

WICHE's PSEP

Professional Student Exchange Program



Future
healthcare
professional ...

the West
needs you!

*Obtaining a professional
degree in healthcare
can be expensive.
Let us help make it
more affordable.*



Western Interstate Commission
for Higher Education

PROFESSIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been providing Western residents with *affordable access to the healthcare professions* for more than 55 years through its Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP).

If you enroll through WICHE's PSEP, you pay reduced tuition at out-of-state public and private institutions. More than 14,000 professionals have received their education through PSEP, most in the healthcare professions. They include **dentists, physicians (allopathic and osteopathic), physician assistants, physical therapists, occupational therapists, optometrists, pharmacists, podiatrists, and veterinarians.**

Here's how it works

Healthcare workforce needs are at an all-time high, regionally and nationally. State policymakers are looking for the smartest investment of limited tax dollars, and sharing educational resources within the West is a fiscally responsible approach. Given fiscal pressures and other factors, it doesn't always make sense for a state to create its own program in certain healthcare professions.

Years ago, our Western states formed the Western Regional Education Compact and agreed to share higher education resources in the region through WICHE.

WICHE states that use PSEP have discovered they get an excellent return on investment when they appropriate funds to educate students at other institutions within the 15-state WICHE region. Those funds are administered through WICHE's PSEP and are sent to the enrolling institutions. The student's home state pays a "support fee" for the student's seat; this fee is negotiated between WICHE and the cooperating programs.

If your state is a member of WICHE and does not offer a healthcare education program at an in-state public institution, there's a good chance that your state can help you through WICHE's PSEP. Your state may also provide support through PSEP in a healthcare field that is only offered at a private institution located within the state.

How do I apply?

- ▶ **Check the chart at right to determine if your home state supports your healthcare profession.** Please note that state support and program participation are subject to change by legislative or administrative action on an annual basis.
- ▶ **Apply directly to your home state, and become "certified."** This means you're a bona fide resident of your home state, eligible to compete for WICHE support (which is provided by your home state tax dollars). State residency requirements vary across the West. Visit our Website for your state office's contact information.



- ▶ **Complete the certification process before October 15 of the year preceding admission.** Most states will not accept late applications; consult with your state for details.
- ▶ **Apply to the participating schools of your choice.** When applying for admission, indicate that you have applied for WICHE certification. You are subject to the application deadlines and academic requirements established by each school. Many programs give preferential consideration to WICHE applicants. For a current list of cooperating WICHE programs in your field, visit our Website.
- ▶ **Inform your state office of all schools to which you are seeking admission.** Immediately notify your state office when you receive offers of admission and when you accept an offer at a participating school.
- ▶ **Formally decline offers of admission at schools where you do not intend to enroll.** We encourage you to decline offers in a timely manner, as a courtesy to your fellow applicants who are waiting for an offer.

Once you are funded through PSEP:

- ▶ **Remain enrolled as a full-time student in good academic standing for the duration of the program.**
- ▶ **Maintain your home state residency for the duration of your studies.**

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Supported Fields of Study by State (subject to change)

	DENT	MED	O T	OPT	OSTEO	PHARM	P T	P A	POD	VETMED
Alaska	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	
Arizona	●		●	●	●			●		●
Colorado				●						
Hawaii	●		●	●		●	●			●
Idaho				●						
Montana	●	●	●	●	●				●	●
Nevada				●		●		●		●
New Mexico	●									●
North Dakota	●			●						●
Utah				●					●	●
Washington				●	●					
Wyoming	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●

- ▶ **Remain in contact with your home state office.**
Notify your state office immediately of any address, phone, email or enrollment status changes. Many states require that you sign annual contracts to maintain funding, and they need current contact information to reach you.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Can I apply for PSEP support if I am already enrolled?

A: A few states accept applications from students who are already enrolled in a professional program. However, new students always receive first priority. Each state has its own regulations, so check with your home state directly for details. Visit www.wiche.edu/psep for contact information.

Q: If I am “certified” by my state and accepted by a cooperating program, do I automatically receive financial assistance?

A: No. Each state determines how many new students it can assist each year. If there are more applicants with offers of admission than state funds available to support the students, your state will ask WICHE to conduct a ranking of applicants to determine who is most qualified.

