

# The Medical Toxicology Milestone Project

*A Joint Initiative of*

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education

and

The American Board of Emergency Medicine



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The Milestones are designed only for use in evaluation of the fellow in the context of their participation in ACGME-accredited residency or fellowship programs. The Milestones provide a framework for assessment of the development of the fellow in key dimensions of the elements of physician competency in a specialty or subspecialty. They neither represent the entirety of the dimensions of the six domains of physician competency, nor are they designed to be relevant in any other context.

## **Medical Toxicology Milestones**

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## Milestone Reporting

This document presents milestones designed for programs to use in semi-annual review of fellow performance and reporting to the ACGME. Milestones are knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other attributes for each of the ACGME competencies organized in a developmental framework from less to more advanced. They are descriptors and targets for fellow performance as a fellow moves from entry into fellowship through graduation. In the initial years of implementation, the Review Committee will examine milestone performance data for each program's fellows as one element in the Next Accreditation System (NAS) to determine whether fellows overall are progressing.

For each period, review and reporting will involve selecting milestone levels that best describe a fellow's current performance and attributes. Milestones are arranged into numbered levels. Tracking from Level 1 to Level 5 is synonymous with moving from novice to expert in the subspecialty.

Selection of a level implies that the fellow substantially demonstrates the milestones in that level, as well as those in lower levels (see the diagram on page v).

**Level 1:** The fellow demonstrates milestones expected of an incoming fellow.

**Level 2:** The fellow is advancing and demonstrates additional milestones, but is not yet performing at a mid-fellowship level.

**Level 3:** The fellow continues to advance and demonstrate additional milestones, consistently including the majority of milestones targeted for fellowship.

**Level 4:** The fellow has advanced so that he or she now substantially demonstrates the milestones targeted for fellowship. This level is designed as the graduation target.

**Level 5:** The fellow has advanced beyond performance targets set for fellowship and is demonstrating "aspirational" goals which might describe the performance of someone who has been in practice for several years. It is expected that only a few exceptional fellows will reach this level.

## **Additional Notes**

Level 4 is designed as the graduation *target* and *does not* represent a graduation *requirement*. Making decisions about readiness for graduation is the purview of the fellowship program director. Study of Milestone performance data will be required before the ACGME and its partners will be able to determine whether milestones in the first four levels appropriately represent the developmental framework, and whether Milestone data are of sufficient quality to be used for high-stakes decisions.

Examples are provided with some milestones. Please note that the examples are not the required element or outcome; they are provided as a way to share the intent of the element.

Some milestone descriptions include statements about performing independently. These activities must occur in conformity to the ACGME supervision guidelines, as well as institutional and program policies. For example, a fellow who performs a procedure independently must, at a minimum, be supervised through oversight.

*Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Milestones are available on the Milestones web page:*  
<http://www.acgme.org/acqmeweb/Portals/0/MilestonesFAQ.pdf>.

The diagram below presents an example set of milestones for one sub-competency in the same format as the ACGME Report Worksheet. For each reporting period, a fellow's performance on the milestones for each sub-competency will be indicated by selecting the level of milestones that best describes that fellow's performance in relation to the milestones.

PC1: Exposure Assessment: History and Physical				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during pediatric/adult acute exposure</li> <li>• Performs an accurate physical examination appropriately targeted to the patient's exposure history and co-existing medical/surgical conditions</li> <li>• Identifies pertinent abnormalities and toxidromes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during pediatric/adult chronic exposure</li> <li>• Accurately tracks important changes in the physical examination and ancillary testing over time in the outpatient and inpatient setting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during multiple exposure sources, mixed exposure, unknown exposure, or withdrawal</li> <li>• Demonstrates and teaches how to elicit important physical and other findings for other members of the healthcare team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during unexplained syndromes (e.g., environmental illness), hazardous material exposure, population exposure (e.g., chemical release), or workplace/environmental exposure</li> <li>• Routinely identifies subtle or unusual findings that may influence clinical decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops guidelines for the performance of complex exposure assessment</li> <li>• Performs causation analysis</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				

Selecting a response box in the middle of a level implies that milestones in that level and in lower levels have been substantially demonstrated.

Selecting a response box on the line in between levels indicates that milestones in lower levels have been substantially demonstrated as well as **some** milestones in the higher level(s).

