



Guide to Writing a Curriculum Vitae for Advanced Practice (Licensed) Healthcare Professionals and Fellows in Rheumatology

A Curriculum Vitae (CV) is an important tool that all professionals use to document and communicate relevant clinical, educational, and research experiences and achievements (1–3). A CV can also help trainees and advanced care practitioners identify areas needing additional training and development. Therefore, it is important to make a good first impression on your future employers and to constantly work on your CV throughout your career.

Overall, the CV should be a quick and easy-to-read summary of one's professional journey, usually starting from college years. However, recent graduates and early career professionals often struggle to structure a CV effectively, potentially overlooking details that may give them access to better job opportunities (4,5).

With proper guidance, writing a CV can become a rewarding endeavor. The AWARD team is committed to providing a user-friendly guide to help you create an impressive and professional CV, specifically tailored for future fellows, rheumatologists, and healthcare professionals (HPs) within our specialty.

A. Content and Structure

1. Contact Information

Place your full name, professional email address, phone number, and your home address (if this is your first position) or current employment at the top of your CV. Avoid including unnecessary personal information such as marital status, or date of birth. Sometimes, employers may request a profile picture, which should be tailored to their specifications.

2. Professional Summary or Objective

Include a brief, compelling summary, or objective (no more than 2-3 sentences). This should highlight your key qualifications and career goals, tailored to the job you are applying for (6). An example could be as follows:

"Experienced healthcare professional with a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in healthcare settings. Dedicated to addressing social disparities and promoting equal access to care for all individuals. Seeking to specialize in rheumatology to further contribute to providing inclusive and comprehensive healthcare solutions."

3. Education

Include your educational background, providing information regarding your degrees, institutions and locations, and graduation dates. List your educational background in reverse chronological order.

4. Relevant Clinical Rotations and Work Experience

Provide a list of your clinical rotations and internships obtained during graduate education in reverse chronological order. List these experiences first, before other work experience. Provide the facility name and location, department(s) (e.g. outpatient orthopedic/rheumatology; inpatient cardiopulmonary), duration, and preceptor or clinical supervisor name. Provide a brief (2-3 sentences) description of the clinical responsibilities, what you learn and how it helped you grow. You can use bullet points for clarity and conciseness and quantify your accomplishments whenever possible. Next, provide a list of your past relevant work experience providing similar information as noted above.

5. Research Experience

If you have research experience, be sure to include essential elements such as your role on the research project, the project title, primary investigator's name, grant funding, dates of the project, institution where research was conducted, and a brief paragraph (2-3) sentence describing the project.

6. Publications/ Presentations

These can include original research, case reports, abstracts, etc. List your publications using the proper citation format. Include a PubMed ID number if available(7,8). If you have fewer than 12 items, do not separate by type (case report, original research). Emphasize research that is most relevant to the position you're applying for, showcasing how your research background aligns with the requirements and responsibilities of the position you are applying for.

7. Professional Memberships/Volunteer Activities

Mention any relevant memberships pertaining to the position you are seeking. For example: being a member of the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) or being a member of The Association of Rheumatology Professionals (ARP) when applying for rheumatology positions and include dates of membership. If you held leadership roles, include the roles you served in the professional organization.

Volunteering is often seen as a valuable trait. Volunteer roles can vary from serving on committees at your current workplace, volunteering for professional or patient organizations to contributing to community initiatives. Be sure to include the role you played (chair of

committee, member, advisory or adhoc member). In the end, keep in mind that all types of volunteering are important, so try to include them all. Be prepared for potential interview questions by ensuring clarity and accuracy in detailing your roles and experiences.

8. Awards and Honors

Including awards and honors in your CV indirectly showcases leadership and exceptional skills. These recognitions can come from various stages of your academic and professional life, such as college, medical school, graduate school or work. Include scholarships. Highlighting these achievements also demonstrate your dedication and excellence, boosting your credibility and competitiveness for future opportunities.

9. Extracurricular activities/ Hobbies and interests

Include activities and pursuits outside of work or academics that reflect your personality, values, and interests. These can provide insight into your character and help recruiters or employers understand you better on a personal level.

10. Professional References

Is essential for providing potential employers with additional insight into your qualifications and character. When listing professional references, ensure you include individuals who can speak knowledgeably about your work ethic, skills, and experience. Typically, you should include three to four references, including former supervisors, colleagues, or mentors who can vouch for your abilities and professionalism. For future fellows applying for a Rheumatology Fellowship, there will be a designated platform to upload professional references, known as letters of recommendation (LOR), during their application process (9).

11. Information For Medical Residents applying for fellowship

In the case of medical residents applying for a fellowship position in a Rheumatology program, all applications are submitted through the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) platform according to an established timeline in <https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-residencies-eras/publication-chapters/eras-timeline>, where the CVs are generated by the ERAS program and does not allow for “personalization” of font or paragraph alignment. In this platform you will also add LOR and a Personal statement. The ERAS standardized CV model considers the topics previously discussed in this guide. However, creating a separate, more polished CV is recommended for future job applications (8).

