Accreditation Council for
Graduate Medical Education

ACGME
Common Program Requirements (One-Year Fellowship)

ACGME-approved focused revision: June 13, 2021; effective July 1, 2022

Common Program Requirements (One-Year Fellowship) Contents

Introduction 3
- Int.A. Preamble 3
- Int.B. Definition of Subspecialty 3
- Int.C. Length of Educational Program 4

I. Oversight 4
- I.A. Sponsoring Institution 4
- I.B. Participating Sites 4
- I.C. Recruitment 5
- I.D. Resources 6
- I.E. Other Learners and Other Care Providers 7

II. Personnel 7
- II.A. Program Director 7
- II.B. Faculty 11
- II.C. Program Coordinator 14
- II.D. Other Program Personnel 14

III. Fellow Appointments 15
- III.A. Eligibility Criteria 15
- III.B. Number of Fellows 17

IV. Educational Program 17
- IV.A. Curriculum Components 17
- IV.B. ACGME Competencies 18
- IV.C. Curriculum Organization and Fellow Experiences 20
- IV.D. Scholarship 20
- IV.E. Independent Practice 21

V. Evaluation 21
- V.A. Fellow Evaluation 21
- V.B. Faculty Evaluation 24
- V.C. Program Evaluation and Improvement 25

VI. The Learning and Working Environment 28
- VI.A. Patient Safety, Quality Improvement, Supervision, and Accountability 29
- VI.B. Professionalism 35
- VI.C. Well-Being 37
- VI.D. Fatigue Mitigation 40
- VI.E. Clinical Responsibilities, Teamwork, and Transitions of Care 40
- VI.F. Clinical Experience and Education 42

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Common Program Requirements (One-Year Fellowship)

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.

Note: Review Committees may further specify only where indicated by "The Review Committee may/must further specify."

Background and Intent: These fellowship requirements reflect the fact that these learners have already completed the first phase of graduate medical education. Thus, this document is intended to explain the differences.

Introduction

Int.A. ***Fellowship is advanced graduate medical education beyond a core residency program for physicians who desire to enter more specialized practice. Fellowship-trained physicians serve the public by providing subspecialty care, which may also include core medical care, acting as a community resource for expertise in their field, creating and integrating new knowledge into practice, and educating future generations of physicians. Graduate medical education values the strength that a diverse group of physicians brings to medical care.***

Fellows who have completed residency are able to practice independently in their core specialty. The prior medical experience and expertise of fellows distinguish them from physicians entering into residency training. The fellow's care of patients within the subspecialty is undertaken with appropriate faculty supervision and conditional independence. Faculty members serve as role models of excellence, compassion, professionalism, and scholarship. The fellow develops deep medical knowledge, patient care skills, and expertise applicable to their focused area of practice. Fellowship is an intensive program of subspecialty clinical and didactic education that focuses on the multidisciplinary care of patients. Fellowship education is often physically, emotionally, and intellectually demanding, and occurs in a variety of clinical learning environments committed to graduate medical education and the well-being of patients, residents, fellows, faculty members, students, and all members of the health care team.

In addition to clinical education, many fellowship programs advance fellows' skills as physician-scientists. While the ability to create new knowledge within medicine is not exclusive to fellowship-educated physicians, the fellowship experience expands a physician's abilities to pursue hypothesis-driven scientific inquiry that results in contributions to the medical literature and patient care. Beyond the clinical subspecialty expertise achieved, fellows develop mentored relationships built on an infrastructure that promotes collaborative research.

Int.B. **Definition of Subspecialty**

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49 **[The Review Committee must further specify]**
50
51 **Int.C. Length of Educational Program**
52
53 **[The Review Committee must further specify]**
54
55 **I. Oversight**
56
57 **I.A. Sponsoring Institution**
58
59 ***The Sponsoring Institution is the organization or entity that assumes the***
60 ***ultimate financial and academic responsibility for a program of graduate***
61 ***medical education consistent with the ACGME Institutional Requirements.***
62
63 ***When the Sponsoring Institution is not a rotation site for the program, the***
64 ***most commonly utilized site of clinical activity for the program is the***
65 ***primary clinical site.***
66

Background and Intent: Participating sites will reflect the health care needs of the community and the educational needs of the fellows. A wide variety of organizations may provide a robust educational experience and, thus, Sponsoring Institutions and participating sites may encompass inpatient and outpatient settings including, but not limited to a university, a medical school, a teaching hospital, a nursing home, a school of public health, a health department, a public health agency, an organized health care delivery system, a medical examiner's office, an educational consortium, a teaching health center, a physician group practice, a federally qualified health center, a surgery center, an academic and private single-specialty clinic, or an educational foundation.

67
68 **I.A.1. The program must be sponsored by one ACGME-accredited**
69 **Sponsoring Institution.** (Core)*
70
71 **I.B. Participating Sites**
72
73 ***A participating site is an organization providing educational experiences or***
74 ***educational assignments/rotations for fellows.***
75
76 **I.B.1. The program, with approval of its Sponsoring Institution, must**
77 **designate a primary clinical site.** (Core)
78
79 **[The Review Committee may specify which other**
80 **specialties/programs must be present at the primary clinical site**
81 **and/or the expected relationship with a core program in the**
82 **discipline]**
83
84 **I.B.2. There must be a program letter of agreement (PLA) between the**
85 **program and each participating site that governs the relationship**
86 **between the program and the participating site providing a required**
87 **assignment.** (Core)
88
89 **I.B.2.a) The PLA must:**

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90
91 **I.B.2.a).(1)** **be renewed at least every 10 years; and, (Core)**
92
93 **I.B.2.a).(2)** **be approved by the designated institutional official**
94 **(DIO). (Core)**
95
96 **I.B.3.** **The program must monitor the clinical learning and working**
97 **environment at all participating sites. (Core)**
98
99 **I.B.3.a)** **At each participating site there must be one faculty member,**
100 **designated by the program director, who is accountable for**
101 **fellow education for that site, in collaboration with the**
102 **program director. (Core)**
103

Background and Intent: While all fellowship programs must be sponsored by a single ACGME-accredited Sponsoring Institution, many programs will utilize other clinical settings to provide required or elective training experiences. At times it is appropriate to utilize community sites that are not owned by or affiliated with the Sponsoring Institution. Some of these sites may be remote for geographic, transportation, or communication issues. When utilizing such sites, the program must designate a faculty member responsible for ensuring the quality of the educational experience. In some circumstances, the person charged with this responsibility may not be physically present at the site, but remains responsible for fellow education occurring at the site. The requirements under I.B.3. are intended to ensure that this will be the case.

Suggested elements to be considered in PLAs will be found in the ACGME Program Director's Guide to the Common Program Requirements. These include:
- **Identifying the faculty members who will assume educational and supervisory responsibility for fellows**
- **Specifying the responsibilities for teaching, supervision, and formal evaluation of fellows**
- **Specifying the duration and content of the educational experience**
- **Stating the policies and procedures that will govern fellow education during the assignment**

104
105 **I.B.4.** **The program director must submit any additions or deletions of**
106 **participating sites routinely providing an educational experience,**
107 **required for all fellows, of one month full time equivalent (FTE) or**
108 **more through the ACGME's Accreditation Data System (ADS). (Core)**
109
110 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
111
112 **I.C.** **The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must engage in**
113 **practices that focus on mission-driven, ongoing, systematic recruitment**
114 **and retention of a diverse and inclusive workforce of residents (if present),**
115 **fellows, faculty members, senior administrative staff members, and other**
116 **relevant members of its academic community. (Core)**
117

Background and Intent: It is expected that the Sponsoring Institution has, and programs implement, policies and procedures related to recruitment and retention of minorities

underrepresented in medicine and medical leadership in accordance with the Sponsoring Institution's mission and aims. The program's annual evaluation must include an assessment of the program's efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, as noted in V.C.1.c).(5).(c).

118
119 **I.D. Resources**
120
121 **I.D.1.** **The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must**
122 **ensure the availability of adequate resources for fellow education.**
123 **(Core)**
124
125 **[The Review Committee must further specify]**
126
127 **I.D.2.** **The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must**
128 **ensure healthy and safe learning and working environments that**
129 **promote fellow well-being and provide for: (Core)**
130
131 **I.D.2.a)** **access to food while on duty; (Core)**
132
133 **I.D.2.b)** **safe, quiet, clean, and private sleep/rest facilities available**
134 **and accessible for fellows with proximity appropriate for safe**
135 **patient care, if the fellows are assigned in-house call; (Core)**
136

Background and Intent: Care of patients within a hospital or health system occurs continually through the day and night. Such care requires that fellows function at their peak abilities, which requires the work environment to provide them with the ability to meet their basic needs within proximity of their clinical responsibilities. Access to food and rest are examples of these basic needs, which must be met while fellows are working. Fellows should have access to refrigeration where food may be stored. Food should be available when fellows are required to be in the hospital overnight. Rest facilities are necessary, even when overnight call is not required, to accommodate the fatigued fellow.

137
138 **I.D.2.c)** **clean and private facilities for lactation that have refrigeration**
139 **capabilities, with proximity appropriate for safe patient care;**
140 **(Core)**
141

Background and Intent: Sites must provide private and clean locations where fellows may lactate and store the milk within a refrigerator. These locations should be in close proximity to clinical responsibilities. It would be helpful to have additional support within these locations that may assist the fellow with the continued care of patients, such as a computer and a phone. While space is important, the time required for lactation is also critical for the well-being of the fellow and the fellow's family, as outlined in VI.C.1.d).(1).

142
143 **I.D.2.d)** **security and safety measures appropriate to the participating**
144 **site; and, (Core)**
145
146 **I.D.2.e)** **accommodations for fellows with disabilities consistent with**
147 **the Sponsoring Institution's policy. (Core)**

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148
149 **I.D.3. Fellows must have ready access to subspecialty-specific and other**
150 **appropriate reference material in print or electronic format. This**
151 **must include access to electronic medical literature databases with**
152 **full text capabilities.** (Core)
153
154 **I.D.4. The program's educational and clinical resources must be adequate**
155 **to support the number of fellows appointed to the program.** (Core)
156
157 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
158
159 **I.E.** ***A fellowship program usually occurs in the context of many learners and***
160 ***other care providers and limited clinical resources. It should be structured***
161 ***to optimize education for all learners present.***
162
163 **I.E.1. Fellows should contribute to the education of residents in core**
164 **programs, if present.** (Core)
165
166 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
167

Background and Intent: The clinical learning environment has become increasingly complex and often includes care providers, students, and post-graduate residents and fellows from multiple disciplines. The presence of these practitioners and their learners enriches the learning environment. Programs have a responsibility to monitor the learning environment to ensure that fellows' education is not compromised by the presence of other providers and learners, and that fellows' education does not compromise core residents' education.

168
169 **II. Personnel**
170
171 **II.A. Program Director**
172
173 **II.A.1. There must be one faculty member appointed as program director**
174 **with authority and accountability for the overall program, including**
175 **compliance with all applicable program requirements.** (Core)
176
177 **II.A.1.a) The Sponsoring Institution's Graduate Medical Education**
178 **Committee (GMEC) must approve a change in program**
179 **director.** (Core)
180
181 **II.A.1.b) Final approval of the program director resides with the**
182 **Review Committee.** (Core)
183

Background and Intent: While the ACGME recognizes the value of input from numerous individuals in the management of a fellowship, a single individual must be designated as program director and ~~made responsible~~ have overall responsibility for the program. ~~This individual will have dedicated time for the leadership of the fellowship, and it is this individual's responsibility to communicate with the fellows, faculty members, DIO, GMEC, and the ACGME.~~ The program director's nomination is reviewed and approved by the GMEC. Final approval of the program director~~s~~ resides with the applicable ACGME Review Committee.