PC1: Exposure Assessment: History and Physical				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during pediatric/adult acute exposure</li> <li>• Performs an accurate physical examination appropriately targeted to the patient’s exposure history and co-existing medical/surgical conditions</li> <li>• Identifies pertinent abnormalities and toxidromes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during pediatric/adult chronic exposure</li> <li>• Accurately tracks important changes in the physical examination and ancillary testing over time, in both the outpatient and inpatient settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during multiple exposure sources, mixed exposure, unknown exposure, or withdrawal</li> <li>• Demonstrates and teaches how to elicit important physical and other findings for other members of the health care team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquires accurate and relevant history from the patient and other sources in an efficient manner during unexplained syndromes (e.g., environmental illness), hazardous material exposure, population exposure (e.g., chemical release), or workplace/environmental exposure</li> <li>• Routinely identifies subtle or unusual findings that may influence clinical decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops guidelines for the performance of complex exposure assessment</li> <li>• Performs causation analysis</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments:</b>				

PC2: Clinical Reasoning: Ordering and Interpretation of Studies and Differential Diagnosis				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops prioritized differential for common toxicological conditions</li> <li>• Interprets appropriate diagnostic testing</li> <li>• Recognizes abnormal test results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesizes all available data, including interview, physical examination findings, and preliminary laboratory data, to define each patient’s primary toxicological problem</li> <li>• Makes appropriate clinical decisions based upon the results of common toxicological diagnostic testing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modifies and refines evidence-based differential diagnosis based upon clinical course and data, as appropriate</li> <li>• Makes appropriate clinical decisions and toxicological exposure associations based on results of advanced toxicological testing, recognizing limitations and risks</li> <li>• Interprets workplace/environmental sample testing</li> <li>• Prioritizes essential testing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes toxicological presentations and/or conflicting diagnostic results that deviate from common patterns and require more complex decision-making</li> <li>• Makes appropriate clinical decisions and toxicological exposure associations based on ancillary testing (e.g., biomarkers, pulmonary function tests, electromyography [EMG] studies)</li> <li>• Orders diagnostic testing based on the pre-test probability of disease and the likelihood of test results altering management</li> <li>• Practices cost-effective ordering of diagnostic studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses pattern recognition consistently to identify discriminating features between similar patients and avoids premature closure</li> <li>• Develops protocols/algorithms for determination of appropriate diagnostic testing</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments:</b>				



PC3: Management Plan and Treatment				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes toxicological situations with a need for urgent/emergent medical or surgical care</li> <li>• Manages, with supervision, patients with common toxicological disorders seen in both the inpatient and outpatient settings</li> <li>• With assistance, provides toxicological consultation for uncomplicated patients with straightforward exposures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With minimal supervision, manages patients with common and complex toxicological disorders seen in the practice of both inpatient and outpatient settings</li> <li>• Provides appropriate poison prevention advice to patients and caregivers</li> <li>• Independently provides toxicological consultation for uncomplicated patients with straightforward exposures</li> <li>• With assistance, provides toxicological consultation for complicated patients with straightforward exposures</li> <li>• Uses antidotes and procedures with an understanding of indications, limitations, risks, and benefits (e.g., prevent intoxicant absorption, impact metabolism, enhance elimination)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages patients with toxicological conditions that require intensive care</li> <li>• Independently provides toxicological consultation for complicated patients with straightforward exposures</li> <li>• With assistance, provides toxicological consultation for complicated patients with complex exposures</li> <li>• With assistance, manages patients in an occupational, clinic, or referral setting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customizes care within the context of a patient’s preferences and overall health status</li> <li>• Manages rare toxicological conditions that use specialty antidotes and other treatments</li> <li>• Manages patients in an occupational, clinic, or referral setting</li> <li>• Independently provides toxicological consultation for complicated patients with complex exposures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops guidelines to avoid potential complications of interventions and therapies</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments:</b>				

MK1: Acute and Chronic Exposure				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands concepts of biochemistry, physiology, and pharmacology relevant to common medical toxicological conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands mechanism of toxins, pharmacokinetics, and adverse drug reactions</li> <li>Demonstrates sufficient clinical knowledge to diagnose and treat undifferentiated and emergent conditions</li> <li>Understands the relevant pathophysiological and basic science principles that underlie uncommon or complex toxicological conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands teratogenesis and carcinogenesis</li> <li>Understands withdrawal phenomenon</li> <li>Understands indications, risks, and limitations for procedures, antidotes, and other management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands mechanism of uncommon or natural toxins</li> <li>Demonstrates sufficient knowledge to evaluate complex or rare toxicological conditions with co-existent medical or surgical conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develops guidelines or publishes personal research (e.g., empirical data, systematic literature review) in peer-reviewed journals</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments:</b>				

