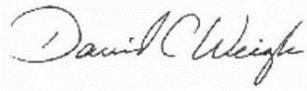

Policy Title: Technical Standards and Essential Functions for UT Southwestern Graduate Medical Education



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STATEMENT AND SCOPE OF POLICY:

Graduate medical education (GME) programs must require competence in six areas: Patient Care, Medical Knowledge, Practice-based Learning and Improvement, Systems-based Practice, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, and Professionalism. Achieving competency in these six areas requires certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities and sufficient mental and emotional stability to assure that residents are able to complete their training and demonstrate the personal attributes required for certification, with or without reasonable accommodation due to disability. For purposes of this document, a “resident” means any physician training in any GME program at UT Southwestern, including interns, residents, fellows, and subspecialty residents.

POLICY:

The following abilities and characteristics are the technical standards, which, in conjunction with academic standards, are essential functions of each GME program and therefore requirements for admission, promotion, graduation, and certification. Individual programs may place more or less emphasis on specific essential functions, as appropriate to the practice requirements of the specialty.

Although these standards serve to delineate the necessary physical and mental abilities of all residents, they are not intended to deter any resident who, with reasonable accommodations, can complete the desired program. Residents with concerns regarding essential functions are encouraged to contact their Program Director and the Office of Graduate Medical Education immediately to begin to address what types of reasonable accommodations may be considered for development to achieve these standards as outlined in GME policy Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Residents with Disabilities.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- a. *Observation:* Residents must be able to observe demonstrations. They must be able to accurately observe patients and assess findings. They must be able to obtain a medical history and perform a complete physical examination in order to integrate findings based on these observations and to develop an appropriate diagnostic and treatment plan. Residents must also possess functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensation. Observation is enhanced by the functional use of the sense of smell. In certain medical specialties, one or more of these senses may be less essential, and evaluation of those senses in the context of the program requirements is appropriate.
- b. *Communication:* Residents must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently orally and in writing with patients, their families, and members of the health care team. They must be able to obtain a medical history in a timely fashion, interpret non-verbal aspects of communication, and establish therapeutic relationships with patients. Residents also must be able to read and comprehend written material. Residents must be able to record information accurately and clearly and communicate effectively in English in a variety of patient settings.
- c. *Motor Function:* Residents must possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers required in the context of their program. They must have sufficient motor function to obtain data from patients using tactile, auditory, and visual maneuvers as required by their medical specialty. They must be able to respond to emergency situations in a timely manner and provide general and emergency care. They must adhere to universal precaution measures and meet applicable safety standards.
- d. *Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:* Residents must have sufficient cognitive (mental) abilities and effective learning techniques to assimilate detailed and complex information. They must be able to

learn through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to, didactic presentations; small group, team, and collaborative activities; individual study; preparation and presentation of reports; and use of computer technology. Residents must be able to memorize, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information across modalities. They must recognize and draw conclusions about three-dimensional spatial relationships and logical sequential relationships among events. They must be able to formulate and test hypotheses that enable effective and timely problem-solving in diagnosis and treatment of patients.

- e. *Behavioral and Social Attributes:* Residents must demonstrate the maturity and emotional stability required for full use of their intellectual abilities. They must accept responsibility for learning, exercising good judgment, and promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, as well as the administrative responsibilities required of healthcare personnel. Residents must be able to work effectively, respectfully, and professionally as part of the healthcare team and to interact with patients, their families, and health care personnel in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner. They must be able to tolerate taxing workloads and long work hours, to function effectively under stress, and to display flexibility and adaptability to changing environments. They must be capable of regular, reliable, and punctual attendance. Residents must be able to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes.
- f. *Ethical and Legal Standards:* Residents must understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and function within both the law and ethical standards of the medical profession. Residents must demonstrate professional demeanor and behavior and must perform in an ethical manner in all dealings with peers, faculty, staff, and patients. They must treat all patients equally without regard to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other attribute. They must meet the legal standards to be licensed to practice medicine in the State of Texas.

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS DUE TO DISABILITY

Residents who have a disability and need accommodations should initiate discussions with the Program Director and the Office of Graduate Medical Education as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of a resident with a disability to contact the Program Director and the Office of Graduate Medical Education and provide sufficiently current information documenting the general nature and extent of his/her disability and the functional limitations proposed to be accommodated. Evaluating and facilitating accommodation requests is a collaborative effort between the resident, UT Southwestern, and, if appropriate, the employer and/or training site. See GME policy *Reasonable Accommodations for Qualified Residents with Disabilities*.