USJ PA Studies Graduate Competencies

A3.12g) The program must define, publish and make readily available to enrolled and prospective students general program information to include: program required competencies for entry level practice, consistent with the competencies as defined by the PA profession

The Physician Assistant Studies Program will ensure that its graduates have attained a set of professional competencies required for entry level PA practice. Influenced by the Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession (2020) adopted by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the American Academy of PAs (AAPA), the National Commission on Certification for Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), as well as the PAEA Core Competencies for New Physician Assistant Graduates, the USJ PA Studies Graduate Competencies include:

I. **Knowledge:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to synthesize core basic and medical science knowledge and appropriately apply it to patient care
   a. Apply knowledge of human anatomy and physiology to patient care
   b. For selected medical and surgical conditions, apply knowledge of:
      i. Pathophysiology
      ii. Epidemiology and risk factors
      iii. Presenting symptoms
      iv. Physical examination findings
      v. Differential diagnosis and establishing the diagnosis
      vi. Pertinent diagnostic and/or laboratory study findings
      vii. Treatment including indications, contraindications, complications, risks, benefits and techniques for pertinent procedures as well as the mechanism of action, indication, contraindications, side effects and adverse reactions of pharmacologic treatments
      viii. Strategies for risk factor modification and patient education

II. **Interpersonal skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the interpersonal and communication skills required to collaborate with patients, their families, peers, physicians, and other healthcare professionals.
   a. Effectively elicit and exchange information using clear language to patients and families through verbal, nonverbal and written means
   b. Create and sustain therapeutic and ethically sound relationships with patients
   c. Adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction
   d. Relay appropriate and complete patient historical information in traditionally accepted written and oral formats to an interdisciplinary team of caregivers.
   e. Accurately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes
   f. Model compassionate service to others, a core value of the University
III. **Patient care, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-solving Skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to obtain a detailed, accurate patient history, sensitive to the individuality of the patient, perform an appropriate physical exam, develop a comprehensive differential diagnosis, order and interpret necessary diagnostic studies, make the correct diagnosis and institute appropriate care.

   a. Accurately obtain the appropriate history in comprehensive and focused interviews
   b. Perform comprehensive and focused physical exams, identifying pertinent information
   c. Recognize normal and abnormal anatomy and physiology
   d. Relate pathophysiologic principles to specific disease processes
   e. Accurately develop a comprehensive differential diagnosis and arrive at the most likely diagnosis
   f. Use diagnostic equipment safely and appropriately
   g. Select, collect and interpret appropriate diagnostic or laboratory studies
   h. Employ clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities in patient care scenarios
   i. Determine the appropriate pharmacologic therapy for selected medical conditions
   j. Monitor pharmacologic regimens and adjust as appropriate
   k. Recognize and initiate treatment for life-threatening emergencies
   l. Counsel and educate patients and their families
   m. Employ information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
   n. Perform medical and surgical procedures essential to the specialty of practice
   o. Provide culturally competent, patient-centered, quality medical care to patients across the lifespan in a variety of settings.
   p. Utilize information resources to locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to a patient’s health
   q. Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
   r. Utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support education

IV. **Professionalism:** Graduates will demonstrate professionalism in their interactions with patients, peers, and other healthcare professionals.

   a. Recognize personal and professional limitations
   b. Be unimpaired by substance, mental illness and cognitive deficiency
   c. Demonstrate respect, compassion, integrity and a sensitivity to cultural, ethnic and generational specifics
   d. Incorporate the principal of patient autonomy to patient care
   e. Demonstrate knowledge and obedience of legal and regulatory requirements as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
   f. Develop professional relationships with physician supervisors and other
health care providers
g. Show accountability to patients, society, and the profession
h. Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and
tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety while maintaining life balance and
healthy behaviors
i. Develop a plan for maintaining excellence and on-going professional development
j. Employ insight to assess and improve clinical skills, patient care and
professional interactions.
k. Employ ethical principles pertaining to the provision or withholding of
clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent,
and business practices
l. Utilize self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative
m. Recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical
knowledge, and physical limitations in oneself and others
n. Seek and accept constructive criticism pertaining to judgement and performance
o. Employ appropriate professional communication skills in verbal, written
and electronic formats

V. **Systems and Problem-based Improvement:** Graduates will demonstrate an
understanding of the American healthcare system as well as the role of other
healthcare professionals and strive to improve the health care system.

a. Apply knowledge of beneficence, non-maleficence, quality, efficacy and cost
to provide patient-centered care within the greater health system
b. Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement
activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of
the health care delivery team
c. Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system
complexities
d. Partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other
health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and
effectiveness of health care and patient outcomes
e. Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and
recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact
patient care
f. Recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to
health care disparities
g. Utilize information resources for the purposes of practice-improvement.
h. Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage
for patient care
i. Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not
compromise quality of care

December 2021