ACGME Program Requirements for Graduate Medical Education in Pediatric Surgery

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ACGME Program Requirements for Graduate Medical Education
in Pediatric Surgery

Common Program Requirements are in BOLD

Where applicable, text in italics describes the underlying philosophy of the requirements in that section. These philosophic statements are not program requirements and are therefore not citable.

The “Specialty Background and Intent” text in the boxes below provide detail regarding the intention behind specific requirements, as well as guidance on how to implement the requirements in a way that supports excellence in residency education. Programs will note that the Pediatric Surgery Subspecialty FAQs companion document has been integrated into this document and, where appropriate, guidance is given on additional Review Committee resource information.

**Introduction**

**Int.A.** Residency is an essential dimension of the transformation of the medical student to the independent practitioner along the continuum of medical education. It is physically, emotionally, and intellectually demanding, and requires longitudinally-concentrated effort on the part of the resident.

The specialty education of physicians to practice independently is experiential, and necessarily occurs within the context of the health care delivery system. Developing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes leading to proficiency in all the domains of clinical competency requires the resident physician to assume personal responsibility for the care of individual patients. For the resident, the essential learning activity is interaction with patients under the guidance and supervision of faculty members who give value, context, and meaning to those interactions. As residents gain experience and demonstrate growth in their ability to care for patients, they assume roles that permit them to exercise those skills with greater independence. This concept--graded and progressive responsibility--is one of the core tenets of American graduate medical education. Supervision in the setting of graduate medical education has the goals of assuring the provision of safe and effective care to the individual patient; assuring each resident’s development of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to enter the unsupervised practice of medicine; and establishing a foundation for continued professional growth.

**Int.B.** A fellowship in pediatric surgery provides advanced knowledge and skills in the surgery of infants and children. At the completion of this education, fellows should diagnose, operate, and peri-operative care of pediatric surgical patients. This continuum may include one or more of the developmental stages of care with which a surgeon might be involved, including prenatal, neonatal, and infant through adolescent or young adult. Along this continuum, there will be exposure to congenital and acquired conditions, including developmental, inflammatory, infectious, neoplastic, or traumatic conditions. The scope of this discipline is focused in infancy and childhood, but includes the fetus, adolescent, and young adult with special health care needs arising from congenital and acquired
pediatric surgical conditions. Individuals who complete this education should be prepared to function as competent pediatric surgeons.

Int.C. The educational program in pediatric surgery must be 24 months in length, of which 48 weeks in each of the two years must comprise clinical pediatric surgery. (Core)

I. Institutions

I.A. Sponsoring Institution

One sponsoring institution must assume ultimate responsibility for the program, as described in the Institutional Requirements, and this responsibility extends to fellow assignments at all participating sites. (Core)

The sponsoring institution and the program must ensure that the program director has sufficient protected time and financial support for his or her educational and administrative responsibilities to the program. (Core)

I.A.1. A pediatric surgery program should be offered in sites accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) or its equivalent, and which are classified as a general hospitals or a children's hospitals. (Core)

I.A.1.a) These sites must include facilities and staff with staffing for a variety of services, including adequate inpatient surgical admissions, intensive care units for both infants and older children, and departments of emergency, pathology, and radiology, pathology, and emergency in which infants and children can be managed 24 hours a day. (Core)

I.A.2. The educational program must not negatively impact the education of residents in the core surgery program. (Core)

I.A.3. There must be a residency program in pediatrics whose residents rotate through the same integrated site(s) as the pediatric surgical fellows. Pediatric surgery fellows must have experience working in interprofessional teams that include pediatric medicine residents at either the primary clinical site or a participating site. (Core)

I.B. Participating Sites

I.B.1. There must be a program letter of agreement (PLA) between the program and each participating site providing a required assignment. The PLA must be renewed at least every five years. (Core)

A participating site is defined as any site to which fellows rotate for assigned experiences.

The PLA should:
I.B.1.a) identify the faculty who will assume both educational and supervisory responsibilities for fellows; (Detail)

I.B.1.b) specify their responsibilities for teaching, supervision, and formal evaluation of fellows, as specified later in this document; (Detail)

I.B.1.c) specify the duration and content of the educational experience; and, (Detail)

I.B.1.d) state the policies and procedures that will govern fellow education during the assignment. (Detail)

I.B.2. The program director must submit any additions or deletions of participating sites routinely providing an educational experience, required for all fellows, of one month full time equivalent (FTE) or more through the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Accreditation Data System (ADS). (Core)

I.B.3. Clinical assignments to participating (non-integrated) sites must be scheduled only during the first year of the program, and assignments must not exceed six months in total, and must be approved in advance by the Review Committee. (Core)

I.B.4. Sites may be integrated with the sponsoring institution through an integration agreement specifying that the program director must:

I.B.4.a) appoint the members of the faculty at the integrated site; (Detail)

I.B.4.b) appoint the chief or director of the teaching service in the integrated site; (Detail)

I.B.4.c) appoint all fellows in the program; and, (Detail)

I.B.4.d) determine all rotations and assignments of both fellows and members of the faculty. (Detail)

I.B.5. Participating sites must be in close geographic proximity or provide for teleconferencing to allow all fellows to attend joint conferences, as well as grand rounds, basic science and clinical conference lectures, and journal club, and ongoing quality improvement and patient safety reviews, such as morbidity and mortality reviews regularly and in a central location. (Detail Core)

I.B.5.a) If the sites are geographically so remote that joint conferences cannot be held, an equivalent educational program of lectures and conferences at the integrated site must be fully documented. (Detail)

I.B.6. Each participating site must be approved by the Review Committee must approve all integrations in advance prior to assignment of any fellow on any rotation(s). (Core)
II. Program Personnel and Resources

II.A. Program Director

II.A.1. There must be a single program director with authority and accountability for the operation of the program. The sponsoring institution’s GMEC must approve a change in program director. (Core)

II.A.1.a) The program director must submit this change to the ACGME via the ADS. (Core)

II.A.1.b) The Review Committee must approve the qualifications of each prospective program director. (Core)

II.A.2. The program director should continue in his or her position for a length of time adequate to maintain continuity of leadership and program stability. (Detail)

II.A.2.a) The length of the appointment must be for at least three years. (DetailCore)

II.A.3. Qualifications of the program director must include:

II.A.3.a) requisite specialty expertise and documented educational and administrative experience acceptable to the Review Committee; (Core)

II.A.3.b) current certification in the subspecialty by the American Board of Surgery, or subspecialty qualifications that are acceptable to the Review Committee; (Core)

II.A.3.c) current medical licensure and appropriate medical staff appointment; (Core)

II.A.3.d) licensure to practice medicine in the state where the sponsoring institution’s program is located; and, (DetailCore)

II.A.3.e) demonstrated scholarly activity in at least one of the areas listed in section II.B.5.b; (CoreDetail)

II.A.3.e).(1) Program directors must demonstrate ongoing peer-reviewed scholarship. (Core)

II.A.3.e).(1).(a) Scholarship should include at least three peer-reviewed scholarly projects over the most recent five-year period, or other scholarship acceptable to the Review Committee. (Detail)

II.A.3.f) at least five years of practice after completion of a pediatric surgery fellowship; and. (Core)
II.A.3.g) at least two years of prior experience in graduate medical education, as a site director, program director, associate program director in a general surgery program, or another position of responsibility in a residency/fellowship program. (Core)

Specialty Background and Intent: The Review Committee believes training pediatric surgery fellows is a complex undertaking, and as such, the accreditation requirements are extensive. Individuals who direct such programs must be prepared to take on the role, must already be a respected member of the medical staff in their Sponsoring Institution, must be senior members of the faculty, and must have reached a stage in their academic practices that enables them to truly devote the time and effort required to oversee a high quality program. New program directors must have a comprehensive understanding of and ability in educational and evaluation methods, active experience in managing and administering a complex organization, and leadership and communication skills. In addition to the experiential requirements, new program directors are advised to have also served at least two years at the Sponsoring Institution, and where applicable, is advised to have been promoted or be eligible for promotion to the position of Associate Professor.