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II.A.2. **The program director and, as applicable, the program's leadership team, must be provided with support adequate for administration of the program based upon its size and configuration.** (Core)

[The Review Committee must further specify minimum dedicated time for program administration, and will determine whether program leadership refers to the program director or both the program director and associate/assistant program director(s)]

~~**[The Review Committee may further specify regarding support for associate program director(s)]**~~

Background and Intent: ~~**Twenty percent FTE is defined as one day per week. [This number will be modified to fit the level of support specified by the Review Committee]**~~

~~**"Administrative time" is defined as non-clinical time spent meeting the responsibilities of the program director as detailed in requirements II.A.4.-II.A.4.a).(16).**~~

~~**The requirement does not address the source of funding required to provide the specified salary support.**~~

To achieve successful graduate medical education, individuals serving as education and administrative leaders of fellowship programs, as well as those significantly engaged in the education, supervision, evaluation, and mentoring of fellows, must have sufficient dedicated professional time to perform the vital activities required to sustain an accredited program.

The ultimate outcome of graduate medical education is excellence in fellow education and patient care.

The program director and, as applicable, the program leadership team, devote a portion of their professional effort to the oversight and management of the fellowship program, as defined in II.A.4.-II.A.4.a).(16). Both provision of support for the time required for the leadership effort and flexibility regarding how this support is provided are important. Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, may provide support for this time in a variety of ways. Examples of support may include, but are not limited to, salary support, supplemental compensation, educational value units, or relief of time from other professional duties.

Program directors and, as applicable, members of the program leadership team, who are new to the role may need to devote additional time to program oversight and management initially as they learn and become proficient in administering the program. It is suggested that during this initial period the support described above be increased as needed.

II.A.3. **Qualifications of the program director:**

II.A.3.a) **must include subspecialty expertise and qualifications acceptable to the Review Committee; and,** (Core)

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203 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
204
205 **II.A.3.b)** **must include current certification in the subspecialty for**
206 **which they are the program director by the American Board**
207 **of _____ or by the American Osteopathic Board of _____, or**
208 **subspecialty qualifications that are acceptable to the Review**
209 **Committee.** **(Core)**
210
211 **[The Review Committee may further specify acceptable**
212 **subspecialty qualifications or that only ABMS and AOA**
213 **certification will be considered acceptable]**
214
215 **[The Review Committee may further specify additional program**
216 **director qualifications]**
217
218 **II.A.4.** **Program Director Responsibilities**
219
220 **The program director must have responsibility, authority, and**
221 **accountability for: administration and operations; teaching and**
222 **scholarly activity; fellow recruitment and selection, evaluation, and**
223 **promotion of fellows, and disciplinary action; supervision of fellows;**
224 **and fellow education in the context of patient care.** **(Core)**
225
226 **II.A.4.a)** **The program director must:**
227
228 **II.A.4.a).(1)** **be a role model of professionalism;** **(Core)**
229

Background and Intent: The program director, as the leader of the program, must serve as a role model to fellows in addition to fulfilling the technical aspects of the role. As fellows are expected to demonstrate compassion, integrity, and respect for others, they must be able to look to the program director as an exemplar. It is of utmost importance, therefore, that the program director model outstanding professionalism, high quality patient care, educational excellence, and a scholarly approach to work. The program director creates an environment where respectful discussion is welcome, with the goal of continued improvement of the educational experience.

230
231 **II.A.4.a).(2)** **design and conduct the program in a fashion**
232 **consistent with the needs of the community, the**
233 **mission(s) of the Sponsoring Institution, and the**
234 **mission(s) of the program;** **(Core)**
235

Background and Intent: The mission of institutions participating in graduate medical education is to improve the health of the public. Each community has health needs that vary based upon location and demographics. Programs must understand the social determinants of health of the populations they serve and incorporate them in the design and implementation of the program curriculum, with the ultimate goal of addressing these needs and health disparities.

236
237 **II.A.4.a).(3)** **administer and maintain a learning environment**
238 **conducive to educating the fellows in each of the**
239 **ACGME Competency domains;** **(Core)**

240

Background and Intent: The program director may establish a leadership team to assist in the accomplishment of program goals. Fellowship programs can be highly complex. In a complex organization the leader typically has the ability to delegate authority to others, yet remains accountable. The leadership team may include physician and non-physician personnel with varying levels of education, training, and experience.

241
242 **II.A.4.a).(4)** **develop and oversee a process to evaluate candidates**
243 **prior to approval as program faculty members for**
244 **participation in the fellowship program education and**
245 **at least annually thereafter, as outlined in V.B.;** (Core)
246
247 **II.A.4.a).(5)** **have the authority to approve program faculty**
248 **members for participation in the fellowship program**
249 **education at all sites;** (Core)
250
251 **II.A.4.a).(6)** **have the authority to remove program faculty**
252 **members from participation in the fellowship program**
253 **education at all sites;** (Core)
254
255 **II.A.4.a).(7)** **have the authority to remove fellows from supervising**
256 **interactions and/or learning environments that do not**
257 **meet the standards of the program;** (Core)
258

Background and Intent: The program director has the responsibility to ensure that all who educate fellows effectively role model the Core Competencies. Working with a fellow is a privilege that is earned through effective teaching and professional role modeling. This privilege may be removed by the program director when the standards of the clinical learning environment are not met.

There may be faculty in a department who are not part of the educational program, and the program director controls who is teaching the residents.

259
260 **II.A.4.a).(8)** **submit accurate and complete information required**
261 **and requested by the DIO, GMEC, and ACGME;** (Core)
262
263 **II.A.4.a).(9)** **provide applicants who are offered an interview with**
264 **information related to the applicant's eligibility for the**
265 **relevant subspecialty board examination(s);** (Core)
266
267 **II.A.4.a).(10)** **provide a learning and working environment in which**
268 **fellows have the opportunity to raise concerns and**
269 **provide feedback in a confidential manner as**
270 **appropriate, without fear of intimidation or retaliation;**
271 (Core)
272
273 **II.A.4.a).(11)** **ensure the program's compliance with the Sponsoring**
274 **Institution's policies and procedures related to**
275 **grievances and due process;** (Core)
276

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277 **II.A.4.a).(12)** **ensure the program's compliance with the Sponsoring Institution's policies and procedures for due process when action is taken to suspend or dismiss, not to promote, or not to renew the appointment of a fellow;** **(Core)**
281
282

Background and Intent: A program does not operate independently of its Sponsoring Institution. It is expected that the program director will be aware of the Sponsoring Institution's policies and procedures, and will ensure they are followed by the program's leadership, faculty members, support personnel, and fellows.

283
284 **II.A.4.a).(13)** **ensure the program's compliance with the Sponsoring Institution's policies and procedures on employment and non-discrimination;** **(Core)**
287
288 **II.A.4.a).(13).(a)** **Fellows must not be required to sign a non-competition guarantee or restrictive covenant.** **(Core)**
290
291
292 **II.A.4.a).(14)** **document verification of program completion for all graduating fellows within 30 days;** **(Core)**
294
295 **II.A.4.a).(15)** **provide verification of an individual fellow's completion upon the fellow's request, within 30 days; and,** **(Core)**
298

Background and Intent: Primary verification of graduate medical education is important to credentialing of physicians for further training and practice. Such verification must be accurate and timely. Sponsoring Institution and program policies for record retention are important to facilitate timely documentation of fellows who have previously completed the program. Fellows who leave the program prior to completion also require timely documentation of their summative evaluation.

299
300 **II.A.4.a).(16)** **obtain review and approval of the Sponsoring Institution's DIO before submitting information or requests to the ACGME, as required in the Institutional Requirements and outlined in the ACGME Program Director's Guide to the Common Program Requirements.** **(Core)**
306
307 **II.B. Faculty**
308
309 ***Faculty members are a foundational element of graduate medical education – faculty members teach fellows how to care for patients. Faculty members provide an important bridge allowing fellows to grow and become practice ready, ensuring that patients receive the highest quality of care. They are role models for future generations of physicians by demonstrating compassion, commitment to excellence in teaching and patient care, professionalism, and a dedication to lifelong learning. Faculty members experience the pride and joy of fostering the growth and development of future colleagues. The care they provide is enhanced by the opportunity to***

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teach. By employing a scholarly approach to patient care, faculty members, through the graduate medical education system, improve the health of the individual and the population.

Faculty members ensure that patients receive the level of care expected from a specialist in the field. They recognize and respond to the needs of the patients, fellows, community, and institution. Faculty members provide appropriate levels of supervision to promote patient safety. Faculty members create an effective learning environment by acting in a professional manner and attending to the well-being of the fellows and themselves.

Background and Intent: "Faculty" refers to the entire teaching force responsible for educating fellows. The term "faculty," including "core faculty," does not imply or require an academic appointment ~~or salary support~~.

II.B.1. **For each participating site, there must be a sufficient number of faculty members with competence to instruct and supervise all fellows at that location.** **(Core)**

[The Review Committee may further specify]

II.B.2. **Faculty members must:**

II.B.2.a) **be role models of professionalism;** **(Core)**

II.B.2.b) **demonstrate commitment to the delivery of safe, quality, cost-effective, patient-centered care;** **(Core)**

Background and Intent: Patients have the right to expect quality, cost-effective care with patient safety at its core. The foundation for meeting this expectation is formed during residency and fellowship. Faculty members model these goals and continually strive for improvement in care and cost, embracing a commitment to the patient and the community they serve.

II.B.2.c) **demonstrate a strong interest in the education of fellows;** **(Core)**

II.B.2.d) **devote sufficient time to the educational program to fulfill their supervisory and teaching responsibilities;** **(Core)**

II.B.2.e) **administer and maintain an educational environment conducive to educating fellows; and,** **(Core)**

II.B.2.f) **pursue faculty development designed to enhance their skills.** **(Core)**

[The Review Committee may further specify faculty qualifications]

II.B.3. **Faculty Qualifications**

II.B.3.a) **Faculty members must have appropriate qualifications in their field and hold appropriate institutional appointments.** **(Core)**

[The Review Committee may further specify]

II.B.3.b) **Subspecialty physician faculty members must:**

II.B.3.b).(1) **have current certification in the subspecialty by the American Board of _____ or the American Osteopathic Board of _____, or possess qualifications judged acceptable to the Review Committee.** **(Core)**

[The Review Committee may further specify additional qualifications]

II.B.3.c) **Any non-physician faculty members who participate in fellowship program education must be approved by the program director.** **(Core)**

[The Review Committee may further specify]

Background and Intent: The provision of optimal and safe patient care requires a team approach. The education of fellows by non-physician educators enables the fellows to better manage patient care and provides valuable advancement of the fellows' knowledge. Furthermore, other individuals contribute to the education of the fellow in the basic science of the subspecialty or in research methodology. If the program director determines that the contribution of a non-physician individual is significant to the education of the fellow, the program director may designate the individual as a program faculty member or a program core faculty member.

