

# ACGME Common Program Requirements

## VI.A.2. Supervision and Accountability

VI.A.2.a) Although the attending physician is ultimately responsible for the care of the patient, every physician shares in the responsibility and accountability for their efforts in the provision of care. **Effective programs, in partnership with their Sponsoring Institutions, define, widely communicate, and monitor a structured chain of responsibility and accountability as it relates to the supervision of all patient care.** Supervision in the setting of graduate medical education provides safe and effective care to patients; ensures each resident's development of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to enter the unsupervised practice of medicine; and establishes a foundation for continued professional growth.<sup>1</sup>

VI.A.2.a).(1) Each patient must have an identifiable and appropriately-credentialed and privileged attending physician (or licensed independent practitioner as specified by the applicable Review Committee) who is responsible and accountable for the patient's care. (Core)

VI.A.2.a).(1).(a) This information must be available to residents, faculty members, other members of the health care team, and patients. (Core)

VI.A.2.a).(1).(b) Residents and faculty members must inform each patient of their respective roles in that patient's care when providing direct patient care. (Core)

VI.A.2.b) Supervision may be exercised through a variety of methods. For many aspects of patient care, the supervising physician may be a more advanced resident or fellow. Other portions of care provided by the resident can be adequately supervised by the appropriate availability of the supervising faculty member, fellow, or senior resident physician, either on site or by means of telecommunication technology. Some activities require the physical presence of the supervising faculty member. In some circumstances, supervision may include post-hoc review of resident-delivered care with feedback.

Background and Intent: Appropriate supervision is essential for patient safety and high-quality teaching. Supervision is also contextual. There is tremendous

diversity of resident patient interactions, education and training locations, and resident skills and abilities even at the same level of the educational program. The degree of supervision is expected to evolve progressively as a resident gains more experience, even with the same patient condition or procedure. All residents have a level of supervision commensurate with their level of autonomy in practice; this level of supervision may be enhanced based on factors such as patient safety, complexity, acuity, urgency, risk of serious adverse events, or other pertinent variables.

VI.A.2.b).(1) The program must demonstrate that the appropriate level of supervision in place for all residents is based on each resident's level of training and ability, as well as patient complexity and acuity. Supervision may be exercised through a variety of methods, as appropriate to the situation. (Core) [The Review Committee may specify which activities require different levels of supervision.]

VI.A.2.b).(2) The program must define when physical presence of a supervising physician is required. (Core)2

### **VI.A.2.c) Levels of Supervision**

To promote appropriate resident supervision while providing for graded authority and responsibility, the program must use the following classification of supervision: (Core) VI.A.2.c).

#### **(1) Direct Supervision:**

VI.A.2.c).(1).(a) the supervising physician is physically present with the resident during the key portions of the patient interaction; or

VI.A.2.c).(1).(a).(i) PGY-1 residents must initially be supervised directly, only as described in VI.A.2.c).(1).(a). (Core) [The Review Committee may describe the conditions under which PGY-1 residents' progress to be supervised indirectly]

VI.A.2.c).(1).(b) the supervising physician and/or patient is not physically present with the resident and the supervising physician is concurrently monitoring the patient care through appropriate telecommunication technology. (Core) [The Review Committee may further specify] [The RC may choose not to permit VI.A.2.c).(1).(b)] VI.A.2.c).

## **(2) Indirect Supervision:**

The supervising physician is not providing physical or concurrent visual or audio supervision but is immediately available to the resident for guidance and is available to provide appropriate direct supervision. (Core) VI.A.2.c).(3)

## **(3) Oversight:**

The supervising physician is available to provide review of procedures/encounters with feedback provided after care is delivered. (Core)

VI.A.2.d) The privilege of progressive authority and responsibility, conditional independence, and a supervisory role in patient care delegated to each resident must be assigned by the program director and faculty members. (Core)3

VI.A.2.d).(1) The program director must evaluate each resident's abilities based on specific criteria, guided by the Milestones. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(2) Faculty members functioning as supervising physicians must delegate portions of care to residents based on the needs of the patient and the skills of each resident. (Core)

VI.A.2.d).(3) Senior residents or fellows should serve in a supervisory role to junior residents in recognition of their progress toward independence, based on the needs of each patient and the skills of the individual resident or fellow. (Detail)

VI.A.2.e) Programs must set guidelines for circumstances and events in which residents must communicate with the supervising faculty member(s). (Core)

VI.A.2.e).(1) Each resident must know the limits of their scope of authority, and the circumstances under which the resident is permitted to act with conditional independence. (Outcome) Background and Intent: The ACGME Glossary of Terms defines conditional independence as: Graded, progressive responsibility for patient care with defined oversight.

VI.A.2.f) Faculty supervision assignments must be of sufficient duration to assess the knowledge and skills of each resident and to delegate to the

resident the appropriate level of patient care authority and responsibility.  
(Core)