Q: How does a state determine which of the accepted applicants receives assistance?

A: Most states choose the “most qualified among the applicants with offers.” WICHE asks cooperating schools to confidentially rank all accepted students

from a given state; that information is compiled by WICHE headquarters’ staff in the form of a weighted ranking. The highest ranked applicants are the first to be offered WICHE support. The process is different for applicants seeking enrollment in veterinary medicine. For complete details, see our Website.

Q: How does the veterinary medicine selection process differ from the other healthcare fields?

A: For all fields except veterinary medicine, WICHE-certified applicants receive their admissions offers before they know whether or not they will be supported through PSEP. In veterinary medicine, however, the opposite is true. Our participating schools adopted a “cooperative admissions procedure,” which identifies the number of certified applicants to receive WICHE support, based on anticipated legislative appropriations. Then the top-ranked candidates receive WICHE-sponsored offers of admission from the cooperating colleges of veterinary medicine. For complete details, see our Website.

Q: If I am selected for WICHE funding, how much will I pay in tuition?

A: To calculate your exact tuition charges after your PSEP support, contact your enrolling institution. Keep in mind that the “support fee” funds for each WICHE PSEP student are sent directly to the enrolling institution, not to each student.

- ▶ If you are enrolled at a public institution, you will pay resident tuition, although there are two

exceptions, described below. The institution receives the support fee funds, helping to cover the tuition differential that a nonresident would normally have to pay. (Public schools receive state tax dollars to supplement the cost of their residents' education. Since nonresidents don't supply these tax dollars, your state helps to make up the tuition differential.)

EXCEPTIONS:

- (1) If you are enrolled in a "self-funded" program at a public institution, where there is no difference between resident and nonresident tuition, then you will pay the balance of the full tuition minus the support fee.
 - (2) If you are a pharmacy student enrolled at a public institution, the enrolling program may charge you the balance of the support fee minus nonresident tuition; this is because the pharmacy support fee is lower and is not currently set to cover tuition differentials at public institutions.
- ▶ If you are enrolled at a private institution, you will pay the balance of private tuition minus the support fee. To find out what current support fee amounts are, visit our Website.

Q: Am I required to repay the state for my support?

A: Many of our states have a contractual "service payback" obligation, whereby you must return to your home state after graduation and practice your profession for a designated number of years. If you do not return, you must reimburse the support and pay interest penalties, as required by your state. Contact your home state certifying office for details.

Q: Am I eligible to receive WICHE support if I have another scholarship?

A: It depends. If you have a scholarship that covers the full amount of your tuition (a military or National Health Service Corps scholarship, for example), then you are not eligible to receive WICHE PSEP support. If your scholarship covers any balance of tuition that you owe after your WICHE support, or educational expenses, then you can keep your WICHE support in



combination with other awards. If you are unsure, contact your home state certifying office or WICHE's central office to discuss your situation.

If your healthcare profession is not offered through PSEP, you still have options!

If your healthcare program is not offered through PSEP, we encourage you to learn more about WICHE's **Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)**. WRGP currently offers residents of all 15 WICHE states access to more than 50 high-quality healthcare-related degrees (at the master's and doctoral level) offered by some 40 public institutions. If you enroll in a cooperating program outside of your home state through WRGP, you pay resident tuition. The programs offered include a wide variety of

graduate nursing degrees, public health, mental health and psychology, audiology and speech pathology, biomedical informatics, and more. WRGP also offers a post-professional doctorate in physical therapy, as well as a master's in dental hygiene to train future faculty members.

Visit wrgp.wiche.edu for more information.

For more information

...and a link to your state's PSEP application, go to www.wiche.edu/psep and **apply directly to your home state office**. Remember, to be considered for WICHE support, you must **apply by October 15**, the year prior to enrollment. Most states do not accept late applications.

Your home state office is your best information resource. However, for general information you can email us at info-sep@wiche.edu or call us at 303.541.0270.

www.wiche.edu/psep

- Alaska • Arizona • California* • Colorado • Hawaii
Idaho • Montana • Nevada • New Mexico
North Dakota • Oregon* • South Dakota*
Utah • Washington • Wyoming

* Institutions in these states enroll WICHE students through PSEP, however, these states do not fund their residents through PSEP at this time.

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