II.B.3.d) **Any other specialty physician faculty members must have current certification in their specialty by the appropriate American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member board or American Osteopathic Association (AOA) certifying board, or possess qualifications judged acceptable to the Review Committee.** **(Core)**

[The Review Committee may further specify]

II.B.4. **Core Faculty**

Core faculty members must have a significant role in the education and supervision of fellows and must devote a significant portion of their entire effort to fellow education and/or administration, and must, as a component of their activities, teach, evaluate, and provide formative feedback to fellows. **(Core)**

Background and Intent: ~~**Core faculty members are critical to the success of fellow education. They support the program leadership in developing, implementing, and assessing curriculum and in assessing fellows' progress toward achievement of**~~

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~~competence in the subspecialty. Core faculty members should be selected for their broad knowledge of and involvement in the program, permitting them to effectively evaluate the program, including completion of the annual ACGME Faculty Survey.~~

Core faculty members are critical to the success of fellow education. They support the program leadership in developing, implementing, and assessing curriculum, mentoring fellows, and assessing fellows' progress toward achievement of competence in and the independent practice of the specialty. Core faculty members should be selected for their broad knowledge of and involvement in the program, permitting them to effectively evaluate the program. Core faculty members may also be selected for their specific expertise and unique contributions to the program. Core faculty members are engaged in a broad range of activities, which may vary across programs and specialties. Core faculty members provide clinical teaching and supervision of fellows, and also participate in non-clinical activities related to fellow education and program administration. Examples of these non-clinical activities include, but are not limited to, interviewing and selecting fellow applicants, providing didactic instruction, mentoring fellows, simulation exercises, completing the annual ACGME Faculty Survey, and participating on the program's Clinical Competency Committee, Program Evaluation Committee, and other GME committees.

II.B.4.a) **Core faculty members must be designated by the program director.** (Core)

II.B.4.b) **Core faculty members must complete the annual ACGME Faculty Survey.** (Core)

[The Review Committee must specify the minimum number of faculty and/or the faculty-fellow ratio]

[The Review Committee may further specify requirements regarding dedicated time ~~support~~ for core faculty members]

II.C. Program Coordinator

II.C.1. **There must be administrative support for program coordination.** (Core)

[The Review Committee may further specify]

Background and Intent: ~~Twenty percent FTE is defined as one day per week. [If applicable, this Background and Intent will be included in the subspecialty-specific program requirements and the number will be modified to fit the level of support specified by the Review Committee]~~

The requirement does not address the source of funding required to provide the specified salary support.

II.D. Other Program Personnel

The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must jointly ensure the availability of necessary personnel for the effective administration of the program. (Core)

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425
426 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
427

Background and Intent: Multiple personnel may be required to effectively administer a program. These may include staff members with clerical skills, project managers, education experts, and staff members to maintain electronic communication for the program. These personnel may support more than one program in more than one discipline.

428
429 **III. Fellow Appointments**
430
431 **III.A. Eligibility Criteria**
432
433 **III.A.1. Eligibility Requirements – Fellowship Programs**
434
435 **[Review Committee to choose one of the following:]**
436
437 **Option 1: All required clinical education for entry into ACGME-**
438 **accredited fellowship programs must be completed in an ACGME-**
439 **accredited residency program, an AOA-approved residency**
440 **program, a program with ACGME International (ACGME-I) Advanced**
441 **Specialty Accreditation, or a Royal College of Physicians and**
442 **Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC)-accredited or College of Family**
443 **Physicians of Canada (CFPC)-accredited residency program located**
444 **in Canada.** (Core)
445
446 **Option 2: All required clinical education for entry into ACGME-**
447 **accredited fellowship programs must be completed in an ACGME-**
448 **accredited residency program or an AOA-approved residency**
449 **program.** (Core)
450

Background and Intent: Eligibility for ABMS or AOA Board certification may not be satisfied by fellowship training. Applicants must be notified of this at the time of application, as required in II.A.4.a).(9).

451
452 **III.A.1.a) [If Review Committee selected Option 1 above:]**
453 **Fellowship programs must receive verification of each**
454 **entering fellow's level of competence in the required field,**
455 **upon matriculation, using ACGME, ACGME-I, or CanMEDS**
456 **Milestones evaluations from the core residency program.** (Core)
457
458 **[If Review Committee selected Option 2 above:]**
459 **Fellowship programs must receive verification of each**
460 **entering fellow's level of competence in the required field,**
461 **upon matriculation, using ACGME Milestones evaluations**
462 **from the core residency program.** (Core)
463
464 **III.A.1.b) [The Review Committee must further specify prerequisite**
465 **postgraduate clinical education]**
466
467 **III.A.1.c) Fellow Eligibility Exception**

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468
469 **The Review Committee for ______ will allow the following exception to the fellowship eligibility requirements:**
470
471
472 **[Note: Review Committees that selected Option 1 will decide whether or not to allow this exception. This section will be deleted for Review Committees that do not allow the exception and for Review Committees that selected Option 2]**
473
474
475
476
477 **III.A.1.c).(1)** **An ACGME-accredited fellowship program may accept an exceptionally qualified international graduate applicant who does not satisfy the eligibility requirements listed in III.A.1., but who does meet all of the following additional qualifications and conditions: (Core)**
478
479
480
481
482
483
484 **III.A.1.c).(1).(a)** **evaluation 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)**
485
486
487
488
489
490
491 **III.A.1.c).(1).(b)** **review and approval of the applicant's exceptional qualifications by the GMEC; and, (Core)**
492
493
494
495 **III.A.1.c).(1).(c)** **verification of Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) certification. (Core)**
496
497
498
499 **III.A.1.c).(2)** **Applicants accepted through this exception must have an evaluation of their performance by the Clinical Competency Committee within 12 weeks of matriculation. (Core)**
500
501
502
503

[If Review Committee allows the exception specified above:]
Background and Intent: An exceptionally qualified international graduate applicant has (1) completed a residency program in the core specialty outside the continental United States that was not accredited by the ACGME, AOA, ACGME-I, RCPSC or CFPC, 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; and/or (c) demonstrated leadership during or after residency. Applicants being considered for these positions must be informed of the fact that their training may not lead to certification by ABMS member boards or AOA certifying boards.

In recognition of the diversity of medical education and training around the world, this early evaluation of clinical competence required for these applicants ensures they can provide quality and safe patient care. Any gaps in competence should be addressed

as per policies for fellows already established by the program in partnership with the Sponsoring Institution.

504
505 **III.B.** **The program director must not appoint more fellows than approved by the**
506 **Review Committee.** (Core)
507
508 **III.B.1.** **All complement increases must be approved by the Review**
509 **Committee.** (Core)
510
511 **[The Review Committee may further specify minimum complement**
512 **numbers]**
513
514 **IV. Educational Program**
515
516 ***The ACGME accreditation system is designed to encourage excellence and***
517 ***innovation in graduate medical education regardless of the organizational***
518 ***affiliation, size, or location of the program.***
519
520 ***The educational program must support the development of knowledgeable, skillful***
521 ***physicians who provide compassionate care.***
522
523 ***In addition, the program is expected to define its specific program aims consistent***
524 ***with the overall mission of its Sponsoring Institution, the needs of the community***
525 ***it serves and that its graduates will serve, and the distinctive capabilities of***
526 ***physicians it intends to graduate. While programs must demonstrate substantial***
527 ***compliance with the Common and subspecialty-specific Program Requirements, it***
528 ***is recognized that within this framework, programs may place different emphasis***
529 ***on research, leadership, public health, etc. It is expected that the program aims***
530 ***will reflect the nuanced program-specific goals for it and its graduates; for***
531 ***example, it is expected that a program aiming to prepare physician-scientists will***
532 ***have a different curriculum from one focusing on community health.***
533
534 **IV.A.** **The curriculum must contain the following educational components:** (Core)
535
536 **IV.A.1.** **a set of program aims consistent with the Sponsoring Institution's**
537 **mission, the needs of the community it serves, and the desired**
538 **distinctive capabilities of its graduates;** (Core)
539
540 **IV.A.1.a)** **The program's aims must be made available to program**
541 **applicants, fellows, and faculty members.** (Core)
542
543 **IV.A.2.** **competency-based goals and objectives for each educational**
544 **experience designed to promote progress on a trajectory to**
545 **autonomous practice in their subspecialty. These must be**
546 **distributed, reviewed, and available to fellows and faculty members;**
547 (Core)
548
549 **IV.A.3.** **delineation of fellow responsibilities for patient care, progressive**
550 **responsibility for patient management, and graded supervision in**
551 **their subspecialty;** (Core)
552

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Background and Intent: These responsibilities may generally be described by PGY level and specifically by Milestones progress as determined by the Clinical Competency Committee. This approach encourages the transition to competency-based education. An advanced learner may be granted more responsibility independent of PGY level and a learner needing more time to accomplish a certain task may do so in a focused rather than global manner.

553
554 **IV.A.4.** **structured educational activities beyond direct patient care; and,**
555 **(Core)**
556

Background and Intent: Patient care-related educational activities, such as morbidity and mortality conferences, tumor boards, surgical planning conferences, case discussions, etc., allow fellows to gain medical knowledge directly applicable to the patients they serve. Programs should define those educational activities in which fellows are expected to participate and for which time is protected. Further specification can be found in IV.C.

557
558 **IV.A.5.** **advancement of fellows' knowledge of ethical principles**
559 **foundational to medical professionalism. (Core)**
560
561 **IV.B.** **ACGME Competencies**
562

Background and Intent: The Competencies provide a conceptual framework describing the required domains for a trusted physician to enter autonomous practice. These Competencies are core to the practice of all physicians, although the specifics are further defined by each subspecialty. The developmental trajectories in each of the Competencies are articulated through the Milestones for each subspecialty. The focus in fellowship is on subspecialty-specific patient care and medical knowledge, as well as refining the other competencies acquired in residency.

563
564 **IV.B.1.** **The program must integrate the following ACGME Competencies**
565 **into the curriculum: (Core)**
566
567 **IV.B.1.a)** **Professionalism**
568
569 **Fellows must demonstrate a commitment to professionalism**
570 **and an adherence to ethical principles. (Core)**
571
572 **IV.B.1.b)** **Patient Care and Procedural Skills**
573

Background and Intent: Quality patient care is safe, effective, timely, efficient, patient-centered, equitable, and designed to improve population health, while reducing per capita costs. (See the Institute of Medicine [IOM]'s *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*, 2001 and Berwick D, Nolan T, Whittington J. *The Triple Aim: care, cost, and quality. Health Affairs.* 2008; 27(3):759-769.). In addition, there should be a focus on improving the clinician's well-being as a means to improve patient care and reduce burnout among residents, fellows, and practicing physicians.

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These organizing principles inform the Common Program Requirements across all Competency domains. Specific content is determined by the Review Committees with input from the appropriate professional societies, certifying boards, and the community.

574
575 **IV.B.1.b).(1)** **Fellows must be able to provide patient care that is**
576 **compassionate, appropriate, and effective for the**
577 **treatment of health problems and the promotion of**
578 **health.** (Core)
579
580 **[The Review Committee must further specify]**
581
582 **IV.B.1.b).(2)** **Fellows must be able to perform all medical,**
583 **diagnostic, and surgical procedures considered**
584 **essential for the area of practice.** (Core)
585
586 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
587
588 **IV.B.1.c)** **Medical Knowledge**
589
590 **Fellows must demonstrate knowledge of established and**
591 **evolving biomedical, clinical, epidemiological and social-**
592 **behavioral sciences, as well as the application of this**
593 **knowledge to patient care.** (Core)
594
595 **[The Review Committee must further specify]**
596
597 **IV.B.1.d)** **Practice-based Learning and Improvement**
598
599 **Fellows must demonstrate the ability to investigate and**
600 **evaluate their care of patients, to appraise and assimilate**
601 **scientific evidence, and to continuously improve patient care**
602 **based on constant self-evaluation and lifelong learning.** (Core)
603

Background and Intent: Practice-based learning and improvement is one of the defining characteristics of being a physician. It is the ability to investigate and evaluate the care of patients, to appraise and assimilate scientific evidence, and to continuously improve patient care based on constant self-evaluation and lifelong learning.

