

IV. Educational Program
A. Curriculum components
5. ACGME Competencies

Introduction:

The identification of the six competency domains focuses attention on other aspects of effective clinical practice and physician competence besides patient care and medical knowledge. Assigning specific outcomes to specific competency domains is not always easy or straightforward because there is significant overlap and also because there are legitimate differences in the interpretation of meaning among the specialties. What is most important is that residents have the opportunity to develop abilities for all the basic outcomes, regardless of the “bucket” in which the outcome is placed.

During the next several years, each specialty is encouraged to identify expected outcomes for each competency domain and the level of proficiency by educational level as appropriate, with agreement in the specialty on a few specific tools to be used for evaluation. This may allow the collection of outcomes nationally and the development of national standards for each outcome. Such standards could facilitate the transition from a process-oriented resident education to one of outcomes and, subsequently, to accreditation decisions that incorporate aggregated resident outcomes relative to national standards as an important program outcome.

In this section of the Guide, the basic elements of each competency domain are presented, along with suggestions for teaching and assessing outcomes, because teaching and evaluation are tightly integrated activities. The questions in the PIF for this section address learning activities related to the competency domains. A separate section of the CPR and PIF address evaluation (CPR V). In the Evaluation section of this Guide, some of the evaluation information discussed in this section is reiterated in the context of developing an evaluation system for the program.