 1 pm – 5pm. You will also spend one full day in a palliative care or hospice setting. You will meet with a social worker and the director of the Organ Donor Network for central Iowa. One or two additional half-days will be spent at other community health sites in the Des Moines area (e.g., PT/OT, On with Life, Iowa Department of Public Health, State Medical Examiner's Office, etc.) You will also have one or two Tuesday evenings where you are scheduled to work at a free medical clinic in West Des Moines where you will see patients and present them to the physician volunteering that night.

During the four weeks with your assigned family medicine preceptor, you will follow their schedule, typically 8-12 and 1-5. You will also do any professional activities your physician participates in, such as visiting nursing homes or working in the emergency room. A nice thing about this clerkship is that you also get a half day per week off clinical duties for self-study.

### **The Test**

Shelf Exam for Family Medicine is shorter than your other shelf exams, with 90 questions in 2 hours and 15 minutes. You will take this on the last Friday of your six weeks. The difficult aspect of this exam is the wide range of questions you can be asked—basically every specialty will be covered, including pediatrics, gynecology, preventative medicine, chronic conditions, etc. There is a lot of overlap with the internal medicine shelf (outpatient questions), so studying for one helps with the other.

### **Most Useful Resources**

There are no textbooks or resources provided for this clerkship. In Amboss, you can create Q-bank sessions for the Family Medicine Shelf Exam (1-3 hammers are appropriate difficulty). You can also do the Family medicine questions on Uworld. Doing these exam-type questions seemed

to be the most helpful in my experience. There are also practice NBME shelf exams available which provide a good measure to see how you are progressing in your studies.

You can also do extra Aquifer cases if you prefer that style. Pretest Family Medicine is a book you can also purchase which includes 500 family medicine board style questions with answers and explanations if you would like to do more questions. Additionally, the Family Medicine Shelf tagged Anki cards in the anking deck are helpful if you like flashcards.