The intention of this Competency is to help a fellow refine the habits of mind required to continuously pursue quality improvement, well past the completion of fellowship.

604
605 **IV.B.1.e)** **Interpersonal and Communication Skills**
606
607 **Fellows must demonstrate interpersonal and communication**
608 **skills that result in the effective exchange of information and**
609 **collaboration with patients, their families, and health**
610 **professionals.** (Core)
611
612 **IV.B.1.f)** **Systems-based Practice**
613

614 615 616 617 618 **Fellows must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context and system of health care, including the social determinants of health, as well as the ability to call effectively on other resources to provide optimal health care.** (Core)

620 **IV.C. Curriculum Organization and Fellow Experiences**

622 **IV.C.1. The curriculum must be structured to optimize fellow educational experiences, the length of these experiences, and supervisory continuity.** (Core)

626 **[The Review Committee must further specify]**

628 **IV.C.2. The program must provide instruction and experience in pain management if applicable for the subspecialty, including recognition of the signs of addiction.** (Core)

632 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**

634 **[The Review Committee may specify required didactic and clinical experiences]**

637 **IV.D. Scholarship**

639 ***Medicine is both an art and a science. The physician is a humanistic scientist who cares for patients. This requires the ability to think critically, evaluate the literature, appropriately assimilate new knowledge, and practice lifelong learning. The program and faculty must create an environment that fosters the acquisition of such skills through fellow participation in scholarly activities as defined in the subspecialty-specific Program Requirements. Scholarly activities may include discovery, integration, application, and teaching.***

648 ***The ACGME recognizes the diversity of fellowships and anticipates that programs prepare physicians for a variety of roles, including clinicians, scientists, and educators. It is expected that the program's scholarship will reflect its mission(s) and aims, and the needs of the community it serves. For example, some programs may concentrate their scholarly activity on quality improvement, population health, and/or teaching, while other programs might choose to utilize more classic forms of biomedical research as the focus for scholarship.***

657 **IV.D.1. Program Responsibilities**

659 **IV.D.1.a) The program must demonstrate evidence of scholarly activities, consistent with its mission(s) and aims.** (Core)

662 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**

664 **IV.D.2. Faculty Scholarly Activity**

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665
666 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
667
668 **IV.D.3. Fellow Scholarly Activity**
669
670 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
671
672 **IV.E.** ***Fellowship programs may assign fellows to engage in the independent***
673 ***practice of their core specialty during their fellowship program.***
674
675 **IV.E.1. If programs permit their fellows to utilize the independent practice**
676 **option, it must not exceed 20 percent of their time per week or 10**
677 **weeks of an academic year.** **(Core)**
678
679 **[This section will be deleted for those Review Committees that**
680 **choose not to permit the independent practice option. For those that**
681 **choose to permit this option, the Review Committee may further**
682 **specify.]**
683

Background and Intent: Fellows who have previously completed residency programs have demonstrated sufficient competence to enter autonomous practice within their core specialty. This option is designed to enhance fellows' maturation and competence in their core specialty. This enables fellows to occupy a dual role in the health system: as learners in their subspecialty, and as credentialed practitioners in their core specialty. Hours worked in independent practice during fellowship still fall under the clinical and educational work hour limits. See Program Director Guide for more details.

684
685 **V. Evaluation**
686
687 **V.A. Fellow Evaluation**
688
689 **V.A.1. Feedback and Evaluation**
690

Background and Intent: Feedback is ongoing information provided regarding aspects of one's performance, knowledge, or understanding. The faculty empower fellows to provide much of that feedback themselves in a spirit of continuous learning and self-reflection. Feedback from faculty members in the context of routine clinical care should be frequent, and need not always be formally documented.

Formative and summative evaluation have distinct definitions. Formative evaluation is *monitoring fellow learning* and providing ongoing feedback that can be used by fellows to improve their learning in the context of provision of patient care or other educational opportunities. More specifically, formative evaluations help:

- **fellows identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work**
- **program directors and faculty members recognize where fellows are struggling and address problems immediately**

Summative evaluation is *evaluating a fellow's learning* by comparing the fellows against the goals and objectives of the rotation and program, respectively. Summative

evaluation is utilized to make decisions about promotion to the next level of training, or program completion.

End-of-rotation and end-of-year evaluations have both summative and formative components. Information from a summative evaluation can be used formatively when fellows or faculty members use it to guide their efforts and activities in subsequent rotations and to successfully complete the fellowship program.

Feedback, formative evaluation, and summative evaluation compare intentions with accomplishments, enabling the transformation of a new specialist to one with growing subspecialty expertise.

691
692 **V.A.1.a)** **Faculty members must directly observe, evaluate, and**
693 **frequently provide feedback on fellow performance during**
694 **each rotation or similar educational assignment.** (Core)
695
696 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
697

Background and Intent: Faculty members should provide feedback frequently throughout the course of each rotation. Fellows require feedback from faculty members to reinforce well-performed duties and tasks, as well as to correct deficiencies. This feedback will allow for the development of the learner as they strive to achieve the Milestones. More frequent feedback is strongly encouraged for fellows who have deficiencies that may result in a poor final rotation evaluation.

698
699 **V.A.1.b)** **Evaluation must be documented at the completion of the**
700 **assignment.** (Core)
701
702 **V.A.1.b).(1)** **Evaluations must be completed at least every three**
703 **months.** (Core)
704
705 **V.A.1.c)** **The program must provide an objective performance**
706 **evaluation based on the Competencies and the subspecialty-**
707 **specific Milestones, and must:** (Core)
708
709 **V.A.1.c).(1)** **use multiple evaluators (e.g., faculty members, peers,**
710 **patients, self, and other professional staff members);**
711 **and,** (Core)
712
713 **V.A.1.c).(2)** **provide that information to the Clinical Competency**
714 **Committee for its synthesis of progressive fellow**
715 **performance and improvement toward unsupervised**
716 **practice.** (Core)
717

Background and Intent: The trajectory to autonomous practice in a subspecialty is documented by the subspecialty-specific Milestones evaluation during fellowship. These Milestones detail the progress of a fellow in attaining skill in each competency domain. It is expected that the most growth in fellowship education occurs in patient care and medical knowledge, while the other four domains of competency must be ensured in the context of the subspecialty. They are developed by a subspecialty

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group and allow evaluation based on observable behaviors. The Milestones are considered formative and should be used to identify learning needs. This may lead to focused or general curricular revision in any given program or to individualized learning plans for any specific fellow.

718
719 **V.A.1.d)** **The program director or their designee, with input from the**
720 **Clinical Competency Committee, must:**
721
722 **V.A.1.d).(1)** **meet with and review with each fellow their**
723 **documented semi-annual evaluation of performance,**
724 **including progress along the subspecialty-specific**
725 **Milestones.** (Core)
726
727 **V.A.1.d).(2)** **develop plans for fellows failing to progress, following**
728 **institutional policies and procedures.** (Core)
729

Background and Intent: Learning is an active process that requires effort from the teacher and the learner. Faculty members evaluate a fellow's performance at least at the end of each rotation. The program director or their designee will review those evaluations, including their progress on the Milestones, at a minimum of every six months. Fellows should be encouraged to reflect upon the evaluation, using the information to reinforce well-performed tasks or knowledge or to modify deficiencies in knowledge or practice. Working together with the faculty members, fellows should develop an individualized learning plan.

Fellows who are experiencing difficulties with achieving progress along the Milestones may require intervention to address specific deficiencies. Such intervention, documented in an individual remediation plan developed by the program director or a faculty mentor and the fellow, will take a variety of forms based on the specific learning needs of the fellow. However, the ACGME recognizes that there are situations which require more significant intervention that may alter the time course of fellow progression. To ensure due process, it is essential that the program director follow institutional policies and procedures.

730
731 **V.A.1.e)** **The evaluations of a fellow's performance must be accessible**
732 **for review by the fellow.** (Core)
733
734 **V.A.2.** **Final Evaluation**
735
736 **V.A.2.a)** **The program director must provide a final evaluation for each**
737 **fellow upon completion of the program.** (Core)
738
739 **V.A.2.a).(1)** **The subspecialty-specific Milestones, and when**
740 **applicable the subspecialty-specific Case Logs, must**
741 **be used as tools to ensure fellows are able to engage**
742 **in autonomous practice upon completion of the**
743 **program.** (Core)
744
745 **V.A.2.a).(2)** **The final evaluation must:**
746

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747 **V.A.2.a).(2).(a)** **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;** **(Core)**
748
749
750
751
752 **V.A.2.a).(2).(b)** **verify that the fellow has demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to enter autonomous practice;** **(Core)**
753
754
755
756 **V.A.2.a).(2).(c)** **consider recommendations from the Clinical Competency Committee; and,** **(Core)**
757
758
759 **V.A.2.a).(2).(d)** **be shared with the fellow upon completion of the program.** **(Core)**
760
761
762 **V.A.3.** **A Clinical Competency Committee must be appointed by the program director.** **(Core)**
763
764
765 **V.A.3.a)** **At a minimum the Clinical Competency Committee must include three members, at least one of whom is a core faculty member. Members must be faculty members from the same program or other programs, or other health professionals who have extensive contact and experience with the program's fellows.** **(Core)**
766
767
768
769
770
771
772 **V.A.3.b)** **The Clinical Competency Committee must:**
773
774 **V.A.3.b).(1)** **review all fellow evaluations at least semi-annually;** **(Core)**
775
776
777 **V.A.3.b).(2)** **determine each fellow's progress on achievement of the subspecialty-specific Milestones; and,** **(Core)**
778
779
780 **V.A.3.b).(3)** **meet prior to the fellows' semi-annual evaluations and advise the program director regarding each fellow's progress.** **(Core)**
781
782
783
784 **V.B.** **Faculty Evaluation**
785
786 **V.B.1.** **The program must have a process to evaluate each faculty member's performance as it relates to the educational program at least annually.** **(Core)**
787
788
789

Background and Intent: The program director is responsible for the education program and for whom delivers it. While the term faculty may be applied to physicians within a given institution for other reasons, it is applied to fellowship program faculty members only through approval by a program director. The development of the faculty improves the education, clinical, and research aspects of a program. Faculty members have a strong commitment to the fellow and desire to provide optimal education and work opportunities. Faculty members must be provided feedback on their contribution to the mission of the program. All faculty members who interact with fellows desire feedback

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on their education, clinical care, and research. If a faculty member does not interact with fellows, feedback is not required. With regard to the diverse operating environments and configurations, the fellowship program director may need to work with others to determine the effectiveness of the program's faculty performance with regard to their role in the educational program. All teaching faculty members should have their educational efforts evaluated by the fellows in a confidential and anonymous manner. Other aspects for the feedback may include research or clinical productivity, review of patient outcomes, or peer review of scholarly activity. The process should reflect the local environment and identify the necessary information. The feedback from the various sources should be summarized and provided to the faculty on an annual basis by a member of the leadership team of the program.

