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101 W. Eighth Ave., Spokane, WA 99204
509-474-3382

Pathology Associates Medical Laboratories
110 W. Cliff Ave., Spokane, WA 99204
509-755-8798

Inland Northwest Blood Center
210 W. Cataldo Ave., Spokane, WA 99210
509-624-8591

Northwest Hospital Alliance, Laboratories
Benewah Community Hospital - St. Maries, ID
Bonner General Health - Sandpoint, ID
Boundary Community Hospital - Bonners Ferry, ID
Kootenai Health - Coeur d’Alene, ID
Shoshone Medical Center - Kellogg, ID
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About Sacred Heart

Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center & Children’s Hospital (PSHMC) is the second-largest hospital in Washington state, with 657 licensed beds. Founded in 1886 by the Sisters of Providence, PSHMC is a non-for-profit Catholic hospital. In addition to our 161-bed Children’s Hospital — with more than 90 pediatric subspecialists and a Level IV NICU — the Medical Center features comprehensive cardiac programs, a robotic center for minimally invasive surgery, a certified stroke center, inpatient psychiatric care and more. As the only Level II Trauma Center in the Inland Northwest, Sacred Heart provides many services often found only in university settings, including a heart, kidney and pancreas transplant program, a world-class research department, medical residency programs and more. Its service area includes about 1.7 million people, and it is Spokane’s largest private employer. The Medical Center is accredited by The Joint Commission.

Sacred Heart is part of Providence Health Care (PHC.org), a regional care delivery system that includes four hospitals, several urgent care facilities, a growing medical group, and a variety of outpatient and skilled nursing services.

Mission Statement

As people of Providence, we reveal God’s love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through our compassionate service.
The Department of Laboratory Medicine at Sacred Heart is accredited by the College of American Pathologists and is licensed as a medical test site by the Washington State Department of Health. The School of Medical Laboratory Science is accredited through the:

National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)
5600 N. River Road
Suite 720, Rosemont, IL 60018-5119

NAACLS conducts a periodic comprehensive review of the Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) Program. For more information on NAACLS, visit NAACLS.org on the web or call 773-714-8880.

The Department of Laboratory Medicine at Sacred Heart operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and performs approximately 550 procedures, handling more than 2.9 million patient samples each year. The staff includes 250 employees: pathologists and other physicians, doctoral scientists, medical laboratory scientists, medical laboratory technicians, cytotechnologists, histotechnicians, phlebotomists, laboratory assistants and other support staff.

Program History

As part of the Department of Laboratory Medicine, the School of Medical Laboratory Science was initially accredited in May of 1932 by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists. At that time, the program accepted students with two years of college education prior to the clinical year. In the early 1950s, the program changed to a 3 + 1 program (accepting students in their senior year of college) and in 1979 it became a 4 + 1 program (requiring a baccalaureate degree prior to the clinical year). Since 2001, the school also has accepted 3 + 1 students from established affiliated universities that grant the degree upon completion.

Program Philosophy

The Medical Laboratory Science program at Providence Sacred Heart is designed for the student who wishes to become a skilled, competent medical laboratory scientist capable of leadership in the profession of medical laboratory science.

We believe students learn most effectively when they are engaged learners and when faculty help facilitate learning experiences. We believe learning can be measured by behavioral changes in the students, who, together with faculty, share in evaluation of the education.

Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center is founded on the Christian principles of providing compassionate care with respect for the dignity of each person, including the poor and vulnerable. The program is open to all qualified students, regardless of race, color, creed, disability, national origin or gender.
Program Mission Statement

Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center’s School of Medical Laboratory Science is committed to providing superior education to prepare competent medical laboratory scientists with the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to make positive contributions in the profession of medical laboratory science.

