

School Of Medicine Objectives

The mission of the School of Medicine is to provide preeminent education to physicians and scientists in order to improve the quality of health care for humanity. Through innovative, scholarly activity and a diverse educational context, the School seeks to create and apply new knowledge, and to provide and continuously improve systems of medical and science education. Furthermore, it is our mission to develop more effective health care practices to address the needs of the diverse populations we serve, and to provide distinguished leadership in the advancement of medicine and science. As pertains to undergraduate medical education, the School requires that all individuals involved in instruction be aware of the educational objectives for medical students. The objectives are:

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 with respect for their privacy and dignity
- Display honesty, integrity, and responsibility in all educational settings and in interactions with patients, their families, and colleagues
- Demonstrate altruism by consistently advocating for the patient's best interest
- Summarize and put into practice the principles of ethical decision-making
- Demonstrate accountability to the patient, society, and the profession through a commitment to excellence and on-going professional development
- Appraise threats to the medical profession posed by 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
- Demonstrate knowledge of the psychological and physical risks and stressors of the practice of medicine
- Identify possible impairments in function and practice techniques for harm reduction

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
- Demonstrate the ability to engage in shared decision making with patients and their families or individuals designated to fulfill this responsibility for the patient
- Demonstrate techniques of patient education and counseling in basic lifestyle changes and disease prevention

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
- Delineate 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 medicine to determine the causation of disease and 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:

- Be able to obtain a complete history and perform a comprehensive physical/mental status examination
- Utilize a focused history and physical and mental status examination to obtain relevant clinical information in an efficient manner

- 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

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:

- Demonstrate the understanding of 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
- Demonstrate the understanding of the limitations of the role of a physician
- Demonstrate the understanding of the limitations of the evolving 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.