

PRECEPTOR TOOLKIT



BE WELL
SOLUTIONS
dietetic internship

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GETTING STARTED



Getting ready to apply for dietetic internships can be both exciting and nerve-wracking. While securing your own rotation sites and preceptors adds a few more tasks to the to-do list, it can also allow for a more enjoyable and fulfilling dietetic internship experience. BWS DI prepared a detailed preceptor toolkit to help you get started in finding your preceptors.

By following along with the email and LinkedIn outreach templates, preceptor questions and considerations, you will hopefully fill out your proposed rotation schedule in no time.

Just remember: you do not need a completed rotation schedule to apply to BWS DI, but it may strengthen your application.



BENEFITS OF FINDING YOUR OWN PRECEPTORS



Choose preceptors you're excited to learn from

This will be the only time before you begin your career where you get to learn from preceptors who will prepare and energize you about joining the RD profession. Make sure to choose preceptors you will want to learn from!



Establish connections at your dream organization

Your dietetic internship is a great opportunity to network with preceptors and others within an organization that you one day hope to be a part of.



Find a preceptor in a specialty area of your choice

BWS DI offers an Emphasis Rotation which allows you to learn from a registered dietitian in a specialized area of your choice such as eating disorders, pediatric nutrition, sports nutrition, private practice, etc.



Configure your rotation schedule in advance

While discussing the logistics of your rotation with your future preceptor, you can ask about any flexibility in your schedule to accommodate graduate classes, a part-time job, or even a planned family vacation.

FINDING YOUR ROTATION SITES

Clinical (320 Hours)

Your primary preceptor must be a registered dietitian. Options may include, but are not limited to:

- Community hospitals
- Medical centers
- Long-term care facilities
- Rehabilitation facilities
- Pediatric hospitals
- Primary care outpatient clinics
- Federally qualified health centers

Bariatric clinics, dialysis centers, behavioral health facilities, functional medicine practices, and inpatient eating disorder programs may all be considered for a partial clinical rotation.

Foodservice (80 Hours)

It is strongly preferred that the preceptor is a registered dietitian, but some preceptors may have backgrounds in culinary science or management. Options may include, but are not limited to:

- School foodservice
- Hospital / Long-term care / medical center foodservice
- College/university dining services
- Corporate dining services
- Consulting organizations serving any of the above
- Food manufacturing companies serving any of the above
- Catering or prepared meals companies with a nutrition focus

FINDING YOUR ROTATION SITES

Community/ Public Health (160 Hours)

During this rotation, the preceptor is often a registered dietitian, but may also come from a public health background. Options may include, but are not limited to:

- WIC
- State, county, or local public health departments
- National public health agencies (CDC, USDA)
- University cooperative extension programs
- SNAP-ed or EFNEP
- Healthcare industry associations (American Heart Association, American Cancer Society)
- Food banks
- Grocery store/supermarket chains
- YMCAs
- Head Start programs
- Health-related children's camps or nonprofit agencies
- Office for the Aging
- Meals on Wheels



FINDING YOUR ROTATION SITES

Wellness (320 Hours)

The primary preceptor must be a registered dietitian. Options may include, but are not limited to:

- Corporate wellness companies such as Be Well Solutions
- Companies with established in-house wellness programs
- Universities providing wellness programming to staff and/or students
- Military bases
- Hospitals or community organizations providing wellness programs
- Insurance companies with a focus on preventative wellness
- Employee assistance programs (EAP)
- Benefits brokers providing wellness services and guidance to clients
- Large fitness / athletic clubs
- Nutrition and wellness private/group practices serving corporate clients

Optional: Emphasis (160 Hours)

You may use this rotation to gain experience in pediatrics, sports nutrition, the private practice sector, outpatient counseling, diabetes management, eating disorders, or any other area of interest to you. It is strongly preferred that the primary preceptor is a registered dietitian.

EMAIL OUTREACH

If you have the email address for a potential preceptor, sending an email is a great way to make an introduction and provide some high-level details about your precepting request. Feel free to personalize the email draft below when reaching out to a potential preceptor:

Dear **[Contact Person]**,

My name is **[Insert Name]**, and I am an aspiring dietetic intern applying to internships this **[Spring/Fall]**. I'm applying to a distance program through Be Well Solutions (BWS DI), and I will be finding my own rotation sites and preceptors. I'm interested in completing a **[rotation name]** at **[site name]**. **[You can also share why you're interested in a rotation here]**.