MK2: Epidemiology and Population Exposure				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies major routes of human exposure</li> <li>Identifies and recognizes basic measures of disease frequency (e.g., incidence, prevalence, mortality)</li> <li>Distinguishes between experimental and observational studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies common illnesses that may be caused or influenced by environmental exposures</li> <li>Identifies broad environmental factors that may impact the health of a community</li> <li>Identifies and recognizes basic measures for comparing risk (e.g., risk ratios, odds ratios)</li> <li>Describes commonly used study designs (e.g., randomized clinical trial, cohort, case-control, cross-sectional)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes individual factors that impact susceptibility to adverse health effects from environmental exposures</li> <li>Identifies potential population health effects from exposure to chemical, physical, and biological hazards</li> <li>Explains validity, bias, confounding, and effect modification; distinguishes between association and causation; lists criteria for causal inference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommends methods of reducing adverse environmental health effects for individuals</li> <li>Identifies sources and routes of environmental exposures to chemical, physical, and biological hazards for defined populations</li> <li>Critically reviews and interprets toxicologic literature for commonly used study designs, identifying purpose, population, design, and biases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develops protocols to limit the exposure of populations to chemical, physical, and biological hazards</li> <li>Uses data to characterize effects of exposure of a local population based on comparison with other populations</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments:</b>				

MK3: Laboratory and Clinical Testing				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates knowledge of laboratory principles using common ancillary testing (e.g., glucose, electrocardiogram [EKG], radiographs, pulse oximetry)</li> <li>• Identifies the differences between assay methods (e.g., screening, confirmatory)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates knowledge of common toxicology testing, including limitations and methodology</li> <li>• Identifies types of interference and causes of false negative and false positive results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates knowledge of advanced toxicology testing, including appropriateness, limitations, and methodology</li> <li>• Understands levels of detection and quantification</li> <li>• Understands urine drug testing principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies biomarkers of exposure or effect</li> <li>• Demonstrates knowledge of advanced clinical testing (e.g., pulmonary function test, nerve conduction studies, forensic and post-mortem testing)</li> <li>• Understands advantages and disadvantages of alternative testing samples (e.g., hair, saliva, meconium)</li> <li>• Understands medicolegal issues involving work place testing, performance enhancing drugs, and impairment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participates as an expert in a medicolegal event</li> <li>• Independently serves as a medical review officer</li> <li>• Develops protocols for advanced and alternative clinical testing</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments:</b>				

SBP1: Patient Safety				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes the importance of advocating for quality care and optimal patient care systems</li> <li>• Recognizes that medical errors and health care system failures are a significant cause of morbidity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands key concepts related to health care quality improvement</li> <li>• Recognizes potential sources of system failure in health care systems, such as medication errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocates for quality care and optimal individual patient care systems</li> <li>• Recognizes and reports lapses in medication safety, medication errors, and near misses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocates for quality care and optimal population-based care systems</li> <li>• Participates in a team-based approach to evaluate medical errors and system-based failures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops or leads a team to evaluate medical errors and system-based failures and to improve processes and systems</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				

SBP2: Clinical Application of Information Technology				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates a timely, accurate, and complete medical record</li> <li>• Recognizes the risks of computer shortcuts, such as electronic health records (EHR), on accurate patient care and documentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates the use of electronic databases to facilitate exact ingredient/product identification</li> <li>• Uses information technology to locate scientific studies related to patient health problems</li> <li>• Recognizes the limitations of social media/open source databases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates the use of electronic databases and systems for the reporting of exposures (e.g., surveillance)</li> <li>• Differentiates between reference sources based on quality, accuracy, and peer review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routinely integrates data from multiple reliable information sources/databases into clinical decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops a database or recommends a system redesign for improved processes</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				