II.A.4. The program director must administer and maintain an educational environment conducive to educating the fellows in each of the ACGME competency areas. (Core)

The program director must:

II.A.4.a) oversee and ensure the quality of didactic and clinical education in all sites that participate in the program; (Core)

II.A.4.b) approve a local director at each participating site who is accountable for fellow education; (Core)

II.A.4.c) approve the selection of program faculty as appropriate; (Core)

II.A.4.d) evaluate program faculty; (Core)

II.A.4.e) approve the continued participation of program faculty based on evaluation; (Core)

II.A.4.f) monitor fellow supervision at all participating sites; (Core)

II.A.4.g) prepare and submit all information required and requested by the ACGME; (Core)

II.A.4.g).(1) This includes, but is not limited to, the program application forms and annual program updates to the ADS, and ensure that the information submitted is accurate and complete. (Core)

II.A.4.h) ensure compliance with grievance and due process procedures as set forth in the Institutional Requirements and implemented by the sponsoring institution; (Detail)
II.A.4.i) provide verification of fellowship education for all fellows, including those who leave the program prior to completion; (Detail)

II.A.4.j) implement policies and procedures consistent with the institutional and program requirements for fellow duty hours and the working environment, including moonlighting; (Core)

and, to that end, must:

II.A.4.j).(1) distribute these policies and procedures to the fellows and faculty; (Detail)

II.A.4.j).(2) monitor fellow duty hours, according to sponsoring institutional policies, with a frequency sufficient to ensure compliance with ACGME requirements; (Core)

II.A.4.j).(3) adjust schedules as necessary to mitigate excessive service demands and/or fatigue; and, (Detail)

II.A.4.j).(4) if applicable, monitor the demands of at-home call and adjust schedules as necessary to mitigate excessive service demands and/or fatigue. (Detail)

II.A.4.k) monitor the need for and ensure the provision of back up support systems when patient care responsibilities are unusually difficult or prolonged; (Detail)

II.A.4.l) comply with the sponsoring institution’s written policies and procedures, including those specified in the Institutional Requirements, for selection, evaluation and promotion of fellows, disciplinary action, and supervision of fellows; (Detail)

II.A.4.m) be familiar with and comply with ACGME and Review Committee policies and procedures as outlined in the ACGME Manual of Policies and Procedures; (Detail)

II.A.4.n) obtain review and approval of the sponsoring institution’s GMEC/DIO before submitting information or requests to the ACGME, including: (Core)

II.A.4.n).(1) all applications for ACGME accreditation of new programs; (Detail)

II.A.4.n).(2) changes in fellow complement; (Detail)

II.A.4.n).(3) major changes in program structure or length of training; (Detail)

II.A.4.n).(4) progress reports requested by the Review Committee;
II.A.4.n).(5) requests for increases or any change to fellow duty hours;

II.A.4.n).(6) voluntary withdrawals of ACGME-accredited programs;

II.A.4.n).(7) requests for appeal of an adverse action; and,

II.A.4.n).(8) appeal presentations to a Board of Appeal or the ACGME.

II.A.4.o) obtain DIO review and co-signature on all program application forms, as well as any correspondence or document submitted to the ACGME that addresses:

II.A.4.o).(1) program citations, and/or

II.A.4.o).(2) request for changes in the program that would have significant impact, including financial, on the program or institution.

II.A.4.p) seek prior approval from the Review Committee for the addition of fellow and resident positions in non-accredited programs (e.g., overseas or trauma); and,

II.A.4.q) review monitor and verify fellows’ operative data with each fellow at least semi-annually.

II.B. Faculty

II.B.1. At each participating site, there must be a sufficient number of faculty with documented qualifications to instruct and supervise all fellows at that location.

The faculty must:

II.B.1.a) devote sufficient time to the educational program to fulfill their supervisory and teaching responsibilities; and to demonstrate a strong interest in the education of fellows,

II.B.1.b) administer and maintain an educational environment conducive to educating fellows in each of the ACGME competency areas.

II.B.2. The physician faculty must have current certification in the subspecialty by the American Board of Surgery, or possess qualifications judged acceptable to the Review Committee.
II.B.3. The physician faculty must possess current medical licensure and appropriate medical staff appointment. (Core)

II.B.3.a) Members of the physician faculty must be licensed to practice medicine in the state where the sponsoring institution program or participating site is located. (Detail)

II.B.4. The nonphysician faculty must have appropriate qualifications in their field and hold appropriate institutional appointments. (Core)

II.B.5. The faculty must establish and maintain an environment of inquiry and scholarship with an active research component. (Core)

II.B.5.a) The faculty must regularly participate in organized clinical discussions, rounds, journal clubs, and conferences. (Detail)

II.B.5.b) Some members of the faculty should also demonstrate scholarship by one or more of the following:

II.B.5.b).(1) peer-reviewed funding; (Detail)

II.B.5.b).(2) publication of original research or review articles in peer-reviewed journals, or chapters in textbooks; (Detail)

II.B.5.b).(3) publication or presentation of case reports or clinical series at local, regional, or national professional and scientific society meetings; or, (Detail)

II.B.5.b).(4) participation in national committees or educational organizations. (Detail)

II.B.5.c) Faculty should encourage and support fellows in scholarly activities. (Core)

II.B.6. In addition to the program director, there must be, for each approved residency/fellowship position, at least one full-time faculty member whose major function is to support the residency program. (Core)

II.B.6.a) The term of appointment for such faculty members must be of a sufficient length to ensure continuity in the supervision and education of the fellows. (Core)

II.B.7. To contribute to fellow education in the care of critically-ill children, the faculty should include at least: (Core)

II.B.7.a) one neonatologist, individual who is board certified or board eligible in neonatal-perinatal medicine; and, either, (Core)

II.B.7.a).(1) one individual who is board certified or board eligible in pediatric intensive care; or,
II.B.7.a).(2) one individual who is board certified or board eligible in pediatric surgery and board certified or board eligible in critical care. (Core)

II.C. Other Program Personnel

The institution and the program must jointly ensure the availability of all necessary professional, technical, and clerical personnel for the effective administration of the program. (Core)

II.D. Resources

The institution and the program must jointly ensure the availability of adequate resources for fellow education, as defined in the specialty program requirements. (Core)

II.D.1. The pediatric surgical service must document a sufficient breadth and volume of procedures to reasonably ensure that each fellow successfully completes the required clinical experience such that fellows will satisfy the defined minimum procedure requirements. (Core)

II.D.1.a) There must be at least 1200 procedures performed by pediatric surgeons at the institution’s approved sites annually. (Core)

II.E. Medical Information Access

Fellows must have ready access to specialty-specific and other appropriate reference material in print or electronic format. Electronic medical literature databases with search capabilities should be available. (Detail)

III. Fellow Appointments

III.A. Eligibility Criteria

The program director must comply with the criteria for resident eligibility as specified in the Institutional Requirements. (Core)

III.A.1. Eligibility Requirements – Residency Programs

III.A.1.a) All prerequisite post-graduate clinical education required for initial entry or transfer into ACGME-accredited residency programs must be completed in ACGME-accredited residency programs, or in Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC)-accredited or College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)-accredited residency programs located in Canada. Residency programs must receive verification of each applicant’s level of competency in the required clinical field using ACGME or CanMEDS Milestones assessments from the prior training program. (Core)

