

Major Revision of the Program Requirements for Dermatology

Background

Every 10 years, the ACGME Review Committees are required to evaluate the applicable specialty-specific Program Requirements for revision. The major revision process for the Program Requirements for Graduate Medical Education in Dermatology began in the spring of 2024 and the following activities have been conducted to date:

- 1) A scenario planning workshop was held in May 2024, with participation of program directors representing a broad spectrum of dermatology residency programs; representatives from other specialties; residents; medical students; and public members.
- 2) Interviews were conducted to introduce into the requirements development process the perspectives of dermatology patients; dermatologists who have recently completed residency; and health care “influencers,” including leaders of health care systems and insurers.
- 3) A literature review was conducted on topics deemed relevant to dermatology resident education, now and in the future.

Definition of the Dermatologist

Based on this work, the Dermatology Writing Group (the Writing Group), on behalf of the Review Committee for Dermatology, drafted the following new definition of the dermatologist of the future:

A dermatologist is an expert in the evaluation, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of conditions affecting the skin, hair, and nails. Dermatologists are board-certified physicians with specialized medical, procedural, and pathology training who provide comprehensive, patient-centered care to all ages, races, gender identities, ethnicities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and skin colors. They use shared decision-making to value and incorporate the perspective of patients and their caregivers, and advocate for the needs of each patient.

Dermatologists are adaptable, intellectually curious, resourceful, and driven. They implement and pursue self-assessment, self-direction, and lifelong learning. They have excellent visual diagnostic skills, integrating physical examination findings and data from many sources. Dermatologists continuously expand their expertise in a changing health care environment, incorporating new and emerging evidence-based literature, technology, and diagnostic testing in daily patient care. They understand the effects of pollution and climate change on the skin and implement strategies to reduce related health impacts.

Dermatologists communicate effectively to educate health care team members, patients, and patients’ caregivers. They provide information appropriate for all learners, distribute relevant knowledge, and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration. Dermatologists engage with patients in a culturally sensitive and compassionate manner, demonstrating empathy for all.

Dermatologists use medical diagnostics, therapies, and procedural modalities to provide expert care to patients of all ages with both common and complex cutaneous diseases. They use medications, biologic therapies, and other treatment modalities that modulate immune dysfunction. Dermatologists have expertise in genomics and its application to diagnosis and pharmacotherapy. Dermatologists are also skilled in procedural modalities, including incisional and reconstructive surgery, lasers and energy devices, and cosmetic and rehabilitative interventions. They implement skin tissue testing, including recognition and correlation of histopathologic findings and associated ancillary testing, to include molecular techniques.

Dermatologists are the leaders in the training of future dermatologists. They also educate and provide consultations to other medical specialists and health team members. Dermatologists serve as advocates and educators for patients with cutaneous diseases and for those patients' caregivers. They are trained to provide comprehensive and compassionate care for their patients in a variety of settings, including inpatient, outpatient, and virtual. They demonstrate professionalism and cultural humility in shared decision-making with patients, patients' caregivers, colleagues, and the broader health care setting.

Dermatologists have expertise in leading and participating in multidisciplinary medical teams to promote optimal patient outcomes. They also have expertise in managing medical practices, including knowledge of system-based payment models, and incorporation of emerging technologies to increase efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and quality of care in practice. Dermatologists are trained to provide care in a range of practice settings and care models.

Dermatologists are innovators and leaders in the house of medicine. Dermatologists strive to be self-reflective and to demonstrate emotional intelligence in their interactions with patients, patients' caregivers, and colleagues. They maintain personal well-being to promote resilience and ensure optimal patient care; they serve as role-models to promote the practice of well-being for their medical teammates. Dermatologists model professionalism and foster an environment of belonging, transparency, and collegiality.

Next Steps

The Writing Group will begin development of the revised Program Requirements in early 2025. Before beginning that work, the group seeks stakeholder input, in the form of a survey, on several key areas.

Please use the link below to access the survey. **The response deadline is November 1, 2024.**

https://acgme.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_02mtv8q3AhOOx8i