

**Shenandoah University
Physician Assistant Program**

Graduate Competencies

Upon completion of the SU PA Program, the graduate will be able to:

1. Elicit a medical history
 - a. ensures patient comfort
 - b. establishes and maintains ethically sound and therapeutic rapport with patient (and/or family)
 - c. reviews medical record
 - d. recognizes and interprets verbal and non-verbal cues
 - e. includes all relevant components
 - f. adjusts according to reason for visit, patient demographics, etc.
 - g. elicits psychosocial factors which may impact upon patient's health

2. Perform a physical examination
 - a. explains examination procedures
 - b. ensures patient comfort and privacy
 - c. utilizes diagnostic tools appropriately
 - d. assesses general status of patient
 - e. utilizes the skills of inspection, palpation, percussion and auscultation
 - f. obtains vital signs
 - g. examines/assesses appropriate systems
 - h. employs special procedures where appropriate
 - i. adjusts according to reason for visit, patient demographics, patient condition etc.
 - j. uses principles of economy of motion, economy of time

3. Develop a diagnostic management plan
 - a. differentiates normal from abnormal findings
 - b. orders appropriate diagnostic tests based upon differential diagnosis
 - c. performs diagnostic tests as appropriate
 - d. considers cost, sensitivity, specificity, invasiveness, appropriate sequencing etc.
 - e. repeats or orders additional tests as indicated
 - f. considers referral as option
 - g. orders/performs appropriate screening tests based upon evaluation of risk factors
 - h. makes informed decisions about diagnostic interventions based upon patient information and preferences, as well as up-to-date scientific evidence and clinical judgment

4. Analyze data and develop a differential diagnosis
 - a. analyzes subjective and objective findings
 - b. recognizes diagnostic patterns
 - c. recognizes impact of social and behavioral issues
 - d. applies principles of epidemiology and principles of evidence-based medicine
 - e. formulates differential diagnosis

- f. applies principles of triage; adapts data gathering and intervention according to level of acuity
5. Develop a therapeutic management plan (acute and/or chronic care)
 - a. applies principles of pharmacotherapeutics
 - b. considers patient's overall condition including socioeconomic factors
 - c. develops plan with patient (and/or family)
 - d. includes non-pharmacologic modalities as appropriate
 - e. considers referral as option
 - f. ensures implementation
 - g. ensures follow-up
 - h. adjusts plan as needed
 - i. obtains patient's informed consent as appropriate
 - j. makes informed decisions about therapeutic interventions based upon patient information and preferences as well as up-to-date scientific evidence and clinical judgment
 6. Provide patient education
 - a. maximizes patient autonomy
 - b. applies principles of adult learning
 - c. instructs patients in health promotion and disease prevention principles
 - d. assists patient/family with utilization of community services
 - e. develops patient education materials
 - f. includes family members as appropriate
 7. Maintain medical records
 - a. obtains biographical data for patient
 - b. documents history, physical examination, progress notes, orders, etc.
 - c. utilizes proper medical charting principles to accurately document and record information regarding findings and care processes for medical, legal, quality and financial purposes.
 - d. prepares summaries as needed (admission, discharge, surgery etc.)
 - e. uses written, oral, and electronic communication techniques
 - f. obtains physician signature
 - g. maintains confidentiality of record
 8. Perform medical and surgical techniques
 - a. performs basic and advanced cardiac life support
 - b. provides wound care including suturing and removal of foreign bodies
 - c. obtains specimens (blood, fluid or tissue)
 - d. administers medications by various routes
 - e. assists in surgery (first or second assist)
 - f. performs basic office-based procedures (e.g. removal/cryosurgery of superficial lesions, ear irrigation etc.)
 - g. uses principles of aseptic technique and universal precautions
 9. Utilize administrative, management and research skills
 - a. complies with local, state and federal laws and regulations
 - b. monitors patient care for quality outcomes and cost effectiveness
 - c. follows guidelines for third-party reimbursement
 - d. critically appraises scientific literature

- e. utilizes technology including information technology to enhance patient care & patient education
- f. regularly engages in active scholarship and teaching

10. Demonstrate professionalism

- a. demonstrates clear and effective oral, written, and electronic communication skills
- b. maintains patient confidentiality
- c. maintains high moral and ethical standards
- d. works effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as member or leader of a health care team or other professional group
- e. demonstrates respect for individual and cultural diversity
- f. recognizes limitations and seeks physician counsel
- g. promotes the physician assistant profession and philosophies
- h. applies humanistic approach to health care (includes respect, compassion and integrity)
- i. adapts approach to patient care to environment and resources
- j. demonstrates emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety

11. Acknowledges the importance of lifelong learning professional education

- a. maintains certification status
- b. keeps abreast of current medical/surgical trends and technology
- c. provides education to the community and/or profession
- d. keeps abreast of technological advances
- e. self reflects on practice in order to grow personally and professionally

12. Demonstrates leadership skills

- a. advocates for patients and their families
- b. displays a service oriented attitude
- c. demonstrates servant-leadership for profession, community and clinical practice
- d. participates in education of PA students as mentor, teacher or preceptor
- e. advocates for and/or participates in care of medically underserved populations
- f. demonstrates initiative

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some sections adapted from: "Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession, AAPA Policy, May 2005.