III.A.1.b) A physician who has completed a residency program that
was not accredited by ACGME, RCPSC, or CFPC may enter an ACGME-accredited residency program in the same specialty at the PGY-1 level and, at the discretion of the program director at the ACGME-accredited program may be advanced to the PGY-2 level based on ACGME Milestones assessments at the ACGME-accredited program. This provision applies only to entry into residency in those specialties for which an initial clinical year is not required for entry. (Core)

III.A.1.c) A Review Committee may grant the exception to the eligibility requirements specified in Section III.A.2.b) for residency programs that require completion of a prerequisite residency program prior to admission. (Core)

III.A.1.d) Review Committees will grant no other exceptions to these eligibility requirements for residency education. (Core)

III.A.2. Eligibility Requirements – Fellowship Programs

All required clinical education for entry into ACGME-accredited fellowship programs must be completed in an ACGME-accredited residency program, or in an RCPSC-accredited or CFPC- accredited residency program located in Canada. (Core)

Prior to entry in the program, fellows must: have successfully completed a residency in general surgery accredited by the ACGME, or such a program located in Canada and accredited by the RCPSC. (Core)

III.A.2.a) Fellowship programs must receive verification of each entering fellow’s level of competency in the required field using ACGME or CanMEDS Milestones assessments from the core residency program. (Core)

III.A.2.b) Fellow Eligibility Exception

A Review Committee may grant the following exception to the fellowship eligibility requirements:

An ACGME-accredited fellowship program may accept an exceptionally qualified applicant**, who does not satisfy the eligibility requirements listed in Sections III.A.2. and III.A.2.a), but who does meet all of the following additional qualifications and conditions: (Core)

III.A.2.b).(1) Assessment by the program director and fellowship selection committee of the applicant’s suitability to enter the program, based on prior training and review of the summative evaluations of training in the core specialty; and (Core)
III.A.2.b).(2) Review and approval of the applicant’s exceptional qualifications by the GMEC or a subcommittee of the GMEC; and

(Composite)

III.A.2.b).(3) Satisfactory completion of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Steps 1, 2, and, if the applicant is eligible, 3, and;

(Composite)

III.A.2.b).(4) For an international graduate, verification of Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification; and,

(Composite)

III.A.2.b).(5) Applicants accepted by this exception must complete fellowship Milestones evaluation (for the purposes of establishment of baseline performance by the Clinical Competency Committee), conducted by the receiving fellowship program within six weeks of matriculation. This evaluation may be waived for an applicant who has completed an ACGME International-accredited residency based on the applicant’s Milestones evaluation conducted at the conclusion of the residency program.

(Composite)

III.A.2.b).(5).(a) If the trainee does not meet the expected level of Milestones competency following entry into the fellowship program, the trainee must undergo a period of remediation, overseen by the Clinical Competency Committee and monitored by the GMEC or a subcommittee of the GMEC. This period of remediation must not count toward time in fellowship training.

(Composite)

** An exceptionally qualified applicant has (1) completed a non-ACGME-accredited residency program in the core specialty, and (2) demonstrated clinical excellence, in comparison to peers, throughout training. Additional evidence of exceptional qualifications is required, which may include one of the following: (a) participation in additional clinical or research training in the specialty or subspecialty; (b) demonstrated scholarship in the specialty or subspecialty; (c) demonstrated leadership during or after residency training; (d) completion of an ACGME-International-accredited residency program.

III.A.2.c) The Review Committee for Surgery does not allow exceptions to the Eligibility Requirements for Fellowship Programs in Section III.A.2.

(Composite)

III.B. Number of Fellows

The program’s educational resources must be adequate to support the
number of fellows appointed to the program. (Core)

III.B.1. The program director may not appoint more fellows than approved by the Review Committee, unless otherwise stated in the specialty-specific requirements. (Core)

III.B.2. Both temporary and permanent increases Any increase in fellow complement must be approved in advance by the Review Committee. Any increase in the complement must be justified in terms of the educational goals of the program. (Core)

Specialty Background and Intent: The Review Committee approves fellow positions for each year of the educational program. An increase in complement in any year and for any reason (e.g., remediation, research year, etc.) must be approved in advance by the Review Committee. Requests for an increase in complement (permanent or temporary) must be submitted through ADS and be accompanied by an educational rationale and block diagram specific to the proposed changes.

III.C. Fellow Transfers

III.C.1. Before accepting a fellow who is transferring from another program, the program director must obtain written or electronic verification of previous educational experiences and a summative competency-based performance evaluation of the transferring fellow. (Detail)

III.C.2. A program director must provide timely verification of fellowship education and summative performance evaluations for fellows who may leave the program prior to completion. (Detail)

III.D. Appointment of Fellows and Other Learners

The presence of other learners (including, but not limited to, residents from other specialties, subspecialty fellows, PhD students, and nurse practitioners) in the program must not interfere with the appointed fellows’ education. (Core)

III.D.1. The program director must report the presence of other learners to the DIO and GMEC in accordance with sponsoring institution guidelines. (Detail)

III.D.2. All residents, fellows, and other students in both ACGME-accredited and non-accredited programs in the sponsoring institution and integrated sites who might affect the educational experience of the program fellows must be identified, and, at the time of the site visit, the relationship of these individuals to the program fellows must be confirmed. (Core)

III.D.3. The educational program must not negatively affect the education of residents in the affiliated general surgery residency program. (Core)

IV. Educational Program
The curriculum must contain the following educational components:

**IV.A. Overall educational goals for the program, which the program must make available to fellows and faculty,** (Core)

**IV.A.1.** Competency-based goals and objectives for each assignment at each educational level, which the program must distribute to fellows and faculty at least annually, in either written or electronic form;  (Core)

**IV.A.2.** Regularly scheduled didactic sessions;  (Core)

**IV.A.3.** Delineation of fellow responsibilities for patient care, progressive responsibility for patient management, and supervision of fellows over the continuum of the program; and,  (Core)

**IV.A.4.** ACGME Competencies

The program must integrate the following ACGME competencies into the curriculum:  (Core)

**IV.A.5.a) Patient Care and Procedural Skills**

**IV.A.5.a).(1)** Fellows must be able to provide patient care that is compassionate, appropriate, and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.  (Outcome)

**IV.A.5.a).(2)** Fellows must be able to competently perform all medical, diagnostic, and surgical procedures considered essential for the area of practice. Fellows:  (Outcome)

**IV.A.5.a).(2).(a)** must demonstrate competence in surgical and peri-operative management, including:

- congenital, neoplastic, infectious, and other acquired conditions of the gastrointestinal system and other abdominal organs;
- diaphragm and thorax, exclusive of the heart; endocrine glands; head and neck; gonads and reproductive organs;
- integument; and blood and vascular system;  (Outcome)

**IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(i)** operative and non-operative traumatic conditions of the abdomen, chest, head and neck, and extremities, with sufficient experience in the management of children who have sustained injuries to multiple organs;  (Outcome)
IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(iii) endoscopy of the airway and gastrointestinal tract, including laryngoscopy, bronchoscopy, esophagoscopy, gastroduodenoscopy, and lower intestinal endoscopy; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(iv) recognition and management of clotting and coagulation disorders; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(v) advanced laparoscopic and thoracoscopic techniques; and, (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(vi) care of the critically-ill infant or child, including: (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(vi).(a) cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(vi).(b) management of patients on ventilators; and, (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(a).(vi).(c) nutritional assessment and management. (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(b) must demonstrate competence in the pre-operative evaluation of patients, the making of provisional diagnoses, initiation of diagnostic procedures, formation of preliminary treatment plans, and provision of outpatient follow-up care of surgical patients. (Outcome)