Program Goals

- Select the most qualified students capable of being successful in the educational program and in the medical laboratory profession
- Provide a current curriculum utilizing expert personnel and state-of-the-art resources
- Provide a learning environment for students to gain sufficient entry-level knowledge and experience to perform, interpret and evaluate procedures competently in the clinical laboratory
- Enable students to gain knowledge and skills in education, research, and management theory and practice
- Instill in students a high level of professionalism, a desire for lifelong learning and a desire to advocate for the medical laboratory science profession through professional society membership and participation
- Promote the core values of the Medical Center as they apply to patient care and relationships within the workplace: Respect, Compassion, Justice, Excellence and Stewardship
- Evaluate students, faculty and program on a regular basis for the purpose of program development and improvement
- Meet the employment needs for medical laboratory scientists, primarily at Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center, Pathology Associates Medical Laboratories and the Inland Northwest Blood Center; in addition, meet the employment needs of other local and regional health care facilities that have a collaborative relationship with the program
- Prepare students to successfully pass the national certification exam upon completion of the program
- Comply with requirements for school accreditation by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences

Program Outcomes

A systematic review of the program is ongoing and includes input from students, instructors, employers, graduates, ASCP BOC exam results, an advisory group, clinical affiliates, comprehensive exams, NAACLS accreditation results, attrition rates, graduation rates and employment statistics. Our program prides itself in continuous quality improvement and is recognized by many employers for the outstanding quality of our graduates who enter the workforce.

For outcomes for the past three years, please visit the PSHMC MLS Program website at PHC.org. In the Facts & Stats section there are current ASCP Board of Certification pass rates, student attrition rates and employment statistics.
Career Entry Skills*

At career entry, the medical laboratory scientist will:

A. Perform the full range of clinical laboratory tests in areas such as chemistry, clinical hematology/hemostasis, immunology, immunohematology/transfusion medicine, microbiology, urine and body fluid analysis, laboratory operations and other emerging diagnostics

B. Play a role in the development and evaluation of test systems and interpretive algorithms

C. Have diverse responsibilities in areas of analysis and clinical decision-making; regulatory compliance with applicable regulations; and education and quality assurance/performance improvement wherever laboratory testing is researched, developed or performed

D. Possess basic knowledge and skills in:
   1. Application of safety and governmental regulations and standards as applied to clinical laboratory science
   2. Principles and practices of professional conduct and the significance of continuing professional development
   3. Communication skills sufficient to serve the needs of patients, the public and members of the health care team
   4. Principles and practices of administration and supervision as applied to clinical laboratory science
   5. Educational methodologies and terminology sufficient to train/educate users and providers of laboratory services
   6. Principles and practices of clinical study design, implementation and dissemination of results

* Preamble, Unique Standards Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS), NAACLS, 2012

Course Descriptions

The courses in the MLS Program include Chemistry & Urinalysis, Hematology, Immunology, Immunohematology, Laboratory Practice and Microbiology. For complete course descriptions and details please refer to the program website, PHC.org.
Program Description

Professional Experience

The program is 12 months long, Monday through Friday, and begins in July each year. Formal classroom instruction and student labs occur during the first four months in a fully equipped laboratory where each student has a dedicated workbench, double-headed microscope and all necessary supplies to learn to perform laboratory testing. The remaining eight months of instruction are devoted to hands-on experience in the clinical departments and student laboratory with one day a week dedicated to advanced lecture topics and reviews. Medical laboratory scientists, pathologists, doctoral scientists and other experts provide the instruction. The professional year allows for extensive experience with state-of-the-art instrumentation and technology, along with a diverse spectrum of patient samples utilized throughout the clinical laboratory.

Students participate in a wide variety of clinical experiences in the major disciplines of microbiology, hematology, chemistry and immunohematology. Additional rotations and experiences include immunology, coagulation, parasitology, mycobacteriology, mycology, virology, molecular biology, serology, phlebotomy, management and research.

Clinical rotations are provided at Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center, Pathology Associates Medical Laboratories, the Inland Northwest Blood Center and the Northwest Hospital Alliance laboratories.

