

# American Medical College Application Service<sup>®</sup> (AMCAS<sup>®</sup>) Work and Activities Experience Type: Community Health Advocacy

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The Social Justice/Advocacy experience type has been renamed Community Health Advocacy. This change provides clearer emphasis on action-based contributions to community and public health, while maintaining the original intent of recognizing advocacy-related experiences.

## **Purpose**

The Community Health Advocacy experience type provides you with an opportunity to describe sustained efforts that contribute to improving community health and public health. This category reflects the professional responsibility of physicians to engage in activities that strengthen the health and wellbeing of the communities they serve.

## **What is a Community Health Advocacy experience?**

A Community Health Advocacy experience is one in which you have actively worked to influence, support, or advance conditions that improve community or population health. These experiences are characterized by initiative, sustained engagement, and a focus on impact rather than participation alone. They emphasize intentional efforts to improve community or public health outcomes beyond individual or episodic service.

## **How does this differ from other Work and Activities experience types?**

- Community Service (Medical or Non-Medical) typically reflects direct service or volunteerism with immediate, individual-level impact. Community Health Advocacy emphasizes efforts to influence systems, policies, or conditions that affect community or population health more broadly.
- Leadership captures roles focused on managing people, programs, or organizations. Community Health Advocacy is used when the primary purpose of the experience is advancing community or public health outcomes.
- Teaching or Tutoring focuses on instructional roles. Educational activities may be included under Community Health Advocacy when they are part of a broader effort to advance community health.

You are encouraged to select the experience type that best reflects the primary focus and impact of your involvement.

### **How can I determine if this experience type applies to me?**

Use this category for experiences when your work:

- Improved or aimed to improve access, conditions, or outcomes related to community or public health.
- Addressed a need affecting a group or population, rather than an individual.
- Contributed to changes in systems, programs, or access to care.
- Involved sustained effort, initiative, or a defined role in advancing that work.

This category is best used when the primary impact of your work influenced broader community or public health outcomes, rather than individual-level service.

### **Why is this experience type included?**

Medical schools recognize that future physicians have a professional responsibility to participate in activities that improve communities and advance public health. This responsibility is reflected in established principles of medical ethics. Community Health Advocacy provides a structured way for you to describe experiences that reflect this commitment and your engagement with community-level health challenges.

### **Example to clarify the distinction:**

- Volunteering at a clinic providing direct patient care → Community Service
- Organizing or leading an effort to expand access to that clinic or improve how patients receive care → Community Health Advocacy

### **Examples of Community Health Advocacy experiences**

Community Health Advocacy encompasses a broad range of active efforts focused on improving community or public health outcomes. Examples may include advocating for improved access to health resources or services; public health education or awareness campaigns; policy- or systems-focused initiatives related to health care delivery; community-based programs addressing health conditions or factors that affect health outcomes; or organized efforts to improve health outcomes for specific populations.