

Technical Standards for the MD Program

Applicants and enrolled medical students must possess the general physical health necessary for performing the duties of a medical student and physician in training without endangering the lives of patients and/or colleagues with whom the student might have contact. Candidates for the MD. Degree must have somatic sensation, the functional use of the senses of vision and hearing, sufficient sensory and motor function, intellectual, and interpersonal skills to permit them to carry out the activities described in the sections that follow. They must be able to integrate consistently, quickly, and accurately all information received by whatever sense(s) employed, and they must have the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data.

A candidate for the M.D. degree must have abilities and skills in five areas: observation, communication, motor, intellectual (conceptual, integrative and quantitative), and behavioral and social. Technological compensation can be made feasible for some disabilities in certain of these areas but a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner. The use of a trained intermediary, a person trained to perform essential skills on behalf of the candidate, or a person used such that a candidate's judgment must be mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation, is not permitted.

1. Observation: The candidate must be able to observe required demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to anatomic dissection, microscopic studies, and patient demonstrations. A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing, and somatic sensation.
2. Communication: A candidate must be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communication. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech, but also reading and writing in English. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team.
3. Motor: A candidate must have sufficient motor function to carry out the basic laboratory techniques and to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers, perform a dissection of a human cadaver, and have sufficient motor ability to use a microscope. A candidate should be able to perform a complete physical examination (including pelvic examination); diagnostic procedures (e.g., venipuncture and basic laboratory tests) A candidate must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of treatment reasonably required of physicians are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the suturing of simple wounds, assisting in surgical operations, and the performance of simple, general obstetrical and gynecological procedures. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch, vision, and hearing.

4. Intellectual- (Conceptual Integrative and Quantitative Abilities): Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physicians, requires that a candidate be able to learn, retrieve, analyze, sequence, organize, synthesize and integrate information efficiently, and reason effectively. In addition a candidate should possess the ability to measure and calculate accurately, to perceive three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.
5. Behavioral and Social Attributes: A candidate must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients and their family members, staff, and colleagues. Each candidate must be able to work effectively as a member of a health-care team. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, collegiality, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that are necessary for the successful physician