IV.A.5.a).(2).(b).(i) Follow-up care should include not only both short-term but and long-term evaluation and progression extended periodic longitudinal care as well, particularly with major congenital anomalies or neoplasm cases, and neoplastic disorders. (Core)

IV.A.5.b) Medical Knowledge

Fellows must demonstrate knowledge of established and evolving biomedical, clinical, epidemiological and social-behavioral sciences, as well as the application of this knowledge to patient care. Fellows: (Outcome)

IV.A.5.b).(1) must demonstrate competence in their knowledge of the basic principles applicable to the pediatric population of cardiothoracic surgery, gynecology, neurological surgery, orthopaedic surgery, otolaryngology, anesthesia, urology, vascular surgery, transplant surgery, and the management of burns; (Outcome)
IV.A.5.b).(2) must demonstrate knowledge of the principles in the management of patients on ventilators and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO); and, (Outcome)

IV.A.5.b).(3) must demonstrate competence in their knowledge of invasive and non-invasive monitoring techniques and interpretation. (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c) Practice-based Learning and Improvement

Fellows must demonstrate the ability to investigate and evaluate their care of patients, to appraise and assimilate scientific evidence, and to continuously improve patient care based on constant self-evaluation and life-long learning. (Outcome)

Fellows are expected to develop skills and habits to be able to meet the following goals:

IV.A.5.c).(1) identify strengths, deficiencies, and limits in one’s knowledge and expertise; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(2) set learning and improvement goals; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(3) identify and perform appropriate learning activities; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(4) systematically analyze practice using quality improvement methods, and implement changes with the goal of practice improvement; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(5) incorporate formative evaluation feedback into daily practice; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(6) locate, appraise, and assimilate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients’ health problems; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(7) use information technology to optimize learning; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(8) participate in the education of patients, families, students, fellows and other health professionals; and, (Outcome)

IV.A.5.c).(9) participate in formal pediatric surgery conferences, including quality improvement and/or patient safety conferences that are specialty-specific and interdisciplinary in nature. (Outcome)
During the final year of their educational program, fellows should organize such conferences. (Outcome)

Fellows must have significant responsibilities for teaching junior residents and medical students. (Outcome)

### IV.A.5.d) Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Fellows must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals. (Outcome)

Fellows are expected to:

- communicate effectively with patients, families, and the public, as appropriate, across a broad range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds; (Outcome)
- communicate effectively with physicians, other health professionals, and health related agencies; (Outcome)
- work effectively as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group; (Outcome)
- act in a consultative role to other physicians and health professionals; (Outcome)
- maintain comprehensive, timely, and legible medical records, if applicable; and, (Outcome)
- provide care as consultants either in a consultative role or as a member of the primary patient care team, under appropriate supervision; and,
- demonstrate the ability to participate in multispecialty teams in the Emergency Department and with other specialists, such as neonatologists and intensivists. (Outcome)

### IV.A.5.e) Professionalism

Fellows must demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles. (Outcome)

Fellows are expected to demonstrate:

- compassion, integrity, and respect for others; (Outcome)
- responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-
IV.A.5.e). (3) respect for patient privacy and autonomy; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.e). (4) accountability to patients, society and the profession; and, (Outcome)

IV.A.5.e). (5) sensitivity and responsiveness to a diverse patient population, including but not limited to diversity in gender, age, culture, race, religion, disabilities, and sexual orientation. (Outcome)

IV.A.5.f) Systems-based Practice

Fellows must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context and system of health care, as well as the ability to call effectively on other resources in the system to provide optimal health care. (Outcome)

Fellows are expected to:

IV.A.5.f). (1) work effectively in various health care delivery settings and systems relevant to their clinical specialty; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.f). (2) coordinate patient care within the health care system relevant to their clinical specialty; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.f). (3) incorporate considerations of cost awareness and risk-benefit analysis in patient and/or population-based care as appropriate; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.f). (4) advocate for quality patient care and optimal patient care systems; (Outcome)

IV.A.5.f). (5) work in interprofessional teams to enhance patient safety and improve patient care quality; and, (Outcome)

IV.A.5.f). (6) participate in identifying system errors and implementing potential systems solutions. (Outcome)

IV.A.6. Curriculum Organization and Fellow Patient Care Experiences

IV.A.6.a) Fellows must have completed advanced life support training specific to pediatric patients (e.g., Pediatric Advanced Life Support [PALS]) before beginning critical care rotations. (Core) During the first 12 months of the program, no more than six months may be devoted to related clinical disciplines designed to enhance the educational experience, including... (Core)

IV.A.6.b) The program must be structured to include:
IV.A.6.b).(1) a minimum of 20 months in general pediatric surgery; (Core)

IV.A.6.b).(2) a maximum of four months dedicated to related clinical disciplines, including: (Core)

IV.A.6.b).(2).(a) a maximum of two months dedicated to pediatric critical care and/or neonatal intensive care; and,

IV.A.6.b).(2).(b) a maximum of two months of clinical assignments rotations in cardiothoracic surgery, gynecology, neurological surgery, orthopaedic surgery, otolaryngology, anesthesia, vascular surgery, transplant surgery, urology, and the management of burns. (Detail/Core)

IV.A.6.c) Optimal clinical care of surgical patients must include demonstrable involvement in pre- and post-operative care and, when applicable, follow-up that corresponds to the patient's unique surgical problem(s), with longevity of follow-up directly correlated to what is known about the natural history of the disease process(es). (Core)

IV.A.6.d) The final 12 months of clinical education must be at the chief level, with responsibility for patient management, and semi-independent operative experience under appropriate supervision. (Core)

IV.A.6.e) Fellows must have an academic program which emphasizes the scholarly attributes of self-instruction, teaching, basic sciences, skilled clinical analysis, sound surgical judgment, and research creativity. (Core)

IV.A.6.f) Fellows must be provided with primary patient care responsibility, under the supervision of pediatric surgery faculty members, in the care of critically-ill surgical patients to allow them to acquire the requisite specialty-specific knowledge and skills, and to obtain competence in the pre-, intra-, and post-operative care of such patients. (Core)

IV.A.6.f).(1) Fellows must have experience and develop competence in writing orders for total parenteral nutrition (TPN), managing extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO), managing fluids/vasopressors, managing ventilators, and decision-making around care. (Core)

IV.A.6.f).(2) Critical care experience must include:

IV.A.6.f).(2).(a) one month in the neonatal intensive care unit, to include the documented care of 20 neonates; and, (Core)
IV.A.6.f)(2).(b) one month in the pediatric intensive care unit, to include the documented care of 10 critically-ill pediatric patients. (Core)

To meet these goals/objectives, there must be coordination of care and collegial relationships between pediatric surgeons, neonatologists, and critical care intensivists concerning the management of medical problems in these complex critically-ill patients. (Core)

During the critical care experience, fellows must lead daily multidisciplinary rounds, to include decision-making and leadership in the care of patients with primary surgical problems. (Core)

Faculty members for neonatology, pediatric critical care, and/or pediatric surgical critical care must attest to the experience gained by each fellow in meeting the critical care requirements at the end of each critical care rotation. (Core)

Waivers to the critical care requirement or decreases of this experience to one month must be approved in advance by the Review Committee, and must be limited to exceptional circumstances, such as when a fellow has previously completed an ACGME-accredited fellowship in surgical critical care, and is board eligible or certified in surgical critical care by the American Board of Surgery. (Core)

Fellows must document an appropriate breadth, volume, and balance of operative experience as primary surgeon. (Core)

Fellows must document a total performance of a minimum of 800 major pediatric surgery procedures as surgeon during the program. (Core)