12. Information For Physician Assistants or Doctors of Physical Therapy applying for fellowship

In the case of physician assistant applying for a fellowship position in a Rheumatology program, applications are submitted directly to the clinical site. For example, for the Brigham and Women's Physician Assistant Fellowship Program (<https://www.brighamandwomens.org/medicine/physician-assistant-fellowship>) you will need to visit their website to find out when the application opens. Check if you are eligible and carefully review the required documentation, which generally follows similar standards to those of other institutions."

- Graduated from an accredited physician assistant program
- National board certification from National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistant (NCCPA)
- Massachusetts state license
- Current Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) license
- Current Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Certifications

Required documentation:

1. **Personal Statement:** One page stating your personal interest in the Fellowship.
2. **Current Curriculum Vitae:** Detailing work and volunteer experiences prior to PA school.
3. **Unofficial Transcript:** From the training program reporting PA school performance.
4. **Two Letters of Recommendation:** With at least one from a clinical rotation preceptor (physician or advanced practice provider).
5. **Four References:** With at least two from a physician or advanced practice provider preceptor/supervisor, and one from your PA program (e.g. faculty member).

13. For Doctors of Physical Therapy, there is a national application process that is well-described on the website of the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency & Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE). On their website (<https://abptrfe.apta.org/for-participants>), you will find tools and links to access opportunities for future training. Although there is currently no specific rheumatology fellowship, orthopedics sometimes overlaps with the work done for our patients in rheumatology." **Dos and Don'ts**

Dos

- Keep your CV up to date, regularly updating it with new experiences and achievements.
- Follow established best practices for CV formatting, using a clean layout and professional fonts like Arial, Tahoma, or Calibri.
- Break up text into bullet points or short paragraphs for easy readability.
- Proofread your CV carefully to catch spelling mistakes and other errors.
- Customize your CV for each job application, emphasizing relevant skills and experiences.
- Seek feedback from trusted sources, such as mentors or career advisors, to improve your CV.
- Utilize tools like Grammarly and ChatGPT to refine your writing but avoid relying solely on automated software.
- Do confirm the individuals you provide as references are willing to provide a strong recommendation.

Don'ts

- Avoid using long paragraphs or excessive text.
- Avoid using unprofessional email addresses or fonts.
- Don't exaggerate or fabricate experiences or qualifications; honesty is crucial.
- Avoid using clichés or generic phrases; strive for originality and specificity in your descriptions.
- Don't include outdated or irrelevant work experiences or skills.
- Don't disparage individuals, programs, or institutions if you have had a negative experience somewhere — regardless of the reason.
- Avoid including unnecessary details or hobbies that are not relevant to the job you're applying for.

B. Cover letter/Essay/Personal Statement

When applying for a job, you'll often need to submit a document introducing yourself, highlighting your qualifications, passions, and aspirations, and explaining why you're interested in the position. This document can take various forms, such as a cover letter, an essay, or a personal statement, depending on the employer's preferences(1,3,8).

1. Cover Letter

In a cover letter, applicants typically address the hiring manager or admissions committee directly, briefly summarizing their relevant experiences and skills, and explaining their interest in the specific job or program. On the other hand, an essay or personal statement offers a more detailed insight into the applicant's background, experiences, achievements, and goals, allowing them to showcase their personality, values, and unique perspectives.

2. Personal Statement

Personal statements are usually asked for residents applying to rheumatology fellowship or APPs. The personal statement (PS) presents the applicant's identity and motivations to readers and Program Directors (PDs). While the CV outlines the applicant's achievements, the PS complements it by delving into the applicant's skills, experiences, and aspirations. It provides an opportunity to showcase strengths, expand on experiences, and convey a genuine reflection of the applicant's character. "To craft an effective personal statement (PS), applicants should dedicate ample time to brainstorm, draft, and revise, ensuring it offers a candid and insightful narrative. Guidance from mentors is invaluable for refining your PS. A well-constructed PS goes beyond explaining the choice of specialty; it should reflect on the applicant's personal evolution, highlighting experiences, passions, and motivations relevant to Rheumatology. It should steer clear of redundant explanations about the specialty and instead focus on personal growth with sincerity and clarity, avoiding clichés. Highlight unique qualities and pertinent experiences to showcase the applicant's potential as a valuable addition to the program. A lengthy PS may risk losing the reader's engagement. Conclude with a paragraph summarizing the applicant's expectations from the fellowship program and outlining their future career plans in medicine."

All the documents described in this section typically require support from mentors and peers and may need to be written multiple times until a final version is ready to present.

C. References

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