Clinical Partners

Pathology Associates Medical Laboratories (PAML), a major national reference laboratory, is a ministry of Providence Health and Services. Together, Sacred Heart and PAML collaborate to provide comprehensive laboratory services to patients, physicians, hospitals and businesses requiring lab testing throughout the nation. For more information, visit PAML.com.

The Inland Northwest Blood Center (INBC) is a clinical affiliate of the School of Medical Laboratory Science. The majority of the immunohematology instruction takes place in the dedicated student laboratory with additional clinical experience at the INBC (INBC2.org) or the Northwest Hospital Alliance laboratories (NWHospitalAlliance.org).

Four students per year are selected to participate in clinical rotations at the Northwest Hospital Alliance laboratories. These five hospital laboratories are clinical affiliates of the Sacred Heart School of Medical Laboratory Science: Benewah Community Hospital, Bonner General Health, Boundary Community Hospital, Kootenai Health and Shoshone Medical Center. Clinical rotations are provided in the major disciplines of these hospital laboratories for students who have an interest in rural medicine and/or living in rural communities.
Attendance

Absenteism and tardiness in the health care professions have the potential to reduce both quality of patient care and productivity of the department. Because the clinical year is very intense and students are expected to be committed, attendance and punctuality are mandatory and strictly enforced.

The academic requirements for the Medical Laboratory Science program make it necessary for students to plan a specific number of hours for study each day; consequently, work schedules must be limited. Part-time employment may be available in the laboratory. Employment should not interfere with clinical laboratory rotations.

Rotation times vary to ensure quality education. Students must be able to adjust to the variations in schedules, including some early morning hours and some evening hours. Routine schedules do not include weekends or late night hours.

Grades

Student progress is evaluated throughout the year with written quizzes, exams, practicals and performance evaluations. Examinations are given for both didactic material and clinical experience with comprehensive exams given at the end of the clinical year. Grades are reported each semester/quarter to affiliated universities for 3 + 1 students. A final transcript of grades is provided to the students and may also be provided to universities upon request.

Evaluations

Students receive verbal and written feedback frequently during the professional year. Each student participates in the evaluation of clinical and didactic instruction. Constructive feedback is promoted, as program and instruction revision are ongoing and considered a critical component of the quality indicators of the program.

Certification Exam

Graduates from the Sacred Heart School of Medical Laboratory Science receive a certificate of completion. This certificate, in addition to the baccalaureate degree, qualifies the graduate to take the ASCP national certification exam through the Board of Certification, a branch of the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP.org). Some states may also require a licensure examination for employment of medical laboratory scientists.

Job Placement

Although Providence Sacred Heart School of Medical Laboratory Science does not guarantee placement for its graduates, the School does act as a contact point for employers. Students often receive several employment offers before graduation. Career opportunities are plentiful nationwide for medical laboratory scientists. Graduates of the program work in hospital laboratories, reference laboratories, physician offices/clinics, transfusion centers and in research, industry, laboratory information systems, management and education.
Admission Requirements

Career Preparation

To prepare for a career in medical laboratory science, a student must have a bachelor’s degree and clinical education from a NAACLS-accredited medical laboratory science program. Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center School of Medical Laboratory Science offers both a 3 + 1 and 4 + 1 route for admission:

In the 3 + 1 route, students complete a minimum of three years of specifically defined prerequisite courses at an affiliated college or university (contact program for a current listing). The student then seeks admission to the School of Medical Laboratory Science for the final year of education. In this route students will receive a Bachelor of Science degree from their university upon successful completion of the clinical internship. The 3 + 1 students most often apply to the program at the beginning of their junior year of college.

A student who elects the 4 + 1 route must first complete a bachelor's degree at a college or university, including the designated prerequisite courses. The student then seeks admission into the year of clinical internship at the Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center School of Medical Laboratory Science. 4 + 1 students most often apply at the beginning of their senior year of college, but can also apply after earning their bachelor's degree.

Upon completion of the program, both the 3 + 1 and the 4 + 1 routes qualify the student to take the national certification exam, which is required for employment.

