

VCU School of Medicine Objectives

Professionalism: The ability to understand and demonstrate the nature of professional and ethical behavior in the act of medical care. This includes respect, responsibility, accountability, excellence, honor, integrity, altruism, leadership, cultural competency, compassion, maintenance of professional boundaries and confidentiality.

Students who are graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine will:

- Provide compassionate care to patients while respecting their privacy and dignity
- Display honesty, integrity, and responsibility in all educational settings and in interactions with patients, their families, and colleagues
- Consistently advocate for the patient's best interest
- Practice ethical decision-making
- Be accountable to the patient, society, and the profession through a commitment to excellence and on-going professional development
- Respond appropriately to the conflicts of interest inherent in the various financial and organizational arrangements within the practice of medicine
- Participate as an active member of the learning community and facilitate the learning of peers and other health care professionals
- Describe the psychological and physical risks and stressors of the practice of medicine
- Identify possible improvements in function and practice techniques to reduce the likelihood of harm

Patient Engagement & Communication (Interpersonal & Communication Skills): The ability to engage and communicate with patients, their families, and professional associates, using interpersonal skills to build relationships for information gathering, guidance, education, support and collaboration.

Students who are graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine will:

- Create and sustain therapeutic and ethically sound relationships with patients and their families
- Employ effective oral and written communication skills to elicit and convey information while building rapport with patients, their families, and professional associates
- Build collaborative relationships across both educational and clinical environments with patients, their families, and professional associates
- Engage in shared decision making with patients and their families or individuals designated to fulfill this responsibility for the patient
- Educate and counsel patients regarding basic lifestyle changes and disease prevention
- Conduct patient handover communications to other providers which are effective, efficient, and maximize patient safety.

Application of Scientific Knowledge & Method (Medical Knowledge): The ability to discuss the biomedical, epidemiological, and social-behavioral aspects of clinical science and apply this knowledge to patient care.

Students who are graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine will:

- Use the scientific method to analyze basic, translational, and clinical research
- Describe the molecular basis for the functions of organs and systems in health and disease
- Describe, apply, and integrate the normal and pathologic structure and function of each organ system of the body
- Describe, apply, and integrate the ways in which organ systems are affected by the various causative mechanisms of disease
- Recognize the clinical, laboratory, radiographic, and pathologic manifestations of disease
- Describe, apply, and integrate the scientific basis of disease prevention and treatment, including intended and unintended effects
- Apply evidence-based practice in defining and treating disease and when evaluating the efficacy of traditional and non-traditional therapies
- Appraise the impact of social-behavioral factors on health maintenance, causation of disease, and therapeutic outcomes

Patient Care: The ability to provide patient care that is appropriate and effective for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of health.

Students who are graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine will:

- Obtain a complete history and perform a comprehensive physical/mental status examination in an organized fashion.
- Utilize a focused history and physical and mental status examination to obtain relevant clinical information in a prioritized, organized, and efficient manner
- Utilize alternative sources (i.e. family members, other health care providers, etc) to obtain a medical history when necessary.
- Recognize patients with immediate life threatening or serious conditions that require critical care and outline an initial course of management
- Discuss with and provide to patients and their families information and counseling aimed at disease management, prevention, and wellness
- Identify the epidemiology of common conditions within a defined population and apply systematic approaches to help reduce the incidence and prevalence of these conditions
- Describe the indications, risks, limitations, complications, and interpretation of commonly used diagnostic tests
- Perform routine procedures competently and identify the indications, risks, limitations, justifications, complications, and interpretations of these procedures
- Construct appropriate assessments, differential diagnoses, and treatment plans for patients across the spectrum of medical presentations
- Gather, interpret, and apply ongoing relevant clinical information in the care of patients

- Select appropriate tests for detecting patients at risk for specific diseases and determine strategies for responding appropriately
- Utilize information technology to gather patient data, support patient care decisions, and educate patients and their families
- Enter and discuss safe and appropriate orders for patients using written form as well as the electronic medical record
- Compose prescriptions in verbal, written, and electronic formats using accepted standards.
- Obtain informed consent for interventions, tests, and/or procedures in which they order and/or perform.

Putting Care in Practical Context (Systems-based Practice): The ability to provide clinical care within the practical context of a patient's age, gender, personal values, family, health literacy, culture, religion, and social and economic circumstances. This goal includes consideration of relevant ethical, moral, and legal perspectives, patient advocacy, public health concerns, and resources and limitations of the healthcare system.

Students who are graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine will:

- Obtain patient histories including information about patients' culture and other factors that may influence the appropriate course of care
- Perform culturally-sensitive physical exams
- Identify cultural barriers that are perceived by patients as impacting health and health care
- Develop plans of care that take into account pertinent cultural attributes of patients and address barriers perceived by patients
- Compare and contrast various approaches to the organization, financing, and delivery of health care
- Demonstrate understanding of the legal framework within which physicians function
- Describe the various roles and responsibilities of members of the health care team
- Interact effectively with all members of the health care team to provide the best possible care for patients
- Relate the effect of public policy actions to individual health and health care systems as a whole
- Define the methods used by individuals and systems to improve quality of care
- Practice a commitment to provide care to patients who are unable to pay and to advocate for access to health care for members of underserved populations
- Recognize and appropriately address gender and cultural biases in themselves and others and in the process of health care delivery

Self-directed Learning & Self-Assessment (Practice-based Learning & Improvement): The ability to assess and understand one's learning style, to self-identify areas of strength and weakness, to independently identify and evaluate resources to engage in lifelong learning, and to critically appraise the evolving body of medical knowledge.

Students who are graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine will:

- Appreciate the limitations of one's own knowledge and skills and seek to engage in lifelong learning and the advice and teaching of more experienced medical practitioners to address those limitations
- Appreciate the limitations of the role of a physician
- Appreciate the limitations of the body of medical knowledge
- Retrieve, critically review, and utilize biomedical and biopsychosocial information
- Identify means to maintain a healthy balance between professional and personal responsibilities to optimize mental, physical and emotional well-being.