Fellows must participate in a minimum of 50 Teaching Assistant cases and may participate in a maximum of 50 additional Teaching Assistant cases for a maximum of 100 Teaching Assistant cases. (Core)

Fellows should, if not a surgery chief resident, act as a Teaching Assistant when their operative experiences justify a teaching role. (Detail)

Fellows must not share primary responsibility for the same patient with, or serve as teaching assistants for, a general surgery chief resident. (Core)
IV.A.6.i) Fellows must document at least one half-day of outpatient experience weekly, averaged over the 48 weeks of each year of clinical education. (Core)

IV.A.6.j) The program must provide fellows with an environment that emphasizes the scholarly attributes of self-instruction, teaching, basic sciences, skilled clinical analysis, sound surgical judgment, and research creativity. (Core)

IV.B. Fellows’ Scholarly Activities

IV.B.1. The curriculum must advance fellows’ knowledge of the basic principles of research, including how research is conducted, evaluated, explained to patients, and applied to patient care. (Core)

IV.B.2. Fellows should participate in scholarly activity. (Core)

IV.B.2.a) Fellows should understand and demonstrate knowledge of design, implementation, and interpretation of clinical research studies. (Outcome)

IV.B.3. The sponsoring institution and program should allocate adequate educational resources to facilitate fellow involvement in scholarly activities. (Detail)

V. Evaluation

V.A. Fellow Evaluation

V.A.1. The program director must appoint the Clinical Competency Committee. (Core)

V.A.1.a) At a minimum the Clinical Competency Committee must be composed of three members of the program faculty. (Core)

V.A.1.a).(1) The program director may appoint additional members of the Clinical Competency Committee.

V.A.1.a).(1).(a) These additional members must be physician faculty members from the same program or other programs, or other health professionals who have extensive contact and experience with the program’s fellows in patient care and other health care settings. (Core)

V.A.1.a).(1).(b) Chief residents who have completed core residency programs in their specialty and are eligible for specialty board certification may be members of the Clinical Competency Committee. (Core)
V.A.1.b) There must be a written description of the responsibilities of the Clinical Competency Committee. (Core)

V.A.1.b).(1) The Clinical Competency Committee should:

V.A.1.b).(1).(a) review all fellow evaluations semi-annually; (Core)

V.A.1.b).(1).(b) prepare and ensure the reporting of Milestones evaluations of each fellow semi-annually to ACGME; and, (Core)

V.A.1.b).(1).(c) advise the program director regarding fellow progress, including promotion, remediation, and dismissal. (Detail)

V.A.2. Formative Evaluation

V.A.2.a) The faculty must evaluate fellow performance in a timely manner during each rotation or similar educational assignment, and document this evaluation at completion of the assignment. (Core)

V.A.2.b) The program must:

V.A.2.b).(1) provide objective assessments of competence in patient care and procedural skills, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism, and systems-based practice based on the specialty-specific Milestones; (Core)

V.A.2.b).(2) use multiple evaluators (e.g., faculty, peers, patients, self, and other professional staff); (Detail)

V.A.2.b).(3) document progressive fellow performance improvement appropriate to educational level; and, (Core)

V.A.2.b).(4) provide each fellow with documented semiannual evaluation of performance with feedback. (Core)

V.A.2.c) The evaluations of fellow performance must be accessible for review by the fellow, in accordance with institutional policy. (Detail)

V.A.3. Summative Evaluation

V.A.3.a) The specialty-specific Milestones must be used as one of the tools to ensure fellows are able to practice core professional activities without supervision upon completion of the program. (Core)
V.A.3.b) The program director must provide a summative evaluation for each fellow upon completion of the program. (Core)

This evaluation must:

V.A.3.b).(1) become part of the fellow’s permanent record maintained by the institution, and must be accessible for review by the fellow in accordance with institutional policy; (Detail)

V.A.3.b).(2) document the fellow’s performance during the final period of education; and, (Detail)

V.A.3.b).(3) verify that the fellow has demonstrated sufficient competence to enter practice without direct supervision. (Detail)

V.B. Faculty Evaluation

V.B.1. At least annually, the program must evaluate faculty performance as it relates to the educational program. (Core)

V.B.2. These evaluations should include a review of the faculty’s clinical teaching abilities, commitment to the educational program, clinical knowledge, professionalism, and scholarly activities. (Detail)

V.B.3. This evaluation must include at least annual written confidential evaluations by the fellows. (Detail)

V.C. Program Evaluation and Improvement

V.C.1. The program director must appoint the Program Evaluation Committee (PEC). (Core)

V.C.1.a) The Program Evaluation Committee:

V.C.1.a).(1) must be composed of at least two program faculty members and should include at least one fellow; (Core)

V.C.1.a).(2) must have a written description of its responsibilities; and, (Core)

V.C.1.a).(3) should participate actively in:

V.C.1.a).(3).(a) planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating educational activities of the program; (Detail)

V.C.1.a).(3).(b) reviewing and making recommendations for revision of competency-based curriculum goals
V.C.1.a).(3).c addressing areas of non-compliance with ACGME standards; and, (Detail)

V.C.1.a).(3).d reviewing the program annually using evaluations of faculty, fellows, and others, as specified below. (Detail)

V.C.1.b) The program must assess and incorporate, into the Annual Program Evaluation, the impact of other learners, including residents and fellows in both ACGME-accredited and non-accredited programs at the Sponsoring Institution and at all participating sites. (Core)

V.C.2. The program, through the PEC, must document formal, systematic evaluation of the curriculum at least annually, and is responsible for rendering a written, annual program evaluation. (Core)

The program must monitor and track each of the following areas:

V.C.2.a) fellow performance; (Core)

V.C.2.b) faculty development; (Core)

V.C.2.b).(1) The program must provide documentation of faculty member participation in annual faculty development activities in fellow evaluation and teaching. (Core)

V.C.2.c) graduate performance, including performance of program graduates on the certification examination; (Core)

V.C.2.c).(1) The performance of program graduates on the certification examination must be used as one measure of evaluating program effectiveness. (Outcome)

V.C.2.c).(1).(a) At least 60 percent of the program’s graduates from the preceding seven years for programs with fellows and graduates taking the American Board of Surgery examinations must pass. (Outcome)

V.C.2.c).(1).(a).(i) at least 65 percent of a program’s graduates from the preceding seven years who take the Pediatric Surgery Qualifying Examination must pass; and, (Outcome)

V.C.2.c).(1).(a).(ii) at least 65 percent of a program’s graduates from the preceding seven years who have taken the Pediatric Surgery Certifying Examination must have passed. (Outcome)
V.C.2.d) program quality; and, (Core)

V.C.2.d).(1) Fellows and faculty must have the opportunity to evaluate the program confidentially and in writing at least annually, and (Detail)

V.C.2.d).(2) The program must use the results of fellows’ and faculty members’ assessments of the program together with other program evaluation results to improve the program. (Detail)

V.C.2.e) progress on the previous year’s action plan(s). (Core)

V.C.3. The PEC must prepare a written plan of action to document initiatives to improve performance in one or more of the areas listed in section V.C.2., as well as delineate how they will be measured and monitored. (Core)

V.C.3.a) The action plan should be reviewed and approved by the teaching faculty and documented in meeting minutes. (Detail)

V.C.4. Programs should use the American Board of Surgery Pediatric Surgery In-training Examination, or an equivalent examination, for the formative fellow evaluation of fellows and to inform program needs during the Annual Program Evaluation. (Detail)

VI. The Learning and Working Environment

Fellowship education must occur in the context of a learning and working environment that emphasizes the following principles:

- Excellence in the safety and quality of care rendered to patients by fellows today

- Excellence in the safety and quality of care rendered to patients by today’s fellows in their future practice

- Excellence in professionalism through faculty modeling of:
  - the effacement of self-interest in a humanistic environment that supports the professional development of physicians
  - the joy of curiosity, problem-solving, intellectual rigor, and discovery

- Commitment to the well-being of the students, residents/fellows, faculty members, and all members of the health care team

VI.A. Patient Safety, Quality Improvement, Supervision, and Accountability
VI.A.1. Patient Safety and Quality Improvement

All physicians share responsibility for promoting patient safety and enhancing quality of patient care. Graduate medical education must prepare fellows to provide the highest level of clinical care with continuous focus on the safety, individual needs, and humanity of their patients. It is the right of each patient to be cared for by fellows who are appropriately supervised; possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities; understand the limits of their knowledge and experience; and seek assistance as required to provide optimal patient care.