Academics

Applicants must have a minimum 2.7 cumulative grade point average with emphasis on high grades in the sciences. Grades of 3.0 and above are most competitive in the application process. Minimum prerequisites include:

Chemistry
A minimum of 16 semester credits (or 24 quarter credits) that must include an upper-division organic chemistry and/or biochemistry course.*

Biological Sciences
A minimum of 16 semester credits (or 24 quarter credits) that must include general microbiology, immunology and medical microbiology* (or pathogenic bacteriology).

Mathematics
One course of mathematics is required; statistics is recommended. Remedial mathematics will not satisfy the math requirement.

*Note: The upper-division organic chemistry or biochemistry course and a microbiology course must be current (taken within the past seven years). Challenge or proficiency examinations scheduled by the student and administered by the college will fulfill this requirement or formally updating the course work with a grade of “B” or better.
The content of chemistry, biological sciences and math courses must be acceptable toward a major in those fields or in medical laboratory science, or certified by the college or university as equivalent. Survey courses do not qualify as fulfillment of chemistry and biological science prerequisites.

In addition to the minimum prerequisite courses, any of the following courses are encouraged and will enhance the student's preparation for medical laboratory science:

- Biochemistry (beyond minimum requirement)
- Cell biology
- Clinical chemistry
- Clinical diagnosis
- Epidemiology
- Genetics
- Hematology
- Human anatomy and physiology
- Instrumentation
- Medical terminology
- Microbial physiology
- Molecular biology
- Mycology
- Organic chemistry (beyond minimum requirement)
- Parasitology
- Quantitative analysis
- Statistics
- Virology

Proficiency in basic computer applications such as data entry, word processing, email communication and internet functions is expected.

Non-academic skills

A personal interview is required to evaluate the applicant's professional goals, judgment, potential for success, interpersonal skills and communication skills required for the profession. The interview also provides applicants an opportunity to assess the Medical Center and instructional resources. Meeting minimum qualifications does not guarantee an interview.

Three references are required from professors, university advisers and/or employers.

Any previous laboratory or medical-related experience, whether paid or voluntary, is encouraged.

Essential Functions

Students must be able to perform the following functions while in the program:

- Emotional stability: Able to alter plans/routines when unexpected stressful situations or multiple interruptions occur; able to do this without projecting stress/frustration that could adversely affect the work environment; able to act responsibly and safely with interruptions and/or stressful situations

- Communicate effectively (verbally and in writing) with laboratory and hospital staff, as well as patients and other clients

- Discriminate color and fluorescent reactions of special stains and chemical reactions

- Good hand/eye coordination

- Near visual acuity is necessary to read detailed instructions and to prepare systems

- Flexibility and range of motion required for varied tasks

- Able to lift 5 to 10 pounds

- Able to hear intercom, phones, alarms on instruments and normal conversation

- Able to perform repetitive motions

- Able to sit at a microscope for extended periods of time

- Able to work in required PPE (personal protective equipment) for at least three to four hours at a time

Students may be exposed to infectious diseases and chemical irritants. Protective clothing and safety gear are provided and required to be used.
Application Procedure

How to Apply

1. All information can be accessed online at [PHC.org>Spokane Medical Education and Residency Programs>Medical Laboratory Science Program](#). (Read the information provided on the website to ensure you meet the minimum requirements prior to applying). The application deadline is Dec. 1 of each year. Complete the electronic application form on the website.

2. Reference forms will be electronically mailed by the program to the references listed in your application; supporting letters from these individuals may also be uploaded at that time. Please communicate this to the individuals you have listed as your references.

3. Request official transcripts to be sent directly to the School of Medical Laboratory Science from all colleges and universities attended:

   School of Medical Laboratory Science
   Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center
   101 W. Eighth Ave.
   Spokane, WA 99204

4. Applicants with completed files will be screened and approximately 40 will be selected for an interview. Meeting the minimum requirements does not automatically grant an interview. Interviews are conducted on specific dates in November, December and early January.

