

Essential Requirements for a General Surgery Resident University of Washington School of Medicine Seattle, Washington

General Essentials

The essential abilities required by the General Surgery program are in the following areas: motor, sensory, communication, intellectual (conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities for problem solving and diagnosis) and the behavioral and social aspects of the performance of a physician.

Motor Skills

- Physical dexterity to perform surgery, master technical and procedural aspects of patient care.
- Being able to stand for long periods of time while performing surgery.
- Adequate physical stamina and energy to carry out taxing duties over long hours.

Sensory Abilities

- Residents must be able to gather audible, visual, and tactile information with all senses, especially sight, hearing, smell, and touch, in order to gather a medical and psychosocial history, perform a physical examination, and diagnose and treat patients.
- The resident must be capable of perceiving the signs of disease as manifested through the physical examination and imaging studies of the body. This includes, but is not limited to the ability to see, hear, palate and percuss the pertinent body parts and view diagnostic images to distinguish between normal and abnormal conditions.

Intellectual Abilities

- The General Surgery curriculum requires essential abilities in information acquisition. The resident must have the ability to master information presented in the form of lectures, written material and projected images.

- The resident must have the cognitive abilities necessary to master relevant content in basic science and advanced surgical knowledge at a level deemed appropriate by the faculty. These skills may be described as the ability to comprehend, memorize, analyze and synthesize material. He/she must be able to discern and comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships of structures, and be able to develop reasoning and decision-making skills appropriate to the practice of medicine and surgery.
- Residents must be able to develop habits of life-long learning.
- Residents must be able to complete the written and practical parts of the American Board of Surgery Certification Examination and pass them.

Communication Skills

- The resident must have the ability to take a medical history and perform a directed physical examination. Such tasks require the ability to communicate with the patient. The resident must be able to communicate effectively with patients and families, physicians, their supervisors, and other members of the health care team. This communication must be able to take place in a distracting environment. The communication skills require the ability to assess all information including the recognition of the significance of non-verbal responses and immediate assessment of information provided to allow for appropriate, well focused, rapid follow-up inquiry. The resident must be capable of responsive, empathetic listening to establish rapport in a way that promotes openness on issues of concern and sensitivity with an appreciation of potential cultural differences.
- The resident must be able to process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to physician colleagues and other members of the health care team. This information then needs to be communicated in a succinct yet comprehensive manner in settings in which time is limited. Written or dictated patient assessments, prescriptions and correspondence must be complete and accurate. The appropriate communication may also rely on the resident's ability to make a correct judgement in seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.

Behavior, Social, and Professional Abilities

- The resident must conduct themselves in an ethical fashion consistent with their community and profession in all his/her activities.
- It is important that the resident possess the intelligence, integrity, compassion, humanitarian concern, and physical and emotional capacity necessary to practice medicine and surgery.

- Residents must possess the emotional maturity and stability to function effectively under stress that is inherent in medicine and to adapt to circumstances which are unpredictable or that change rapidly. They must be able to interact productively, cooperatively and in a collegial manner with individuals of differing personalities and backgrounds, and be an active contributor to the process of providing health care by demonstrating the ability to engage in teamwork and team building. They must demonstrate the ability to identify and set priorities in patient management and in all aspects of their professional work. They must be punctual and perform work in a timely manner.
- Residents must exhibit an ethic of professionalism, including the ability to place others' needs ahead of their own. They must exhibit compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, responsibility and tolerance, as well as demonstrate the ability to exercise the requisite judgment required in the practice of medicine and surgery.
- Must not have an active drug or alcohol dependency problem
- Must take reasonable measures to maintain health, including mental health.
- Must participate in regular self-evaluative process and report results to faculty
- Must maintain a surgical log book containing up-to-date information

Specific/Focused Requirements

Residents must be able to or be capable of:

- Being on call every third night
- Work in-house when patients are critically ill
- Spend 4-5 days per week in the operating rooms
- Stand for many hours at a time
- Read patient monitors from a distance of 6-8 feet
- Hear and understand spoken requests and discriminate patient monitor alarms
- Hear adequately to assess lung and heart sounds of patients
- Comprehend English including medical terminology
- Speak English fluently including medical terminology
- Respond to cardiac arrests and urgent calls in a timely fashion:
Example: running or walking quickly to floors in the hospital, at times without the aid of the elevators, if that would cause an undue delay
- Assume unusual positions while delivering patient care on the wards and in the intensive care units.
Example: lying on the floor to intubate patients who have experienced cardiac arrest, leaning over equipment at the head of the patient beds such as found in the intensive care units to intubate patients or place central lines.
- Report to work in a timely fashion (i.e. in general between 05:00 – 06:00 hours)
- Maintain a high level of personal hygiene
- Refrain from use of alcoholic beverages within 8 hours of reporting to work and throughout the clinical shift.
- Refrain from the use of sedatives or narcotics prescribed by the employees' physician within 8 hours of reporting to work and throughout the clinical shift.
- Spend 1 day in the outpatient clinic
- Supervise a more junior residents in the management of the inpatient services.

These essential functions are requirements for admission, retention, and graduation for residents of the General Surgery residency of the Department of Surgery, University of Washington School of Medicine. It is the responsibility of the residents with disabilities to request those accommodations that he/she feels are reasonable and are needed to execute the essential requirements described.