790
791 **V.B.1.a)** **This evaluation must include a review of the faculty member's**
792 **clinical teaching abilities, engagement with the educational**
793 **program, participation in faculty development related to their**
794 **skills as an educator, clinical performance, professionalism,**
795 **and scholarly activities.** (Core)
796
797 **V.B.1.b)** **This evaluation must include written, confidential evaluations**
798 **by the fellows.** (Core)
799
800 **V.B.2.** **Faculty members must receive feedback on their evaluations at least**
801 **annually.** (Core)
802

Background and Intent: The quality of the faculty's teaching and clinical care is a determinant of the quality of the program and the quality of the fellows' future clinical care. Therefore, the program has the responsibility to evaluate and improve the program faculty members' teaching, scholarship, professionalism, and quality care. This section mandates annual review of the program's faculty members for this purpose, and can be used as input into the Annual Program Evaluation.

803
804 **V.C.** **Program Evaluation and Improvement**
805
806 **V.C.1.** **The program director must appoint the Program Evaluation**
807 **Committee to conduct and document the Annual Program**
808 **Evaluation as part of the program's continuous improvement**
809 **process.** (Core)
810
811 **V.C.1.a)** **The Program Evaluation Committee must be composed of at**
812 **least two program faculty members, at least one of whom is a**
813 **core faculty member, and at least one fellow.** (Core)
814
815 **V.C.1.b)** **Program Evaluation Committee responsibilities must include:**
816
817 **V.C.1.b).(1)** **acting as an advisor to the program director, through**
818 **program oversight;** (Core)
819
820 **V.C.1.b).(2)** **review of the program's self-determined goals and**
821 **progress toward meeting them;** (Core)
822

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823 **V.C.1.b).(3)** **guiding ongoing program improvement, including development of new goals, based upon outcomes; and,** (Core)

827 **V.C.1.b).(4)** **review of the current operating environment to identify strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats as related to the program's mission and aims.** (Core)

Background and Intent: In order to achieve its mission and train quality physicians, a program must evaluate its performance and plan for improvement in the Annual Program Evaluation. Performance of fellows and faculty members is a reflection of program quality, and can use metrics that reflect the goals that a program has set for itself. The Program Evaluation Committee utilizes outcome parameters and other data to assess the program's progress toward achievement of its goals and aims.

832 **V.C.1.c)** **The Program Evaluation Committee should consider the following elements in its assessment of the program:**

835 **V.C.1.c).(1)** **fellow performance;** (Core)

837 **V.C.1.c).(2)** **faculty development; and,** (Core)

839 **V.C.1.c).(3)** **progress on the previous year's action plan(s).** (Core)

841 **V.C.1.d)** **The Program Evaluation Committee must evaluate the program's mission and aims, strengths, areas for improvement, and threats.** (Core)

845 **V.C.1.e)** **The annual review, including the action plan, must:**

847 **V.C.1.e).(1)** **be distributed to and discussed with the members of the teaching faculty and the fellows; and,** (Core)

850 **V.C.1.e).(2)** **be submitted to the DIO.** (Core)

852 **V.C.2.** **The program must participate in a Self-Study prior to its 10-Year Accreditation Site Visit.** (Core)

855 **V.C.2.a)** **A summary of the Self-Study must be submitted to the DIO.** (Core)

Background and Intent: Outcomes of the documented Annual Program Evaluation can be integrated into the 10-year Self-Study process. The Self-Study is an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the fellowship program, with the aim of improving it. Underlying the Self-Study is this longitudinal evaluation of the program and its learning environment, facilitated through sequential Annual Program Evaluations that focus on the required components, with an emphasis on program strengths and self-identified areas for improvement. Details regarding the timing and expectations for the Self-Study and the 10-Year Accreditation Site Visit are provided in the *ACGME Manual of Policies and Procedures*. Additionally, a description of the Self-Study process, as

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well as information on how to prepare for the 10-Year Accreditation Site Visit, is available on the ACGME website.

858
859 **V.C.3.** ***One goal of ACGME-accredited education is to educate physicians who seek and achieve board certification. One measure of the effectiveness of the educational program is the ultimate pass rate.***
860
861
862
863 ***The program director should encourage all eligible program graduates to take the certifying examination offered by the applicable American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member board or American Osteopathic Association (AOA) certifying board.***
864
865
866
867
868 **[If certification in the subspecialty is not offered by the ABMS and/or the AOA, the certification requirements will be omitted.]**
869
870
871 **V.C.3.a)** **For subspecialties in which the ABMS member board and/or AOA certifying board offer(s) an annual written exam, in the preceding three years, the program's aggregate pass rate of those taking the examination for the first time must be higher than the bottom fifth percentile of programs in that subspecialty.** **(Outcome)**
872
873
874
875
876
877
878 **V.C.3.b)** **For subspecialties in which the ABMS member board and/or AOA certifying board offer(s) a biennial written exam, in the preceding six years, the program's aggregate pass rate of those taking the examination for the first time must be higher than the bottom fifth percentile of programs in that subspecialty.** **(Outcome)**
879
880
881
882
883
884
885 **V.C.3.c)** **For subspecialties in which the ABMS member board and/or AOA certifying board offer(s) an annual oral exam, in the preceding three years, the program's aggregate pass rate of those taking the examination for the first time must be higher than the bottom fifth percentile of programs in that subspecialty.** **(Outcome)**
886
887
888
889
890
891
892 **V.C.3.d)** **For subspecialties in which the ABMS member board and/or AOA certifying board offer(s) a biennial oral exam, in the preceding six years, the program's aggregate pass rate of those taking the examination for the first time must be higher than the bottom fifth percentile of programs in that subspecialty.** **(Outcome)**
893
894
895
896
897
898
899 **V.C.3.e)** **For each of the exams referenced in V.C.3.a)-d), any program whose graduates over the time period specified in the requirement have achieved an 80 percent pass rate will have met this requirement, no matter the percentile rank of the program for pass rate in that subspecialty.** **(Outcome)**
900
901
902
903
904

Background and Intent: Setting a single standard for pass rate that works across subspecialties is not supportable based on the heterogeneity of the psychometrics of

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different examinations. By using a percentile rank, the performance of the lower five percent (fifth percentile) of programs can be identified and set on a path to curricular and test preparation reform.

There are subspecialties where there is a very high board pass rate that could leave successful programs in the bottom five percent (fifth percentile) despite admirable performance. These high-performing programs should not be cited, and V.C.3.e) is designed to address this.

905
906 **V.C.3.f)** **Programs must report, in ADS, board certification status**
907 **annually for the cohort of board-eligible fellows that**
908 **graduated seven years earlier.** **(Core)**
909

Background and Intent: It is essential that fellowship programs demonstrate knowledge and skill transfer to their fellows. One measure of that is the qualifying or initial certification exam pass rate. Another important parameter of the success of the program is the ultimate board certification rate of its graduates. Graduates are eligible for up to seven years from fellowship graduation for initial certification. The ACGME will calculate a rolling three-year average of the ultimate board certification rate at seven years post-graduation, and the Review Committees will monitor it.

The Review Committees will track the rolling seven-year certification rate as an indicator of program quality. Programs are encouraged to monitor their graduates' performance on board certification examinations.

In the future, the ACGME may establish parameters related to ultimate board certification rates.

910
911 **VI. The Learning and Working Environment**
912
913 ***Fellowship education must occur in the context of a learning and working***
914 ***environment that emphasizes the following principles:***
915
916 - ***Excellence in the safety and quality of care rendered to patients by fellows***
917 ***today***
918
919 - ***Excellence in the safety and quality of care rendered to patients by today's***
920 ***fellows in their future practice***
921
922 - ***Excellence in professionalism through faculty modeling of:***
923
924 - ***the effacement of self-interest in a humanistic environment that supports***
925 ***the professional development of physicians***
926
927 - ***the joy of curiosity, problem-solving, intellectual rigor, and discovery***
928
929 - ***Commitment to the well-being of the students, residents, fellows, faculty***
930 ***members, and all members of the health care team***
931

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Background and Intent: The revised requirements are intended to provide greater flexibility within an established framework, allowing programs and fellows more discretion to structure clinical education in a way that best supports the above principles of professional development. With this increased flexibility comes the responsibility for programs and fellows to adhere to the 80-hour maximum weekly limit (unless a rotation-specific exception is granted by a Review Committee), and to utilize flexibility in a manner that optimizes patient safety, fellow education, and fellow well-being. The requirements are intended to support the development of a sense of professionalism by encouraging fellows to make decisions based on patient needs and their own well-being, without fear of jeopardizing their program's accreditation status. In addition, the proposed requirements eliminate the burdensome documentation requirement for fellows to justify clinical and educational work hour variations.

Clinical and educational work hours represent only one part of the larger issue of conditions of the learning and working environment, and Section VI has now been expanded to include greater attention to patient safety and fellow and faculty member well-being. The requirements are intended to support programs and fellows as they strive for excellence, while also ensuring ethical, humanistic training. Ensuring that flexibility is used in an appropriate manner is a shared responsibility of the program and fellows. With this flexibility comes a responsibility for fellows and faculty members to recognize the need to hand off care of a patient to another provider when a fellow is too fatigued to provide safe, high quality care and for programs to ensure that fellows remain within the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.

932
933 **VI.A. Patient Safety, Quality Improvement, Supervision, and Accountability**
934
935 **VI.A.1. Patient Safety and Quality Improvement**
936
937 ***All physicians share responsibility for promoting patient safety and***
938 ***enhancing quality of patient care. Graduate medical education must***
939 ***prepare fellows to provide the highest level of clinical care with***
940 ***continuous focus on the safety, individual needs, and humanity of***
941 ***their patients. It is the right of each patient to be cared for by fellows***
942 ***who are appropriately supervised; possess the requisite knowledge,***
943 ***skills, and abilities; understand the limits of their knowledge and***
944 ***experience; and seek assistance as required to provide optimal***
945 ***patient care.***
946
947 ***Fellows must demonstrate the ability to analyze the care they***
948 ***provide, understand their roles within health care teams, and play an***
949 ***active role in system improvement processes. Graduating fellows***
950 ***will apply these skills to critique their future unsupervised practice***
951 ***and effect quality improvement measures.***
952
953 ***It is necessary for fellows and faculty members to consistently work***
954 ***in a well-coordinated manner with other health care professionals to***
955 ***achieve organizational patient safety goals.***
956
957 **VI.A.1.a) Patient Safety**
958
959 **VI.A.1.a).(1) Culture of Safety**

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960
961 *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.*

968 **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)**

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

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

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

982

Background and Intent: Optimal patient safety occurs in the setting of a coordinated interprofessional learning and working environment.

983
984 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**

986 **VI.A.1.a).(3)** **Patient Safety Events**

988 *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.*

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

1001 **VI.A.1.a).(3).(a).(i)** **know their responsibilities in reporting patient safety events at the clinical site;** **(Core)**

1005 **VI.A.1.a).(3).(a).(ii)** **know how to report patient safety events, including near misses, at the clinical site; and,** **(Core)**

1008

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1009 **VI.A.1.a).(3).(a).(iii)** **be provided with summary information of their institution's patient safety reports.** (Core)

1013 **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)

1020 **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.

1029 **VI.A.1.a).(4).(a)** **All fellows must receive training in how to disclose adverse events to patients and families.** (Core)

1033 **VI.A.1.a).(4).(b)** **Fellows should have the opportunity to participate in the disclosure of patient safety events, real or simulated.** (Detail)†

1037 **VI.A.1.b)** **Quality Improvement**

1039 **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.