International students with education obtained outside of the U.S. must submit a transcript evaluation performed by an acceptable agency. A current list of international evaluation agencies is maintained at [ASCP.org](#). Select: Board of Certification>Apply>Documentation>Document and Verify your academic education. Near the end of the page is a link to a PDF for acceptable evaluation agencies for foreign transcripts. The MLS program does not sponsor student visas. Program participants must be legally authorized to live and attend school in the United States.
Acceptance Criteria

Students are selected on the basis of:

1. Cumulative grade point average
2. Biology, chemistry and math grade point averages
3. Curriculum preparation/additional related coursework
4. Personal interview
5. Communication skills
6. Interpersonal skills
7. Professionalism
8. Letters of recommendation
9. Related work or volunteer experience, and
10. Ability to accomplish essential functions of the program with reasonable accommodations if needed.

Class size is limited to 16 students selected in February each year. Classes begin in July.

Regional applicants and those who have attended universities in the Northwest may be given preference in the selection process.
General Information

Housing

Housing is the responsibility of the student. Nearby housing is available in apartments and houses. Rentals average approximately $500 to $700 per month.

Tuition and Fees

A tuition of $5,000 is charged to the 4 + 1 students for the year. Students enrolled in affiliated universities as 3 + 1 students pay tuition to their respective universities rather than the program; the university then reimburses the program for the student's share of tuition. Students purchase textbooks and other supplies, totaling approximately $900. There is a nonrefundable acceptance fee of $500, which is applied toward the student's application fee for the national certification exam. As part of the application process, students pay a $35 fee. All fees are subject to change; check our website for current information.

Refund Policy

The student acceptance fee and application fee are nonrefundable. Tuition is fully refundable until July 15. After July 15, tuition is nonrefundable. Textbook expenses may be refunded based on the return policies of the publisher. Students wishing to withdraw from the program should submit a written statement giving the effective date of separation and the reason for withdrawal to the program director.

Financial Aid

Scholarships ranging from $300 to $2,500 are available from medical laboratory science professional organizations, Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center & Children’s Hospital Foundation and the Blood Center Foundation of the Inland Northwest. The School of Medical Laboratory Science does not participate in federal student aid programs. 4 + 1 students generally do not need to pay on existing student loans while in the program if the loans can be put in forbearance. Students entering the program through a 3 + 1 university affiliation may qualify for federal financial aid through their university.

Health Services

Although health insurance is not provided, students do have access to the health care services available through Sacred Heart's Employee Health Service department. These services are provided at no charge:

- Tuberculosis test
- Color blindness test
- Vaccinations if needed (MMR, chicken pox, hepatitis B, Tdap, meningococcal)
- Flu shot

In addition, the Medical Center's Caregiver Assistance Plan is available to students. This includes professional counseling for issues such as anxiety, marital, financial, substance abuse, stress-related problems, etc.

Dress Code

Attire should be appropriate for health care professionals. Generally conservative and professional clothing is worn; scrubs are reserved for those working in direct patient care areas. A lab coat must be worn at all times when in contact with patients, laboratory specimens or reagents. Lab coats are provided and laundered by the Medical Center. As a safety precaution, no open-toed or canvas shoes are allowed in the clinical laboratory. Hair shoulder length or longer must be pulled back at all times in the laboratory or when on phlebotomy rounds.
Contact Information

For questions regarding the School of Medical Laboratory Science, contact:

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Program Director
School of Medical Laboratory Science
Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center & Children's Hospital
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Spokane, WA 99204
509-474-3382 or email Cynthia.Hamby@providence.org
PHC.org

The faculty and administration of the School of Medical Laboratory Science reserve the right to change program content and content of this publication without notification.
OUR MISSION
As people of Providence, we reveal God's love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through our compassionate service.

CORE VALUES
Respect, Compassion, Justice, Excellence, Stewardship

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