PBL1: Self-Directed Learning in Medical Toxicology				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledges gaps in personal knowledge and expertise, and frequently asks for feedback</li> <li>• Understands the importance of setting learning and improvement goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops learning and improvement goals based on feedback, with minimal external assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performs ongoing self-assessment to identify areas for continued self-improvement, and implements learning plans</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to critically appraise scientific literature and apply evidence-based medicine to improve one's individual performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies performance improvement by incorporating feedback from multiple stakeholders (e.g., patients, members of the health care team, third-party payers)</li> <li>• Demonstrates best clinical practice, including use of evidence-based pathways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates novel ways to assess performance</li> <li>• Applies results from self-directed learning to educating others</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				

PBLI2: Quality Improvement Project				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies problems in health care delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begins working on a quality improvement project either as an individual or team member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continues to develop a quality improvement project, employing methods to measure and analyze the data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completes a quality improvement project</li> <li>Displays effective teamwork skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develops and leads complex quality improvement projects, and is able to lead a root cause analysis</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				



PROF1: Professional Values				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates behavior that conveys compassion, honesty, genuine interest, and tolerance when interacting with a diverse population of patients, families, and other members of the health care team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of compassion, integrity, respect, sensitivity, and responsiveness, and exhibits these attitudes consistently in common/uncomplicated situations (e.g., disclosure of error) and with diverse populations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes how own personal beliefs and values impact medical care; consistently manages own values and beliefs to optimize relationships and medical care</li> <li>• Develops alternate care plans when patients' personal decisions/beliefs preclude the use of commonly accepted practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops and applies a consistent and appropriate approach to evaluating appropriate care, possible barriers, and strategies to intervene that consistently prioritizes the patient's best interest in all relationships and situations</li> <li>• Effectively analyzes and manages ethical issues in complicated and challenging clinical situations (e.g., end-of-life, unexpected outcomes, suicidality)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops institutional and organizational strategies to protect and maintain professional and bioethical principles</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				

PROF2: Accountability to patients, society, profession, and self				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates basic professional responsibilities, such as timely reporting for duty, responsiveness to requests for consultation, appropriate dress/grooming, timely chart completion, and duty hour reporting</li> <li>• Maintains patient confidentiality as stipulated (e.g., Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)</li> <li>• Uses social media ethically and responsibly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies basic principles of physician wellness, including sleep, hygiene, and fatigue mitigation</li> <li>• Consistently recognizes limits of knowledge in common and frequent clinical situations, and asks for assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently recognizes limits of knowledge in uncommon and complicated clinical situations; develops and implements plans for the best possible patient care</li> <li>• Recognizes and avoids inappropriate influences of marketing and advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands how to identify and report impairment in oneself or a colleague in a professional and confidential manner</li> <li>• Manages medical errors according to principles of responsibility and accountability in accordance with institutional policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops institutional and organizational strategies to improve physician insight into and management of professional responsibilities</li> <li>• Trains physicians and educators regarding responsibility, wellness, fatigue, and physician impairment</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				

ICS1: Patients Families and Public				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizes the importance of effective communication with patients, families, and the public across a broad range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates effective communication with patients, families, or the public in common situations</li> <li>Provides appropriate poison prevention, medication safety, or workplace safety counseling to patients and caregivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates effective communication with patients or the public in issues related to confidential and/or highly sensitive medical information</li> <li>Effectively communicates with vulnerable populations, including patients at risk and their families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates effective communication with patients and the public in issues related to confidential and/or highly sensitive medical information using multiple communication modalities</li> <li>Understands how to develop appropriate risk communication to the community</li> <li>Able to communicate with non-medical personnel, such as police, media, risk managers, and hospital administrators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates effective communication outside of the local health care environment, such as state and federal agencies, and regional health care systems</li> </ul>
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<b>Comments:</b>				

ICS2: Communication with Health Care Professionals				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes the importance of effective, timely consultation and communication with the health care team</li> <li>• Ensures transitions of care are accurately and efficiently communicated</li> <li>• Ensures clear communication and respect among team members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates effective, timely consultation and communication with the health care team in clinical situations</li> <li>• Develops working relationships across specialties with other health care professionals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to provide effective, timely consultation and communication with the health care team in stressful/crisis situations</li> <li>• Provides educational support across specialties and to other health care professionals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to work effectively with the health care team in public health events (e.g., mass exposures)</li> <li>• Uses flexible communication strategies to resolve specific challenges, such as difficulties with consultants and other health care professionals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leads change in team activities to optimize performance</li> <li>• Seeks leadership opportunities within professional organizations</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Comments:</b>				