1046 **VI.A.1.b).(1).(a)** **Fellows must receive training and experience in quality improvement processes, including an understanding of health care disparities.** (Core)

1050 **VI.A.1.b).(2)** **Quality Metrics**

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

1056 **VI.A.1.b).(2).(a)** **Fellows and faculty members must receive data on quality metrics and benchmarks related to their patient populations.** (Core)

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1060 **VI.A.1.b).(3)** **Engagement in Quality Improvement Activities**
1061
1062 ***Experiential learning is essential to developing the***
1063 ***ability to identify and institute sustainable systems-***
1064 ***based changes to improve patient care.***
1065
1066 **VI.A.1.b).(3).(a)** **Fellows must have the opportunity to**
1067 **participate in interprofessional quality**
1068 **improvement activities.** **(Core)**
1069
1070 **VI.A.1.b).(3).(a).(i)** **This should include activities aimed at**
1071 **reducing health care disparities.** **(Detail)**
1072
1073 **[The Review Committee may further specify under any**
1074 **requirement in VI.A.1.b)-VI.A.1.b).(3).(a).(i)]**
1075
1076 **VI.A.2.** **Supervision and Accountability**
1077
1078 **VI.A.2.a)** ***Although the attending physician is ultimately responsible for***
1079 ***the care of the patient, every physician shares in the***
1080 ***responsibility and accountability for their efforts in the***
1081 ***provision of care. Effective programs, in partnership with***
1082 ***their Sponsoring Institutions, define, widely communicate,***
1083 ***and monitor a structured chain of responsibility and***
1084 ***accountability as it relates to the supervision of all patient***
1085 ***care.***
1086
1087 ***Supervision in the setting of graduate medical education***
1088 ***provides safe and effective care to patients; ensures each***
1089 ***fellow's development of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes***
1090 ***required to enter the unsupervised practice of medicine; and***
1091 ***establishes a foundation for continued professional growth.***
1092
1093 **VI.A.2.a).(1)** **Each patient must have an identifiable and**
1094 **appropriately-credentialed and privileged attending**
1095 **physician (or licensed independent practitioner as**
1096 **specified by the applicable Review Committee) who is**
1097 **responsible and accountable for the patient's care.**
1098 **(Core)**
1099
1100 **VI.A.2.a).(1).(a)** **This information must be available to fellows,**
1101 **faculty members, other members of the health**
1102 **care team, and patients.** **(Core)**
1103
1104 **VI.A.2.a).(1).(b)** **Fellows and faculty members must inform each**
1105 **patient of their respective roles in that patient's**
1106 **care when providing direct patient care.** **(Core)**
1107
1108 **VI.A.2.b)** ***Supervision may be exercised through a variety of methods.***
1109 ***For many aspects of patient care, the supervising physician***
1110 ***may be a more advanced fellow. Other portions of care***

1111 *provided by the fellow can be adequately supervised by the*
1112 *appropriate availability of the supervising faculty member or*
1113 *fellow, either on site or by means of telecommunication*
1114 *technology. Some activities require the physical presence of*
1115 *the supervising faculty member. In some circumstances,*
1116 *supervision may include post-hoc review of fellow-delivered*
1117 *care with feedback.*
1118

Background and Intent: Appropriate supervision is essential for patient safety and high-quality teaching. Supervision is also contextual. There is tremendous diversity of fellow patient interactions, education and training locations, and fellow skills and abilities even at the same level of the educational program. The degree of supervision is expected to evolve progressively as a fellow gains more experience, even with the same patient condition or procedure. All fellows have a level of supervision commensurate with their level of autonomy in practice; this level of supervision may be enhanced based on factors such as patient safety, complexity, acuity, urgency, risk of serious adverse events, or other pertinent variables.

1119
1120 **VI.A.2.b).(1)** **The program must demonstrate that the appropriate**
1121 **level of supervision in place for all fellows is based on**
1122 **each fellow's level of training and ability, as well as**
1123 **patient complexity and acuity. Supervision may be**
1124 **exercised through a variety of methods, as appropriate**
1125 **to the situation.** (Core)
1126
1127 **[The Review Committee may specify which**
1128 **activities require different levels of**
1129 **supervision.]**
1130
1131 **VI.A.2.b).(2)** **The program must define when physical presence of a**
1132 **supervising physician is required.** (Core)
1133
1134 **VI.A.2.c)** **Levels of Supervision**
1135
1136 **To promote appropriate fellow supervision while providing**
1137 **for graded authority and responsibility, the program must use**
1138 **the following classification of supervision:** (Core)
1139
1140 **VI.A.2.c).(1)** **Direct Supervision:**
1141
1142 **VI.A.2.c).(1).(a)** **the supervising physician is physically present**
1143 **with the fellow during the key portions of the**
1144 **patient interaction; or,** (Core)
1145
1146 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
1147
1148 **VI.A.2.c).(1).(b)** **the supervising physician and/or patient is not**
1149 **physically present with the fellow and the**
1150 **supervising physician is concurrently**
1151 **monitoring the patient care through appropriate**
1152 **telecommunication technology.** (Core)

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1153
1154 **[The Review Committee may further**
1155 **specify]**
1156
1157 **[The RC may choose not to permit**
1158 **VI.A.2.c).(1).(b)]**
1159
1160 **VI.A.2.c).(2)** **Indirect Supervision: the supervising physician is not**
1161 **providing physical or concurrent visual or audio**
1162 **supervision but is immediately available to the fellow**
1163 **for guidance and is available to provide appropriate**
1164 **direct supervision. (Core)**
1165
1166 **VI.A.2.c).(3)** **Oversight – the supervising physician is available to**
1167 **provide review of procedures/encounters with**
1168 **feedback provided after care is delivered. (Core)**
1169
1170 **VI.A.2.d)** **The privilege of progressive authority and responsibility,**
1171 **conditional independence, and a supervisory role in patient**
1172 **care delegated to each fellow must be assigned by the**
1173 **program director and faculty members. (Core)**
1174
1175 **VI.A.2.d).(1)** **The program director must evaluate each fellow's**
1176 **abilities based on specific criteria, guided by the**
1177 **Milestones. (Core)**
1178
1179 **VI.A.2.d).(2)** **Faculty members functioning as supervising**
1180 **physicians must delegate portions of care to fellows**
1181 **based on the needs of the patient and the skills of**
1182 **each fellow. (Core)**
1183
1184 **VI.A.2.d).(3)** **Fellows should serve in a supervisory role to junior**
1185 **fellows and residents in recognition of their progress**
1186 **toward independence, based on the needs of each**
1187 **patient and the skills of the individual resident or**
1188 **fellow. (Detail)**
1189
1190 **VI.A.2.e)** **Programs must set guidelines for circumstances and events**
1191 **in which fellows must communicate with the supervising**
1192 **faculty member(s). (Core)**
1193
1194 **VI.A.2.e).(1)** **Each fellow must know the limits of their scope of**
1195 **authority, and the circumstances under which the**
1196 **fellow is permitted to act with conditional**
1197 **independence. (Outcome)**
1198

Background and Intent: The ACGME Glossary of Terms defines conditional independence as: Graded, progressive responsibility for patient care with defined oversight.

1199

1200 **VI.A.2.f)** **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)
1201
1202
1203
1204
1205 **VI.B. Professionalism**
1206
1207 **VI.B.1.** **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)
1208
1209
1210
1211
1212
1213 **VI.B.2.** **The learning objectives of the program must:**
1214
1215 **VI.B.2.a)** **be accomplished through an appropriate blend of supervised patient care responsibilities, clinical teaching, and didactic educational events;** (Core)
1216
1217
1218
1219 **VI.B.2.b)** **be accomplished without excessive reliance on fellows to fulfill non-physician obligations; and,** (Core)
1220
1221

Background and Intent: Routine reliance on fellows to fulfill non-physician obligations increases work compression for fellows and does not provide an optimal educational experience. Non-physician obligations are those duties which in most institutions are performed by nursing and allied health professionals, transport services, or clerical staff. Examples of such obligations include transport of patients from the wards or units for procedures elsewhere in the hospital; routine blood drawing for laboratory tests; routine monitoring of patients when off the ward; and clerical duties, such as scheduling. While it is understood that fellows may be expected to do any of these things on occasion when the need arises, these activities should not be performed by fellows routinely and must be kept to a minimum to optimize fellow education.

1222
1223 **VI.B.2.c)** **ensure manageable patient care responsibilities.** (Core)
1224
1225 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
1226

Background and Intent: The Common Program Requirements do not define “manageable patient care responsibilities” as this is variable by specialty and PGY level. Review Committees will provide further detail regarding patient care responsibilities in the applicable specialty-specific Program Requirements and accompanying FAQs. However, all programs, regardless of specialty, should carefully assess how the assignment of patient care responsibilities can affect work compression.

1227
1228 **VI.B.3.** **The program director, in partnership with the Sponsoring Institution, must provide a culture of professionalism that supports patient safety and personal responsibility.** (Core)
1229
1230
1231

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1232 **VI.B.4.** **Fellows and faculty members must demonstrate an understanding**
1233 **of their personal role in the:**
1234
1235 **VI.B.4.a)** **provision of patient- and family-centered care;** **(Outcome)**
1236
1237 **VI.B.4.b)** **safety and welfare of patients entrusted to their care,**
1238 **including the ability to report unsafe conditions and adverse**
1239 **events;** **(Outcome)**
1240

Background and Intent: This requirement emphasizes that responsibility for reporting unsafe conditions and adverse events is shared by all members of the team and is not solely the responsibility of the fellow.

1241
1242 **VI.B.4.c)** **assurance of their fitness for work, including:** **(Outcome)**
1243

Background and Intent: This requirement emphasizes the professional responsibility of faculty members and fellows to arrive for work adequately rested and ready to care for patients. It is also the responsibility of faculty members, fellows, and other members of the care team to be observant, to intervene, and/or to escalate their concern about fellow and faculty member fitness for work, depending on the situation, and in accordance with institutional policies.

1244
1245 **VI.B.4.c).(1)** **management of their time before, during, and after**
1246 **clinical assignments; and,** **(Outcome)**
1247
1248 **VI.B.4.c).(2)** **recognition of impairment, including from illness,**
1249 **fatigue, and substance use, in themselves, their peers,**
1250 **and other members of the health care team.** **(Outcome)**
1251
1252 **VI.B.4.d)** **commitment to lifelong learning;** **(Outcome)**
1253
1254 **VI.B.4.e)** **monitoring of their patient care performance improvement**
1255 **indicators; and,** **(Outcome)**
1256
1257 **VI.B.4.f)** **accurate reporting of clinical and educational work hours,**
1258 **patient outcomes, and clinical experience data.** **(Outcome)**
1259
1260 **VI.B.5.** **All fellows and faculty members must demonstrate responsiveness**
1261 **to patient needs that supersedes self-interest. This includes the**
1262 **recognition that under certain circumstances, the best interests of**
1263 **the patient may be served by transitioning that patient's care to**
1264 **another qualified and rested provider.** **(Outcome)**
1265
1266 **VI.B.6.** **Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, must**
1267 **provide a professional, equitable, respectful, and civil environment**
1268 **that is free from discrimination, sexual and other forms of**
1269 **harassment, mistreatment, abuse, or coercion of students, fellows,**
1270 **faculty, and staff.** **(Core)**
1271

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1272 **VI.B.7.** **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)

1277 **VI.C. Well-Being**

Psychological, emotional, and physical well-being are critical in the development of the competent, caring, and resilient physician and require proactive attention to life inside and outside of medicine. Well-being requires that physicians retain the joy in medicine while managing their own real-life stresses. Self-care and responsibility to support other members of the health care team are important components of professionalism; they are also skills that must be modeled, learned, and nurtured in the context of other aspects of fellowship training.

