

PRINT-New OSF-UIC health careers app features social media tactic

Answer a few questions on a social media quiz and it'll tell you which character on Friends you're most like. That's the same concept behind a new [healthcareers.guide](#) developed by [OSF Innovation](#) and the [Illinois College of Medicine](#) at the University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC).

The health careers guide is aimed at creating awareness and helping middle and high school learners understand the types of skills, length and cost of education, and potential earnings for a chosen health-related career. Noël Adams, vice president for academic collaborations and operations at OSF HealthCare says the easy-to-use guide allows young people to explore careers on their own or filter according to a few questions about their personality.PR

"They can also go in and answer a few questions that relate to their personality like, 'How do you feel about blood?' or 'Are you introverted or extroverted?' Adams continues, "Then, we map those types of skills to the different health care careers. So, after they answer those, it'll return a whole list of types of careers that would fit those particular personality types."

The guide can be accessed easily according to Adams.

"It's mobile friendly so that can do that through a phone, or they can do it through their Chromebooks at school. We really tried to make the content school-friendly so that schools can help promote this version of learning and what these different types of careers are through their own curriculum."

Adams says despite a nation-wide shortage of critical health professionals such as physicians and nurses, there is not easily accessible educational content to reach young people, particularly in underserved communities where those professions are needed the most.

OSF HealthCare, through its Innovation division, has developed free STEAM programming focused on health careers and the [National Center for Rural Health Professions \(NCRHP\)](#) at UIC has led innovations in health career pipeline programming to address the significant disparities in underserved areas. The Center has established programs in rural and urban underserved high schools, community colleges and four-year universities throughout the state of Illinois.

"This is a really innovative approach in reaching today's generation of learners who often access information online and in interactive ways," said Dr. Hana Hinkle, UIC's Assistant Dean for Rural Health Professions. She continued, "We aren't aware of any other program available in the country that leverages this type of platform and algorithm and we are very grateful for the partnership with OSF Innovation and through the CHA programming to make this idea a reality that so many students will benefit from."

The health careers guide was created with support from a [Community Health Advocacy](#) (CHA) grant, a partnership between OSF HealthCare and UIC that brings together faculty researchers and health care professionals to develop innovative solutions to health-related problems in urban communities.

Adams says the guide is unique – unlike what is available at most schools or career centers. It uses technology developed by the OSF Innovation [Medical Visualization](#) team and content from an existing, extensive guidebook used regularly to support additional education through the Rural Health Professions Center at UIC.

The platform allows the user to drill down into jobs to learn far more than what's available from a typical brochure.

Adams explains, "It helps youth understand what a job is all about, how it works, and then gives lots of detailed information like how much school you need, how much you might get paid, how long it takes to train, and then helps find job openings on different websites."

Throughout development of the health careers website and app, researchers had students attending career events, beta test the app and provide feedback for improvements. Adams says not many tweaks were needed.

"We received many positive comments from youth test groups about how we've used pictures to explain information related to careers instead of having too much text in the application," Adams says.

Researchers have sought CHA grant funding for phase two which would focus on adding more careers to the app and tapping into existing regional networks to provide direct mentorship, coaching and support to identified students.