Fellows must demonstrate the ability to analyze the care they provide, understand their roles within health care teams, and play an active role in system improvement processes. Graduating fellows will apply these skills to critique their future unsupervised practice and effect quality improvement measures.

It is necessary for fellows and faculty members to consistently work in a well-coordinated manner with other health care professionals to achieve organizational patient safety goals.

VI.A.1.a) Patient Safety

VI.A.1.a).(1) Culture of Safety

A culture of safety requires continuous identification of vulnerabilities and a willingness to transparently deal with them. An effective organization has formal mechanisms to assess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of its personnel toward safety in order to identify areas for improvement.

VI.A.1.a).(1).(a) The program, its faculty, residents, and fellows must actively participate in patient safety systems and contribute to a culture of safety. (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(1).(b) The program must have a structure that promotes safe, interprofessional, team-based care. (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(2) Education on Patient Safety

Programs must provide formal educational activities that promote patient safety-related goals, tools, and techniques. (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(3) Patient Safety Events
Reporting, investigation, and follow-up of adverse events, near misses, and unsafe conditions are pivotal mechanisms for improving patient safety, and are essential for the success of any patient safety program. Feedback and experiential learning are essential to developing true competence in the ability to identify causes and institute sustainable systems-based changes to ameliorate patient safety vulnerabilities.

VI.A.1.a).(3).(a) Residents, fellows, faculty members, and other clinical staff members must:

VI.A.1.a).(3).(a).(i) know their responsibilities in reporting patient safety events at the clinical site; (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(3).(a).(ii) know how to report patient safety events, including near misses, at the clinical site; and, (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(3).(a).(iii) be provided with summary information of their institution’s patient safety reports. (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(3).(b) Fellows must participate as team members in real and/or simulated interprofessional clinical patient safety activities, such as root cause analyses or other activities that include analysis, as well as formulation and implementation of actions. (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(4) Fellow Education and Experience in Disclosure of Adverse Events

Patient-centered care requires patients, and when appropriate families, to be apprised of clinical situations that affect them, including adverse events. This is an important skill for faculty physicians to model, and for fellows to develop and apply.

VI.A.1.a).(4).(a) All fellows must receive training in how to disclose adverse events to patients and families. (Core)

VI.A.1.a).(4).(b) Fellows should have the opportunity to participate in the disclosure of patient safety events, real or simulated. (Detail)

VI.A.1.b) Quality Improvement
VI.A.1.b).(1) Education in Quality Improvement

A cohesive model of health care includes quality-related goals, tools, and techniques that are necessary in order for health care professionals to achieve quality improvement goals.

Fellows must receive training and experience in quality improvement processes, including an understanding of health care disparities. (Core)

VI.A.1.b).(2) Quality Metrics

Access to data is essential to prioritizing activities for care improvement and evaluating success of improvement efforts.

Fellows and faculty members must receive data on quality metrics and benchmarks related to their patient populations. (Core)

VI.A.1.b).(3) Engagement in Quality Improvement Activities

Experiential learning is essential to developing the ability to identify and institute sustainable systems-based changes to improve patient care.

Fellows must have the opportunity to participate in interprofessional quality improvement activities. (Core)

This should include activities aimed at reducing health care disparities. (Detail)

VI.A.2. Supervision and Accountability

Although the attending physician is ultimately responsible for the care of the patient, every physician shares in the responsibility and accountability for their efforts in the provision of care. Effective programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, define, widely communicate, and monitor a structured chain of responsibility and accountability as it relates to the supervision of all patient care.

Supervision in the setting of graduate medical education provides safe and effective care to patients; ensures each fellow’s development of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to enter the unsupervised practice of medicine; and establishes a foundation for continued professional growth.
Each patient must have an identifiable and appropriately-credentialed and privileged attending physician (or licensed independent practitioner as specified by the applicable Review Committee) who is responsible and accountable for the patient’s care. (Core)

This information must be available to fellows, faculty members, other members of the health care team, and patients. (Core)

Fellows and faculty members must inform each patient of their respective roles in that patient’s care when providing direct patient care. (Core)

Supervision may be exercised through a variety of methods. For many aspects of patient care, the supervising physician may be a more advanced fellow. Other portions of care provided by the fellow can be adequately supervised by the immediate availability of the supervising faculty member or fellow physician, either on site or by means of telephonic and/or electronic modalities. Some activities require the physical presence of the supervising faculty member. In some circumstances, supervision may include post-hoc review of fellow-delivered care with feedback.

The program must demonstrate that the appropriate level of supervision in place for all fellows is based on each fellow’s level of training and ability, as well as patient complexity and acuity. Supervision may be exercised through a variety of methods, as appropriate to the situation. (Core)

Levels of Supervision

To promote oversight of fellow supervision while providing for graded authority and responsibility, the program must use the following classification of supervision: (Core)

Direct Supervision – the supervising physician is physically present with the fellow and patient. (Core)

Indirect Supervision:

with Direct Supervision immediately available – the supervising physician is physically within the hospital or other site of patient care, and is immediately available to provide Direct Supervision. (Core)
VI.A.2.c).(2).(b) with Direct Supervision available – the supervising physician is not physically present within the hospital or other site of patient care, but is immediately available by means of telephonic and/or electronic modalities, and is available to provide Direct Supervision. (Core)

VI.A.2.c).(3) Oversight – the supervising physician is available to provide review of procedures/encounters with feedback provided after care is delivered. (Core)

VI.A.2.d) The privilege of progressive authority and responsibility, conditional independence, and a supervisory role in patient care delegated to each fellow must be assigned by the program director and faculty members. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(1) The program director must evaluate each fellow’s abilities based on specific criteria, guided by the Milestones. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(1).(a) The program must review and document each fellow’s required level of supervision at least annually. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(1).(b) The program’s supervision policy must outline volume-based and experiential definitions of required competencies for the performance of procedures and participation in pediatric and neonatal critical care. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(2) Faculty members functioning as supervising physicians must delegate portions of care to fellows based on the needs of the patient and the skills of each fellow. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(2).(a) Faculty members must have knowledge of each fellow’s prescribed level of supervision and must evaluate each fellow’s supervision needs with each rotation. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(3) Fellows should serve in a supervisory role to residents or junior fellows in recognition of their progress toward independence, based on the needs of each patient and the skills of the individual resident or fellow. (Detail)

VI.A.2.e) Programs must set guidelines for circumstances and events in which fellows must communicate with the supervising faculty member(s). (Core)
Each fellow must know the limits of their scope of authority, and the circumstances under which the fellow is permitted to act with conditional independence. (Outcome)

Programs must distribute these guidelines as a written chain of command to fellows and faculty members at least annually. (Core)

Faculty supervision assignments must be of sufficient duration to assess the knowledge and skills of each fellow and to delegate to the fellow the appropriate level of patient care authority and responsibility. (Core)

Specialty Background and Intent: Appropriately-credentialed and privileged attending physicians in the surgical clinical environment include appropriately-credentialed American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) board-certified surgeons (e.g., pediatric surgeries would be supervised by pediatric surgeons, etc.). In the critical care clinical environment, procedures must be supervised by appropriately-credentialed ABMS board-certified critical care physicians (e.g., anesthesia critical care physicians, critical care medicine physicians, critical care pediatric physicians, etc.).

Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, must educate fellows and faculty members concerning the professional responsibilities of physicians, including their obligation to be appropriately rested and fit to provide the care required by their patients. (Core)

The learning objectives of the program must:

- be accomplished through an appropriate blend of supervised patient care responsibilities, clinical teaching, and didactic educational events; (Core)

- be accomplished without excessive reliance on fellows to fulfill non-physician obligations; and, (Core)

- ensure manageable patient care responsibilities; and, (Core)

- be accomplished without excessive reliance on fellows to fulfill obligations of a non-educational nature or those activities that are not directly associated with the educational program. (Core)

The program director, in partnership with the Sponsoring Institution, must provide a culture of professionalism that supports patient safety and personal responsibility. (Core)

Fellows and faculty members must demonstrate an understanding of their personal role in the:
VI.B.4.a) provision of patient- and family-centered care; (Outcome)

VI.B.4.b) safety and welfare of patients entrusted to their care, including the ability to report unsafe conditions and adverse events; (Outcome)

VI.B.4.c) assurance of their fitness for work, including: (Outcome)

VI.B.4.c).(1) management of their time before, during, and after clinical assignments; and, (Outcome)

VI.B.4.c).(2) recognition of impairment, including from illness, fatigue, and substance use, in themselves, their peers, and other members of the health care team. (Outcome)

VI.B.4.d) commitment to lifelong learning; (Outcome)

VI.B.4.e) monitoring of their patient care performance improvement indicators; and, (Outcome)

VI.B.4.f) accurate reporting of clinical and educational work hours, patient outcomes, and clinical experience data. (Outcome)

VI.B.5. All fellows and faculty members must demonstrate responsiveness to patient needs that supersedes self-interest. This includes the recognition that under certain circumstances, the best interests of the patient may be served by transitioning that patient’s care to another qualified and rested provider. (Outcome)

VI.B.6. Programs must provide a professional, respectful, and civil environment that is free from mistreatment, abuse, or coercion of students, residents/fellows, faculty, and staff. Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, should have a process for education of fellows and faculty regarding unprofessional behavior and a confidential process for reporting, investigating, and addressing such concerns. (Core)

Specialty Background and Intent: Programs are advised to provide the caregiver team instruction in the recognition of and sensitivity to the experience and competency of other team members; time management; prioritization of tasks as the dynamics of a patient’s needs change; recognizing when an individual becomes overburdened with responsibilities that cannot be accomplished within an allotted time period; communication, so that if all required tasks cannot be accomplished in a timely fashion, appropriate methods are established to hand off the remaining task(s) to another team member as necessary; recognizing signs and symptoms of fatigue not only in oneself, but in other team members; compliance with work hour limits; and, team development.

VI.C. Well-Being

In the current health care environment, fellows and faculty members are at
increased risk for burnout and depression. Psychological, emotional, and physical well-being are critical in the development of the competent, caring, and resilient physician. Self-care is an important component of professionalism; it is also a skill that must be learned and nurtured in the context of other aspects of fellowship training. Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, have the same responsibility to address well-being as they do to evaluate other aspects of fellow competence.

VI.C.1. This responsibility must include:

VI.C.1.a) efforts to enhance the meaning that each fellow finds in the experience of being a physician, including protecting time with patients, minimizing non-physician obligations, providing administrative support, promoting progressive autonomy and flexibility, and enhancing professional relationships; (Core)

VI.C.1.b) attention to scheduling, work intensity, and work compression that impacts fellow well-being; (Core)

VI.C.1.c) evaluating workplace safety data and addressing the safety of fellows and faculty members; (Core)

VI.C.1.d) policies and programs that encourage optimal fellow and faculty member well-being; and, (Core)

VI.C.1.d).(1) Fellows must be given the opportunity to attend medical, mental health, and dental care appointments, including those scheduled during their working hours. (Core)

VI.C.1.e) attention to fellow and faculty member burnout, depression, and substance abuse. The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must educate faculty members and fellows in identification of the symptoms of burnout, depression, and substance abuse, including means to assist those who experience these conditions. Fellows and faculty members must also be educated to recognize those symptoms in themselves and how to seek appropriate care. The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must; (Core)

VI.C.1.e).(1) encourage fellows and faculty members to alert the program director or other designated personnel or programs when they are concerned that another resident, fellow, or faculty member may be displaying signs of burnout, depression, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, or potential for violence; (Core)

VI.C.1.e).(2) provide access to appropriate tools for self-screening; and, (Core)
VI.C.1.e).(3) provide access to confidential, affordable mental health assessment, counseling, and treatment, including access to urgent and emergent care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. (Core)

VI.C.2. There are circumstances in which fellows may be unable to attend work, including but not limited to fatigue, illness, and family emergencies. Each program must have policies and procedures in place that ensure coverage of patient care in the event that a fellow may be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities. These policies must be implemented without fear of negative consequences for the fellow who is unable to provide the clinical work. (Core)

VI.D. Fatigue Mitigation

VI.D.1. Programs must:

VI.D.1.a) educate all faculty members and fellows to recognize the signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation; (Core)

VI.D.1.b) educate all faculty members and fellows in alertness management and fatigue mitigation processes; and, (Core)

VI.D.1.c) encourage fellows to use fatigue mitigation processes to manage the potential negative effects of fatigue on patient care and learning. (Detail)

VI.D.2. Each program must ensure continuity of patient care, consistent with the program’s policies and procedures referenced in VI.C.2, in the event that a fellow may be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities due to excessive fatigue. (Core)

VI.D.3. The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must ensure adequate sleep facilities and safe transportation options for fellows who may be too fatigued to safely return home. (Core)

VI.E. Clinical Responsibilities, Teamwork, and Transitions of Care

VI.E.1. Clinical Responsibilities

VI.E.1.a) The clinical responsibilities for each fellow must be based on PGY level, patient safety, fellow ability, severity and complexity of patient illness/condition, and available support services. (Core)

VI.E.1.b) The workload associated with optimal clinical care of surgical patients must reflect the continuum from the moment of admission to the point to discharge. (Core)
VI.E.1.b) During the residency education process, surgical teams should be made up of attending surgeons, residents at various PG levels, medical students (when appropriate), and other health care providers. (Detail)

VI.E.1.c) The work of the caregiver team should be assigned to team members based on each member’s level of education, experience, and competence. (Detail)

VI.E.1.d) Work assignments should keep pace with residents’ increased competence and responsibility as they progress through the program. (Detail)

VI.E.2. Teamwork

Fellows must care for patients in an environment that maximizes communication. This must include the opportunity to work as a member of effective interprofessional teams that are appropriate to the delivery of care in the specialty and larger health system. (Core)

VI.E.2.a) Effective surgical practices entail the involvement of team members with a mix of complementary skills and attributes (physicians, nurses, and other staff). Programs should ensure that faculty and fellows demonstrate success requires both an unwavering mutual respect for those skills and contributions, and a shared commitment to the process of patient care. (Detail)

VI.E.2.b) During the fellowship education process, surgical teams should be made up of attending surgeons, residents and fellows at various PG levels, medical students (when appropriate), and other health care providers. (Detail)

VI.E.2.c) Fellows must collaborate with surgical team members as well as residents, fellows, and faculty members from other departments outside of their surgical specialty. (Outcome)