Fellows and faculty members are at risk for burnout and depression. Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, have the same responsibility to address well-being as other aspects of resident competence. Physicians and all members of the health care team share responsibility for the well-being of each other. For example, a culture which encourages covering for colleagues after an illness without the expectation of reciprocity reflects the ideal of professionalism. A positive culture in a clinical learning environment models constructive behaviors, and prepares fellows with the skills and attitudes needed to thrive throughout their careers.

Background and Intent: The ACGME is committed to addressing physician well-being for individuals and as it relates to the learning and working environment. The creation of a learning and working environment with a culture of respect and accountability for physician well-being is crucial to physicians' ability to deliver the safest, best possible care to patients. The ACGME is leveraging its resources in four key areas to support the ongoing focus on physician well-being: education, influence, research, and collaboration. Information regarding the ACGME's ongoing efforts in this area is available on the ACGME website.

As these efforts evolve, information will be shared with programs seeking to develop and/or strengthen their own well-being initiatives. In addition, there are many activities that programs can utilize now to assess and support physician well-being. These include culture of safety surveys, ensuring the availability of counseling services, and attention to the safety of the entire health care team.

1300 **VI.C.1.** **The responsibility of the program, in partnership with the Sponsoring Institution, to address well-being must include:**

1303 **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)

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1309
1310 **VI.C.1.b)** **attention to scheduling, work intensity, and work**
1311 **compression that impacts fellow well-being;** **(Core)**
1312
1313 **VI.C.1.c)** **evaluating workplace safety data and addressing the safety of**
1314 **fellows and faculty members;** **(Core)**
1315

Background and Intent: This requirement emphasizes the responsibility shared by the Sponsoring Institution and its programs to gather information and utilize systems that monitor and enhance fellow and faculty member safety, including physical safety. Issues to be addressed include, but are not limited to, monitoring of workplace injuries, physical or emotional violence, vehicle collisions, and emotional well-being after adverse events.

1316
1317 **VI.C.1.d)** **policies and programs that encourage optimal fellow and**
1318 **faculty member well-being; and,** **(Core)**
1319

Background and Intent: Well-being includes having time away from work to engage with family and friends, as well as to attend to personal needs and to one's own health, including adequate rest, healthy diet, and regular exercise.

1320
1321 **VI.C.1.d).(1)** **Fellows must be given the opportunity to attend**
1322 **medical, mental health, and dental care appointments,**
1323 **including those scheduled during their working hours.**
1324 **(Core)**
1325

Background and Intent: The intent of this requirement is to ensure that fellows have the opportunity to access medical and dental care, including mental health care, at times that are appropriate to their individual circumstances. Fellows must be provided with time away from the program as needed to access care, including appointments scheduled during their working hours.

1326
1327 **VI.C.1.e)** **attention to fellow and faculty member burnout, depression,**
1328 **and substance use disorder. The program, in partnership with**
1329 **its Sponsoring Institution, must educate faculty members and**
1330 **fellows in identification of the symptoms of burnout,**
1331 **depression, and substance use disorder, including means to**
1332 **assist those who experience these conditions. Fellows and**
1333 **faculty members must also be educated to recognize those**
1334 **symptoms in themselves and how to seek appropriate care.**
1335 **The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution,**
1336 **must:** **(Core)**
1337

Background and Intent: Programs and Sponsoring Institutions are encouraged to review materials in order to create systems for identification of burnout, depression, and substance use disorder. Materials and more information are available on the Physician Well-being section of the ACGME website (http://www.acgme.org/What-We-Do/Initiatives/Physician-Well-Being).

1338

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1339 **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 fellow, resident, or faculty member may be displaying signs of burnout, depression, a substance use disorder, suicidal ideation, or potential for violence;** (Core)
1345
1346

Background and Intent: Individuals experiencing burnout, depression, a substance use disorder, and/or suicidal ideation are often reluctant to reach out for help due to the stigma associated with these conditions, and are concerned that seeking help may have a negative impact on their career. Recognizing that physicians are at increased risk in these areas, it is essential that fellows and faculty members are able to report their concerns when another fellow or faculty member displays signs of any of these conditions, so that the program director or other designated personnel, such as the department chair, may assess the situation and intervene as necessary to facilitate access to appropriate care. Fellows and faculty members must know which personnel, in addition to the program director, have been designated with this responsibility; those personnel and the program director should be familiar with the institution's impaired physician policy and any employee health, employee assistance, and/or wellness programs within the institution. In cases of physician impairment, the program director or designated personnel should follow the policies of their institution for reporting.

1347
1348 **VI.C.1.e).(2)** **provide access to appropriate tools for self-screening; and,** (Core)
1350
1351 **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)
1355

Background and Intent: The intent of this requirement is to ensure that fellows have immediate access at all times to a mental health professional (psychiatrist, psychologist, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Primary Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, or Licensed Professional Counselor) for urgent or emergent mental health issues. In-person, telemedicine, or telephonic means may be utilized to satisfy this requirement. Care in the Emergency Department may be necessary in some cases, but not as the primary or sole means to meet the requirement.

The reference to affordable counseling is intended to require that financial cost not be a barrier to obtaining care.

1356
1357 **VI.C.2.** **There are circumstances in which fellows may be unable to attend work, including but not limited to fatigue, illness, family emergencies, and parental leave. Each program must allow an appropriate length of absence for fellows unable to perform their patient care responsibilities.** (Core)
1362
1363 **VI.C.2.a)** **The program must have policies and procedures in place to ensure coverage of patient care.** (Core)

1365

1366 **VI.C.2.b)** **These policies must be implemented without fear of negative**
1367 **consequences for the fellow who is or was unable to provide**
1368 **the clinical work.** (Core)
1369

Background and Intent: Fellows may need to extend their length of training depending on length of absence and specialty board eligibility requirements. Teammates should assist colleagues in need and equitably reintegrate them upon return.

1370

1371 **VI.D. Fatigue Mitigation**

1372

1373 **VI.D.1. Programs must:**

1374

1375 **VI.D.1.a)** **educate all faculty members and fellows to recognize the**
1376 **signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation;** (Core)
1377

1378 **VI.D.1.b)** **educate all faculty members and fellows in alertness**
1379 **management and fatigue mitigation processes; and,** (Core)
1380

1381 **VI.D.1.c)** **encourage fellows to use fatigue mitigation processes to**
1382 **manage the potential negative effects of fatigue on patient**
1383 **care and learning.** (Detail)
1384

Background and Intent: Providing medical care to patients is physically and mentally demanding. Night shifts, even for those who have had enough rest, cause fatigue. Experiencing fatigue in a supervised environment during training prepares fellows for managing fatigue in practice. It is expected that programs adopt fatigue mitigation processes and ensure that there are no negative consequences and/or stigma for using fatigue mitigation strategies.

This requirement emphasizes the importance of adequate rest before and after clinical responsibilities. Strategies that may be used include, but are not limited to, strategic napping; the judicious use of caffeine; availability of other caregivers; time management to maximize sleep off-duty; learning to recognize the signs of fatigue, and self-monitoring performance and/or asking others to monitor performance; remaining active to promote alertness; maintaining a healthy diet; using relaxation techniques to fall asleep; maintaining a consistent sleep routine; exercising regularly; increasing sleep time before and after call; and ensuring sufficient sleep recovery periods.

1385

1386 **VI.D.2.** **Each program must ensure continuity of patient care, consistent**
1387 **with the program's policies and procedures referenced in VI.C.2–**
1388 **VI.C.2.b), in the event that a fellow may be unable to perform their**
1389 **patient care responsibilities due to excessive fatigue.** (Core)
1390

1391 **VI.D.3.** **The program, in partnership with its Sponsoring Institution, must**
1392 **ensure adequate sleep facilities and safe transportation options for**
1393 **fellows who may be too fatigued to safely return home.** (Core)
1394

1395 **VI.E. Clinical Responsibilities, Teamwork, and Transitions of Care**

1396

1397 **VI.E.1. Clinical Responsibilities**
1398
1399 **The clinical responsibilities for each fellow must be based on PGY**
1400 **level, patient safety, fellow ability, severity and complexity of patient**
1401 **illness/condition, and available support services.** (Core)
1402
1403 **[Optimal clinical workload may be further specified by each Review**
1404 **Committee]**
1405

Background and Intent: The changing clinical care environment of medicine has meant that work compression due to high complexity has increased stress on fellows. Faculty members and program directors need to make sure fellows function in an environment that has safe patient care and a sense of fellow well-being. Some Review Committees have addressed this by setting limits on patient admissions, and it is an essential responsibility of the program director to monitor fellow workload. Workload should be distributed among the fellow team and interdisciplinary teams to minimize work compression.

1406
1407 **VI.E.2. Teamwork**
1408
1409 **Fellows must care for patients in an environment that maximizes**
1410 **communication. This must include the opportunity to work as a**
1411 **member of effective interprofessional teams that are appropriate to**
1412 **the delivery of care in the subspecialty and larger health system.**
1413 (Core)
1414
1415 **[The Review Committee may further specify]**
1416
1417 **VI.E.3. Transitions of Care**
1418
1419 **VI.E.3.a) Programs must design clinical assignments to optimize**
1420 **transitions in patient care, including their safety, frequency,**
1421 **and structure.** (Core)
1422
1423 **VI.E.3.b) Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions,**
1424 **must ensure and monitor effective, structured hand-over**
1425 **processes to facilitate both continuity of care and patient**
1426 **safety.** (Core)
1427
1428 **VI.E.3.c) Programs must ensure that fellows are competent in**
1429 **communicating with team members in the hand-over process.**
1430 (Outcome)
1431
1432 **VI.E.3.d) Programs and clinical sites must maintain and communicate**
1433 **schedules of attending physicians and fellows currently**
1434 **responsible for care.** (Core)
1435
1436 **VI.E.3.e) Each program must ensure continuity of patient care,**
1437 **consistent with the program's policies and procedures**
1438 **referenced in VI.C.2-VI.C.2.b), in the event that a fellow may**

1439 **be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities due to**
1440 **excessive fatigue or illness, or family emergency.** (Core)
1441
1442 **VI.F. Clinical Experience and Education**
1443
1444 ***Programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, must design***
1445 ***an effective program structure that is configured to provide fellows with***
1446 ***educational and clinical experience opportunities, as well as reasonable***
1447 ***opportunities for rest and personal activities.***
1448

Background and Intent: In the new requirements, the terms "clinical experience and education," "clinical and educational work," and "clinical and educational work hours" replace the terms "duty hours," "duty periods," and "duty." These changes have been made in response to concerns that the previous use of the term "duty" in reference to number of hours worked may have led some to conclude that fellows' duty to "clock out" on time superseded their duty to their patients.

1449
1450 **VI.F.1. Maximum Hours of Clinical and Educational Work per Week**
1451
1452 **Clinical and educational work hours must be limited to no more than**
1453 **80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all**
1454 **in-house clinical and educational activities, clinical work done from**
1455 **home, and all moonlighting.** (Core)
1456

Background and Intent: Programs and fellows have a shared responsibility to ensure that the 80-hour maximum weekly limit is not exceeded. While the requirement has been written with the intent of allowing fellows to remain beyond their scheduled work periods to care for a patient or participate in an educational activity, these additional hours must be accounted for in the allocated 80 hours when averaged over four weeks.

