

## **MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSIONS, CONTINUATION, AND GRADUATION**

In order for a student to successfully complete Physician Assistant Education and training and then enter clinical practice, s/he must be able to meet the technical standards of the Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant Studies Program. These standards are prerequisites for entrance to, continuation within, and graduation from the Ohio Dominican University Physician Assistant program. They are also prerequisites to licensure by various state professional boards. Reasonable accommodation will be offered for persons with disabilities in conjunction with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Students are required to demonstrate: the ability to effectively observe; sensory/motor coordination and function; behavioral and social skills, abilities and aptitudes; communication aptitude and ability; as well as aptitude, ability and skills with conceptualization, integration and quantitation. These areas are considered standards of minimal competence in the PA Studies program at Ohio Dominican University.

### Observation

Effective diagnosis and management of patient populations requires various skills of the practitioner. For example, the practitioner (and students) must be able to accurately observe a patient both in close proximity and at a distance. The student must be able to observe verbal and nonverbal signs that may present with the patient. This could include changes in body movements, anatomic structures, patient dress or other physical attributes of the patient. These specific visual criteria include, but are not limited to identification of color changes in skin, fluids, media (culture and otherwise) as well as identifying normal and abnormal findings on radiographs or other imaging tests. Further, the student must be able to accurately read written and illustrated materials. Students must be able to adequately discriminate among patterns, numbers or other visual criteria associated with diagnostic tests and competently utilize instruments such as the ophthalmoscope, microscope, stethoscope, or otoscope. Students must be able to observe details from microscopes, overhead projectors, projected images, slides or other visual media.

### Sensory/Motor Coordination and Function

Students must be able to evaluate various sounds including, but not limited to components of the voice (pitch, timbre, intensity), auscultatory findings such as heart, lung and abdominal sounds as well as blood pressure readings. Students must be able to accurately differentiate percussive notes as well and differentiate normal and abnormal sounds utilizing such instruments as the stethoscope, or tuning fork.

Students must possess the attributes to perform physical examinations using palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers as required. This requires sufficient exteroceptive sense (visual, auditory, touch, and temperature), coordination to manipulate patients, and adequate motor and diagnostic instruments. Further, the students should be able to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients which may include such physical activity as moving a patient, emergent diagnostic testing, treatment or resuscitative efforts. This may require the student to

respond promptly to emergencies in an individual or hospital setting. The student must be able to physically perform these duties so as not hinder the ability of his/her co-workers to provide prompt care.

Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of a physician assistant include arriving quickly when called and maintaining an airway, assisting in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), applying pressure to arrest bleeding, suturing wounds, administering intravenous medications, or assisting with obstetrical maneuvers.

Students should be able to perform basic laboratory tests such as gram's stain or urinalysis, venipuncture, and placement of catheters and tubes. Students must possess the level of dexterity, sensation, and visual acuity in order to competently perform these duties. Students must be able to measure angles and diameters of various body structures using a tape measure or other devices to measure blood pressure, respiration and pulse, and interpret graphs describing biologic relationships. Clinical rotations also require the ability to transport oneself to a variety of settings in a timely manner.

### Behavioral and Social Skills, Abilities, and Aptitudes

Students must be able to develop appropriate professional relationships with their colleagues, patients, supervisors, preceptors, other medical personnel, and patients. Students must be able to provide comfort and reassurance to patients and protect patients' confidentiality. In order to do this, students must possess the emotional health required for full use of their intellectual abilities and the prompt completion of all responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients. This requires the exercise of good judgment, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships in the diagnosis and care of patients. Required personal qualities include such attributes as empathy, honesty, integrity, concern and respect for others, appropriate interpersonal skills, and a genuine interest in people. Students must also be able to monitor and react appropriately to their own emotional needs as well. Students need to recognize the need for and seek a balanced demeanor and maintain good organizational skills even in the face of long hours, dissatisfied patients, or emotionally taxing, tired or rude colleagues.

Students must possess the endurance to function effectively under stress. All students are at times required to work for extended periods of time, occasionally with rotating schedules. Students must be able to adapt to changing environments, schedules and display flexibility and the ability to learn and function in the face of uncertainties which frequently occur in the practice of medicine. Students are expected to professionally and appropriately accept criticism and feedback and if necessary, to respond by modifying their behavior.

### Communication

Effective communication involves many aspects ranging from verbal to nonverbal actions and reading and writing appropriately. Students must be able effectively communicate with patients as well as convey compassion and empathy. Students must be able to clearly communicate in order to effectively and accurately elicit information, as well as describe accurately and objectively the verbal and nonverbal signs and symptoms the patient may demonstrate. For example, students must learn to recognize and promptly respond to emotional cues, such as sadness and agitation.

Physician Assistant education involves learning exceptional volumes of information which may include a varied breadth of reading required to master subject areas in order to impart the information to others. Students must be able to communicate quickly, effectively, and efficiently in oral and written English in the classroom and with other professionals of the health care team. Specific requirements include, but are not limited to the following: rapidly and clearly communicating with the medical staff on rounds or elsewhere, eliciting an accurate history from patients, and communicating complex findings in appropriate terms to patients and to various members of the health care team.

Students must be able to accurately and legibly record observations and plans in legal documents, such as the patient record. Students must be able to prepare and communicate concise, complete summaries of patient encounters. Students must be able to complete forms, in a timely fashion, and according to directions and appropriate standard of care of the community.

#### Intellectual, Conceptualization, Integration, and Quantitation

Rapid intellectual function and problem-solving, or cognitive reasoning in general is a skill often required of the physician assistant. The ability to recognize measurements, numerical figures, calculations, analysis, or synthesis of the same requires this intellectual capability. Critical-thinking skills are necessary in order for students to be able to identify significant findings and draw reasonable conclusions and diagnoses, as well as development of management plans for the patients served by the physician assistant. It is essential that the student is able to incorporate new information from many sources toward the formulation of a diagnosis and plan. Good judgment in patient assessment and diagnostic/ therapeutic planning is also essential. When appropriate, students must be able to identify and communicate the extent of their knowledge to others.