



## Consensus Statement on a Framework for Professional Competence by the Coalition for Physician Accountability

### Executive Statement

The Coalition member organizations are committed to the core concept of professional accountability in which the profession is entrusted by the public with the responsibility to regulate medicine and educate the next generation of physicians. The members of the Coalition endorse a framework for professional competence that contains six general but essential domains of competence: Professionalism, Medical Knowledge, Patient Care and Procedural Skills, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Practice-based Learning and Improvement, and System-based Practice. The Coalition member organizations are committed to ongoing, meaningful processes for assessment and evolution of the competencies to ensure that students and physicians have the knowledge and skills to provide excellent patient care as social and delivery system needs change.

### Full Consensus Statement

The mission of the Coalition is to advance health care and promote professional accountability by improving the quality, efficiency, and continuity of the education, training, and assessment of physicians.

The Coalition member organizations are committed to the core concept of professional accountability, a tradition in medicine under which physicians, as a community, are entrusted by the public with the responsibility to regulate medicine and educate the next generation of physicians. These organizations are charged with setting standards for the continuum of medical education and training and for the assessment, certification, and licensure of physicians, and hold themselves accountable to the public for the outcomes of those processes.

In 1999, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) embraced a common conceptual framework to guide this process of learning and improvement, described in six general but essential domains of competence: Professionalism, Medical Knowledge, Patient Care and Procedural Skills, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Practice-based Learning and Improvement, and System-based Practice. Since that time, the Coalition members have united in their commitment to developing physician capabilities in all six domains of competence. These six domains offer a

practical framework that captures the most important dimensions of physician performance and defines good medical practice.

There should be ongoing, meaningful processes for assessment and evolution of the competencies to ensure that physicians have the knowledge and skills to provide excellent patient care as social and delivery system needs change. The Coalition members provide a framework for the continuous improvement of physician competence relevant to each physician's scope of practice and the needs of patients.

Mastery of the competencies is developmental, beginning before entry into medical school and continuing throughout a career in clinical practice. An individual's performance in most competencies may improve with practice during both the formal phase of medical education and throughout a career of clinical practice. Performance in at least some competencies may decline over time. The pace of growth will vary among individuals, and any individual likely will progress at different rates in different competencies. Developmental milestones that mark growth in the acquisition of these competencies are being developed for each specialty.

The six core domains of competence capture the most important dimensions of physician performance. We expect that our shared understanding of the behaviors that define the competencies and milestones within these domains will evolve as patient needs and societal expectations change, as knowledge and technology advance, and as we learn more about the process of learning and practice. The milestone framework should be sufficiently dynamic to adapt to such changes. The Coalition recognizes that some constituencies may emphasize particular competencies; the Coalition's focus is on the competencies core to all physicians.

Because the alignment of educational, training, assessment and life-long learning activities for physicians is of great importance to the public and the profession, the members of the Coalition will work together to assure that they share an understanding of the domains of competence; refine behavioral expectations within the domains as health system needs evolve; and align medical education, training and assessment with the competency framework to help physicians demonstrate mastery and excellence throughout their careers.

Endorsed by:

#### Organizational Members

- Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)
- Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)
- American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Osteopathic Association (AOA)
- Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
- Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)
- Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB)
- Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)

National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME)  
National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME)

Liaison Members

Council of Medical Specialty Societies (CMSS)  
The Joint Commission