Scheduling
While the ACGME acknowledges that, on rare occasions, a fellow may work in excess of 80 hours in a given week, all programs and fellows utilizing this flexibility will be required to adhere to the 80-hour maximum weekly limit when averaged over a four-week period. Programs that regularly schedule fellows to work 80 hours per week and still permit fellows to remain beyond their scheduled work period are likely to exceed the 80-hour maximum, which would not be in substantial compliance with the requirement. These programs should adjust schedules so that fellows are scheduled to work fewer than 80 hours per week, which would allow fellows to remain beyond their scheduled work period when needed without violating the 80-hour requirement. Programs may wish to consider using night float and/or making adjustments to the frequency of in-house call to ensure compliance with the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.

Oversight
With increased flexibility introduced into the Requirements, programs permitting this flexibility will need to account for the potential for fellows to remain beyond their assigned work periods when developing schedules, to avoid exceeding the 80-hour maximum weekly limit, averaged over four weeks. The ACGME Review Committees will strictly monitor and enforce compliance with the 80-hour requirement. Where violations

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of the 80-hour requirement are identified, programs will be subject to citation and at risk for an adverse accreditation action.

Work from Home
While the requirement specifies that clinical work done from home must be counted toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit, the expectation remains that scheduling be structured so that fellows are able to complete most work on site during scheduled clinical work hours without requiring them to take work home. The new requirements acknowledge the changing landscape of medicine, including electronic health records, and the resulting increase in the amount of work fellows choose to do from home. The requirement provides flexibility for fellows to do this while ensuring that the time spent by fellows completing clinical work from home is accomplished within the 80-hour weekly maximum. Types of work from home that must be counted include using an electronic health record and taking calls from home. Reading done in preparation for the following day's cases, studying, and research done from home do not count toward the 80 hours. Fellow decisions to leave the hospital before their clinical work has been completed and to finish that work later from home should be made in consultation with the fellow's supervisor. In such circumstances, fellows should be mindful of their professional responsibility to complete work in a timely manner and to maintain patient confidentiality.

During the public comment period many individuals raised questions and concerns related to this change. Some questioned whether minute by minute tracking would be required; in other words, if a fellow spends three minutes on a phone call and then a few hours later spends two minutes on another call, will the fellow need to report that time. Others raised concerns related to the ability of programs and institutions to verify the accuracy of the information reported by fellows. The new requirements are not an attempt to micromanage this process. Fellows are to track the time they spend on clinical work from home and to report that time to the program. Decisions regarding whether to report infrequent phone calls of very short duration will be left to the individual fellow. Programs will need to factor in time fellows are spending on clinical work at home when schedules are developed to ensure that fellows are not working in excess of 80 hours per week, averaged over four weeks. There is no requirement that programs assume responsibility for documenting this time. Rather, the program's responsibility is ensuring that fellows report their time from home and that schedules are structured to ensure that fellows are not working in excess of 80 hours per week, averaged over four weeks.

1457
1458 **VI.F.2.** **Mandatory Time Free of Clinical Work and Education**
1459
1460 **VI.F.2.a)** **The program must design an effective program structure that**
1461 **is configured to provide fellows with educational**
1462 **opportunities, as well as reasonable opportunities for rest**
1463 **and personal well-being.** **(Core)**
1464
1465 **VI.F.2.b)** **Fellows should have eight hours off between scheduled**
1466 **clinical work and education periods.** **(Detail)**
1467
1468 **VI.F.2.b).(1)** **There may be circumstances when fellows choose to**
1469 **stay to care for their patients or return to the hospital**
1470 **with fewer than eight hours free of clinical experience**

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1471 **and education. This must occur within the context of**
1472 **the 80-hour and the one-day-off-in-seven**
1473 **requirements.** **(Detail)**
1474

Background and Intent: While it is expected that fellow schedules will be structured to ensure that fellows are provided with a minimum of eight hours off between scheduled work periods, it is recognized that fellows may choose to remain beyond their scheduled time, or return to the clinical site during this time-off period, to care for a patient. The requirement preserves the flexibility for fellows to make those choices. It is also noted that the 80-hour weekly limit (averaged over four weeks) is a deterrent for scheduling fewer than eight hours off between clinical and education work periods, as it would be difficult for a program to design a schedule that provides fewer than eight hours off without violating the 80-hour rule.

1475
1476 **VI.F.2.c)** **Fellows must have at least 14 hours free of clinical work and**
1477 **education after 24 hours of in-house call.** **(Core)**
1478

Background and Intent: Fellows have a responsibility to return to work rested, and thus are expected to use this time away from work to get adequate rest. In support of this goal, fellows are encouraged to prioritize sleep over other discretionary activities.

1479
1480 **VI.F.2.d)** **Fellows must be scheduled for a minimum of one day in**
1481 **seven free of clinical work and required education (when**
1482 **averaged over four weeks). At-home call cannot be assigned**
1483 **on these free days.** **(Core)**
1484

Background and Intent: The requirement provides flexibility for programs to distribute days off in a manner that meets program and fellow needs. It is strongly recommended that fellows' preference regarding how their days off are distributed be considered as schedules are developed. It is desirable that days off be distributed throughout the month, but some fellows may prefer to group their days off to have a "golden weekend, " meaning a consecutive Saturday and Sunday free from work. The requirement for one free day in seven should not be interpreted as precluding a golden weekend. Where feasible, schedules may be designed to provide fellows with a weekend, or two consecutive days, free of work. The applicable Review Committee will evaluate the number of consecutive days of work and determine whether they meet educational objectives. Programs are encouraged to distribute days off in a fashion that optimizes fellow well-being, and educational and personal goals. It is noted that a day off is defined in the ACGME Glossary of Terms as "one (1) continuous 24-hour period free from all administrative, clinical, and educational activities."

1485
1486 **VI.F.3.** **Maximum Clinical Work and Education Period Length**
1487
1488 **VI.F.3.a)** **Clinical and educational work periods for fellows must not**
1489 **exceed 24 hours of continuous scheduled clinical**
1490 **assignments.** **(Core)**
1491
1492 **VI.F.3.a).(1)** **Up to four hours of additional time may be used for**
1493 **activities related to patient safety, such as providing**

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1494 **effective transitions of care, and/or fellow education.**
1495 **(Core)**
1496
1497 **VI.F.3.a).(1).(a)** **Additional patient care responsibilities must not**
1498 **be assigned to a fellow during this time. (Core)**
1499

Background and Intent: The additional time referenced in VI.F.3.a).(1) should not be used for the care of new patients. It is essential that the fellow continue to function as a member of the team in an environment where other members of the team can assess fellow fatigue, and that supervision for post-call fellows is provided. This 24 hours and up to an additional four hours must occur within the context of 80-hour weekly limit, averaged over four weeks.

1500
1501 **VI.F.4.** **Clinical and Educational Work Hour Exceptions**
1502
1503 **VI.F.4.a)** **In rare circumstances, after handing off all other**
1504 **responsibilities, a fellow, on their own initiative, may elect to**
1505 **remain or return to the clinical site in the following**
1506 **circumstances:**
1507
1508 **VI.F.4.a).(1)** **to continue to provide care to a single severely ill or**
1509 **unstable patient; (Detail)**
1510
1511 **VI.F.4.a).(2)** **humanistic attention to the needs of a patient or**
1512 **family; or, (Detail)**
1513
1514 **VI.F.4.a).(3)** **to attend unique educational events. (Detail)**
1515
1516 **VI.F.4.b)** **These additional hours of care or education will be counted**
1517 **toward the 80-hour weekly limit. (Detail)**
1518

Background and Intent: This requirement is intended to provide fellows with some control over their schedules by providing the flexibility to voluntarily remain beyond the scheduled responsibilities under the circumstances described above. It is important to note that a fellow may remain to attend a conference, or return for a conference later in the day, only if the decision is made voluntarily. Fellows must not be required to stay. Programs allowing fellows to remain or return beyond the scheduled work and clinical education period must ensure that the decision to remain is initiated by the fellow and that fellows are not coerced. This additional time must be counted toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.

1519
1520 **VI.F.4.c)** **A Review Committee may grant rotation-specific exceptions**
1521 **for up to 10 percent or a maximum of 88 clinical and**
1522 **educational work hours to individual programs based on a**
1523 **sound educational rationale.**
1524
1525 **VI.F.4.c).(1)** **In preparing a request for an exception, the program**
1526 **director must follow the clinical and educational work**
1527 **hour exception policy from the *ACGME Manual of***
1528 ***Policies and Procedures*. (Core)**

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1529

1530 **VI.F.4.c).(2)** **Prior to submitting the request to the Review**
1531 **Committee, the program director must obtain approval**
1532 **from the Sponsoring Institution's GMEC and DIO.** (Core)
1533

Background and Intent: The provision for exceptions for up to 88 hours per week has been modified to specify that exceptions may be granted for specific rotations if the program can justify the increase based on criteria specified by the Review Committee. As in the past, Review Committees may opt not to permit exceptions. The underlying philosophy for this requirement is that while it is expected that all fellows should be able to train within an 80-hour work week, it is recognized that some programs may include rotations with alternate structures based on the nature of the specialty. DIO/GMEC approval is required before the request will be considered by the Review Committee.

1534

1535 **VI.F.5.** **Moonlighting**
1536

1537 **VI.F.5.a)** **Moonlighting must not interfere with the ability of the fellow**
1538 **to achieve the goals and objectives of the educational**
1539 **program, and must not interfere with the fellow's fitness for**
1540 **work nor compromise patient safety.** (Core)
1541

1542 **VI.F.5.b)** **Time spent by fellows in internal and external moonlighting**
1543 **(as defined in the ACGME Glossary of Terms) must be**
1544 **counted toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.** (Core)
1545

Background and Intent: For additional clarification of the expectations related to moonlighting, please refer to the Common Program Requirement FAQs (available at http://www.acgme.org/What-We-Do/Accreditation/Common-Program-Requirements).

1546

1547 **VI.F.6.** **In-House Night Float**
1548

1549 **Night float must occur within the context of the 80-hour and one-**
1550 **day-off-in-seven requirements.** (Core)
1551

1552 **[The maximum number of consecutive weeks of night float, and**
1553 **maximum number of months of night float per year may be further**
1554 **specified by the Review Committee.]**
1555

Background and Intent: The requirement for no more than six consecutive nights of night float was removed to provide programs with increased flexibility in scheduling.

1556

1557 **VI.F.7.** **Maximum In-House On-Call Frequency**
1558

1559 **Fellows must be scheduled for in-house call no more frequently than**
1560 **every third night (when averaged over a four-week period).** (Core)
1561

1562 **VI.F.8.** **At-Home Call**
1563

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1564 **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.** (Core)

1571 **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.** (Core)

1575 **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.** (Detail)

1580 **[The Review Committee may further specify under any requirement in VI.F.-VI.F.8.b)]**

Background and Intent: This requirement has been modified to specify that clinical work done from home when a fellow is taking at-home call must count toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit. This change acknowledges the often significant amount of time fellows devote to clinical activities when taking at-home call, and ensures that taking at-home call does not result in fellows routinely working more than 80 hours per week. At-home call activities that must be counted include responding to phone calls and other forms of communication, as well as documentation, such as entering notes in an electronic health record. Activities such as reading about the next day's case, studying, or research activities do not count toward the 80-hour weekly limit.

In their evaluation of fellowship programs, Review Committees will look at the overall impact of at-home call on fellow rest and personal time.

1584 ***

1585 ***Core Requirements:** Statements that define structure, resource, or process elements essential to every graduate medical educational program.

1588 †**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.

1593 ‡**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.

1597 **Osteopathic Recognition**
1598 For programs with or applying for Osteopathic Recognition, the Osteopathic Recognition Requirements also apply (www.acgme.org/OsteopathicRecognition).

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