Here are some details about my internship: I would need to complete **[x]** hours at your site between the dates of **[see important dates site for the earliest day to begin and expected completion of rotations for your cohort]**. For now, the rotation would be tentative until I know if I matched on **[insert Match Day]**. My program does require certain competencies to be met and various paperwork to be in place before the rotation starts, including an affiliation agreement, preceptor guide, and resume. We do not need to start the paperwork collection process until after Match Day, but I can provide more details if needed.

For being a preceptor, you will receive continuing education credits and BWS DI can provide training references as well. If you are interested in learning more about my background, please see my attached resume or LinkedIn profile **[Insert link to profile]**. I'm happy to discuss more details over the phone as well.

Please let me know your thoughts and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,
[Your Name]

LINKEDIN OUTREACH

Searching for preceptors on LinkedIn is a great way to find potential preceptors for any rotation. Not only can you find RDs near you, but you can confirm job titles, organizations, and even view their past job history. Feel free to tailor the message below when sending a connection request on LinkedIn:

Hi **[Contact Person]**,

My name is **[insert name]**, and I am applying to a distance dietetic internship this **[Fall/Spring]**. I'm interested in completing a **[rotation name]** at **[site name]**.

I'd be happy to provide more details about the internship and my resume if you're interested in learning more. Look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
Your Name

Note: This message is optimized to meet the character limit for connection requests, but still may need altered before sending.



PRECEPTOR SCREENING QUESTIONS (1/3)

Here are some suggested questions to ask a potential preceptor to help in your preceptor search:

- **How many years have you been practicing as an RD?**

We prefer preceptors to have at least 2 years of experience. If you find a potential preceptor with less than 2 years of experience, please provide us with the individual's info so that we may review their qualifications and determine whether they are an appropriate preceptor.

- **Have you been a preceptor for dietetic interns before?**

Interns may work with new preceptors; however, some interns prefer to work with experienced preceptors. You may also ask preceptors if they have worked with distance interns before. Some preceptors are experienced in working with interns from traditional programs, but not with interns from distance programs. They may request more details about your internship and what your requirements are as a distance intern. BWS DI would be happy to provide information to preceptors wanting to know more about our program and distance dietetic internships in general. If desired, please have them email us at bwsdi@bewellsolutions.com.

PRECEPTOR SCREENING QUESTIONS (2/3)

- **What would my day-to-day routine look like?**

Be sure to ask about what your daily tasks will be, including projects they will have you work on, their typical patient caseload (if applicable), what your schedule will be, and anything else that you're curious about.

- **Should I have experience in a certain area, or have completed a specific rotation, prior to my rotation?**

While BWS DI does not have a specific requirement for how you set up your rotation schedule, some preceptors prefer that interns have completed a certain rotation(s) or number of hours prior to coming to their facility.

- **What qualities do you think would make a successful dietetic intern at your site?**

This question is great to ask as a way to “sell yourself” to the site. After they've told you what qualities would make a successful intern, you can respond with how you have demonstrated those qualities in your past experiences and how you will use them during the rotation.

PRECEPTOR SCREENING QUESTIONS (3/3)

● **Do you have an onboarding process for interns?**

This will give you an idea of any steps that you need to take before the rotation starts, such as background checks, drug tests, trainings, volunteer/student orientations, etc. It will also help you understand what your experience is going to look like during your first few days at the site.

● **Is there any other information I can provide you with at this time to aid in your decision?**

Asking this will allow you to provide more information about the requested # of hours, possible dates, etc. You may also follow up by asking when you can expect to hear from the preceptor with their decision.

● **Do you have any planned time off during the dates of the rotation?**

This is a question to ask when the dates of the rotation are discussed. Make sure to check in about holidays. If there is planned time off, find out what the plan will be for those days (i.e., is there another person who can serve as your preceptor while they are out?). If the preceptor does not have time off planned, make sure to ask them to notify you if they end up planning time off later.



QUESTIONS TO ASK NON-RD PRECEPTORS

Clinical and wellness preceptors must be RDs. For other rotations, such as Community or Foodservice, individuals with different backgrounds may make great preceptors. Here are some questions to consider asking non-RDs to find out if they will be appropriate preceptors:

- 1 What are your credentials/what is your job title?
- 2 How many years of experience do you have in this field?
- 3 Have you worked with dietetic interns or nutrition students before?

Please Note: There is no “right” answer to these questions. BWS DI will approve non-RD preceptors on a case-by-case basis. If you are unsure about whether a potential preceptor is sufficiently experienced, please send an email to bwsdi@bewellsolutions.com with details about the preceptor.

QUESTIONS?



GET IN TOUCH



bwsdi.com



Schedule time on [Calendly](#).



bwsdi@bewellsolutions.com



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