VI.E.2.d) Fellows must develop collaborative relationships to deliver patient care with nurse practitioners and physicians assistants as important members of the care team. (Outcome)

VI.E.2.e) Through all of their patient care experiences, fellows must continue to develop the necessary sensitivity and professionalism to expand their cultural competence to best formulate care plans for a diverse patient population. Fellows must collaborate with surgical residents, and especially with faculty members, other physicians outside of their specialties, and non-traditional health care providers, to best formulate treatment plans for an increasingly diverse patient population. (Outcome Detail)

VI.E.2.f) Fellows must assume personal responsibility to complete all tasks to which they are assigned (or which they voluntarily assume) in a
These tasks must be completed in the hours assigned, or, if that is not possible, fellows must learn and utilize the established methods for handing off remaining tasks to another member of the carefellow team so that patient care is not compromised. (DetailCore)

Lines of authority should be defined by programs, and all Fellows must have a working knowledge of the expected reporting relationships to maximize quality care and patient safety. (DetailOutcome)

Programs must design clinical assignments to optimize transitions in patient care, including their safety, frequency, and structure. (Core)

Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, must ensure and monitor effective, structured hand-over processes to facilitate both continuity of care and patient safety. (Core)

Programs must ensure that fellows are competent in communicating with team members in the hand-over process. (Outcome)

Programs and clinical sites must maintain and communicate schedules of attending physicians and fellows currently responsible for care. (Core)

Each program must ensure continuity of patient care, consistent with the program’s policies and procedures referenced in VI.C.2, in the event that a fellow may be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities due to excessive fatigue or illness, or family emergency. (Core)

Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, must design an effective program structure that is configured to provide fellows with educational and clinical experience opportunities, as well as reasonable opportunities for rest and personal activities.

Clinical and educational work hours must be limited to no more than 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house clinical and educational activities, clinical work done from home, and all moonlighting. (Core)
VI.F.2. Mandatory Time Free of Clinical Work and Education

VI.F.2.a) The program must design an effective program structure that is configured to provide fellows with educational opportunities, as well as reasonable opportunities for rest and personal well-being. (Core)

VI.F.2.b) Fellows should have eight hours off between scheduled clinical work and education periods. (Detail)

VI.F.2.b.(1) There may be circumstances when fellows choose to stay to care for their patients or return to the hospital with fewer than eight hours free of clinical experience and education. This must occur within the context of the 80-hour and the one-day-off-in-seven requirements. (Detail)

Specialty Background and Intent: The Review Committee recognizes that there are circumstances under which fellows may choose to stay at the hospital or may return to the hospital to care for patients. Most often, this is likely to happen when fellows have a role in a particular patient’s continuity of care.

Examples of these circumstances include:
- A patient on whom a fellow operated/intervened that day who needs to return to the operating room (OR).
- A patient on whom a fellow operated/intervened that day who requires transfer to an intensive care unit (ICU) from a lower level of care.
- A patient on whom a fellow operated/intervened that day who is critically unstable.
- A patient on whom a fellow operated/intervened during that hospital admission who needs to return to the OR related to an operation or procedure previously performed by that resident.
- A patient or patient’s family needs to discuss treatment of a critically-ill patient on whom the fellow has operated or is responsible for care.

Fellows may also have fewer than eight hours off between scheduled clinical work and education periods in the event of a declared emergency or disaster, for which fellows are included in the disaster plan, or to perform high profile, low frequency procedures necessary for competence in the field.

VI.F.2.c) Fellows must have at least 14 hours free of clinical work and education after 24 hours of in-house call. (Core)

VI.F.2.d) Fellows must be scheduled for a minimum of one day in seven free of clinical work and required education (when averaged over four weeks). At-home call cannot be assigned on these free days. (Core)

VI.F.3. Maximum Clinical Work and Education Period Length
VI.F.3.a) Clinical and educational work periods for fellows must not exceed 24 hours of continuous scheduled clinical assignments. (Core)

VI.F.3.a).(1) Up to four hours of additional time may be used for activities related to patient safety, such as providing effective transitions of care, and/or fellow education. (Core)

VI.F.3.a).(1).(a) Additional patient care responsibilities must not be assigned to a fellow during this time. (Core)

VI.F.4. Clinical and Educational Work Hour Exceptions

VI.F.4.a) In rare circumstances, after handing off all other responsibilities, a fellow, on their own initiative, may elect to remain or return to the clinical site in the following circumstances:

VI.F.4.a).(1) to continue to provide care to a single severely ill or unstable patient; (Detail)

VI.F.4.a).(2) humanistic attention to the needs of a patient or family; or, (Detail)

VI.F.4.a).(3) to attend unique educational events. (Detail)

VI.F.4.b) These additional hours of care or education will be counted toward the 80-hour weekly limit. (Detail)

VI.F.4.c) A Review Committee may grant rotation-specific exceptions for up to 10 percent or a maximum of 88 clinical and educational work hours to individual programs based on a sound educational rationale.

The Review Committee for Surgery will not consider requests for exceptions to the 80-hour limit to the fellows’ work week.

VI.F.4.c).(1) In preparing a request for an exception, the program director must follow the clinical and educational work hour exception policy from the ACGME Manual of Policies and Procedures. (Core)

VI.F.4.c).(2) Prior to submitting the request to the Review Committee, the program director must obtain approval from the Sponsoring Institution’s GMEC and DIO. (Core)

VI.F.5. Moonlighting

VI.F.5.a) Moonlighting must not interfere with the ability of the fellow to achieve the goals and objectives of the educational
VI.F.5.b) Time spent by fellows in internal and external moonlighting (as defined in the ACGME Glossary of Terms) must be counted toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.  

VI.F.6. In-House Night Float

Night float must occur within the context of the 80-hour and one-day-off-in-seven requirements.  

VI.F.6.a) Any rotation that requires residents/fellows to work multiple nights in succession is considered a night float rotation, and the total time on nights is must be counted toward the maximum allowable time for each resident/fellow over the duration of the program.  

VI.F.6.b) Night float rotations must not exceed two months in succession, or three months in succession for rotations with night shifts alternating with day shifts.  

VI.F.6.c) There must be no more than four months of night float per year for each fellow in the program.  

VI.F.6.d) There must be at least two months between each night float rotation.  

VI.F.7. Maximum In-House On-Call Frequency

Fellows must be scheduled for in-house call no more frequently than every third night (when averaged over a four-week period).  

VI.F.8. At-Home Call

VI.F.8.a) Time spent on patient care activities by fellows on at-home call must count toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit. The frequency of at-home call is not subject to the every-third-night limitation, but must satisfy the requirement for one day in seven free of clinical work and education, when averaged over four weeks.  

VI.F.8.a).(1) At-home call must not be so frequent or taxing as to preclude rest or reasonable personal time for each fellow.  

VI.F.8.b) Fellows are permitted to return to the hospital while on at-home call to provide direct care for new or established patients. These hours of inpatient patient care must be included in the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.  

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Core Requirements: Statements that define structure, resource, or process elements essential to every graduate medical educational program.

Detail Requirements: Statements that describe a specific structure, resource, or process, for achieving compliance with a Core Requirement. Programs and sponsoring institutions in substantial compliance with the Outcome Requirements may utilize alternative or innovative approaches to meet Core Requirements.

Outcome Requirements: Statements that specify expected measurable or observable attributes (knowledge, abilities, skills, or attitudes) of residents or fellows at key stages of their graduate medical education.

Osteopathic Recognition

For programs seeking Osteopathic Recognition for the entire program, or for a track within the program, the Osteopathic Recognition Requirements are also applicable.

(http://www.acgme.org/Portals/0/PFAssets/ProgramRequirements/Osteopathic_Recognition_Requirements.pdf)