Patient Advocacy Certificate
Launch a rewarding new career helping individuals and families navigate the complex health care system—become a Patient Advocate.
Patient advocates are the guiding lights in an ever-changing healthcare system, handling any number of logistical, financial and communication aspects of hospital and medical care. This unique and growing role is designed to alleviate the confusion for patients and families, so they can focus on what’s most important: health and wellbeing.

This in-depth program will equip students with the knowledge and skillset to pursue a career in patient advocacy and navigation.

“The role of a patient advocate

Sometimes these four simple words can relieve stress and confusion. Patient advocacy is all about supporting the patient experience. As our healthcare system grows in complexity, hospitals, insurance companies and healthcare providers are recognizing the demand for this position. Patients are preoccupied with the emotional burdens of their medical conditions, and they need someone to help them navigate through insurance claims, treatment options, and the financial burdens – someone who speaks that language and whom they can trust.

A day in the life of a patient advocate can include any number of these activities:

**Patient Navigation**
- Facilitate communication between medical professionals and patients
- Facilitate access to care and locate doctors and specialists
- Assist families with the resources they need to make critical decisions
- Schedule, coordinate and attend appointments with various healthcare providers
- Identify resources for interpretation services

**Navigate Insurance**
- Help file insurance claims
- Manage or negotiate hospital bills
- Offer information on billing, procedures and policies
- Provide information so the patient understands their health and financial benefits

**Resolve Issues**
- Facilitate communication and address concerns between patient and medical team
- Provide information on federal regulations and guidelines with regard to privacy and patient rights
- Collect and report data on patient issues, make recommendations for change and ensure safe, quality care

**NAVIGATE. CONNECT. CARE.**

**UCLA Extension’s Patient Advocacy Certificate**

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Considering the constantly evolving landscape of healthcare, this program is ideal for both entry-level and mid-level patient advocates. Coursework is updated based on the latest government policies and practices. The program provides a broad-based, fundamental knowledge required by a patient advocate.

Students who complete the certificate program will learn:

- Fundamentals of the U.S. healthcare system; including common issues in patient advocacy
- To advise and support patients with their care plans
- To address and resolve complaints involving medical professionals and insurance companies
- Best practices as they are applied to legal and financial issues within the health care system
- Language and skills to communicate with health care professionals
- Compassionate communication and active listening skills to work effectively and empathetically with patients and families
What do patients need most in the complex health care system? You.

The program is available entirely online or on-site, and you have the option of taking a combination of both these formats to customize the program to your schedule and learning preferences.

The program was developed by a team of academics and seasoned health care professionals to educate and ground students in the necessary fundamentals and specialized skills of this emerging area of health care.

Would I be a good candidate for this program?

Many students who find success in this program come from health care, legal or insurance industry backgrounds. However, anyone who has a passion to help others with the logistical aspects of health care is an ideal candidate.

There are nuances in a patient advocate’s work, many of which are focused around ensuring the patient is receiving all the support he/she needs at a critical and sensitive time. This requires a great deal of empathy, caring, and patience – but also persistence, focus and the ability to persevere through trying situations. The best patient advocates are emotionally intelligent, excellent communicators and like to solve problems – on a professional and interpersonal level.

The pre-requisites for the Patient Advocacy Certificate are a Bachelor’s Degree in any field, or an Associate’s Degree in Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, Occupational Therapy (Assistant), Physical Therapy or another allied health field.
Where do patient advocates work?

There are a number of settings where one can find a patient advocate. As with any career, the most successful patient advocates find positions suited to their education and skillset based on a number of criteria: prior experience in the health care field, continuing education, and work/mentor relationships.

Those who have prior experience in the medical field – such as nurses, social workers, or other members of hospital staff – tend to have the most success finding work within a hospital or clinic setting.

Others who possess backgrounds in legal, insurance or financial services, may find positions well-suited to them in related settings such as insurance companies, government agencies, exchanges, or as advocates working directly with individuals and families.

As you gain experience, and continue your education around today's health care policies and practices, you will find that patient advocacy is emerging as a career in many different sectors in health care.
PROGRAM CURRICULUM

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Patient Advocacy Courses</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Winter</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundamentals of the U.S. Health Care System: Essentials for Patient Advocacy</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Practice of Patient Advocacy</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<td>Communication Strategies in the Health Care System</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<td>Health Care Law and Legal Issues in Patient Advocacy</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<td>Conflict and Crisis Management</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<td>Introduction to Health Care Finance: The Advocate’s Role</td>
<td>Online</td>
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<td>Introduction to Bioethics</td>
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<td>Care Planning and Patient Navigation</td>
<td>Online</td>
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■ Indicates traditional classroom format vs. online.

This schedule is subject to change. Course availability varies.

PROGRAM COST

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certificate Candidacy Fee:</td>
<td>$175</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuition:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Program, Textbook, Materials:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,075</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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Note: The above estimates are subject to change and DO NOT include parking, meals, or other incidental educational expenses.

FUNDING YOUR EDUCATION

You may qualify for Extension Grants, private education loans, Americorps Awards, or Lifetime Learning Tax credits. Learn more: finaid@uclaextension.edu or (310) 825-4246 or (310) 206-7864.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about the Patient Advocacy Certificate, go to our website: uclaextension.edu/patientadv or contact the program office at (310) 825-7093 or email patientadv@uclaextension.edu.

TO ENROLL

Please visit uclaextension.edu/patientadv today.

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