Domain 1: Professional values and behaviours

The GMC expects doctors to demonstrate appropriate personal and professional values and behaviours. These professional requirements are set out in Good medical practice and related guidance. This guidance outlines a doctor’s professional responsibilities, including their duty of care to their patients. Doctors have a wide range of other professional responsibilities, including their role as an employee, advocate and champion. These include:

- acting with honesty and integrity
- maintaining trust by showing respect, courtesy, dignity and empathy for others, including patients, carers, guardians and colleagues
- ensuring patient confidentiality
- demonstrating openness and transparency in their interactions with patients and employers – known as the professional duty of candour
- raising and escalating concerns where there is an issue with patient safety or quality of care
- being accountable as an employee to their employer
- being professionally accountable within an appropriate clinical governance framework
- managing time and resources effectively
- being able to self-monitor and seek appropriate advice and support to maintain their own physical and mental health
- developing emotional resilience
- demonstrating awareness of their own behaviour, conduct or health, particularly where this might put patients at risk
- demonstrating awareness of the behaviour, conduct or health of others, particularly where this might put patients at risk
- being able to identify and create safe and supportive working and learning environments
- working within appropriate equality and diversity legislation
- working within appropriate health and safety legislation
- demonstrating a commitment to learn from patient safety investigations and complaints
- maintaining their professional legitimacy and credibility by successfully completing appropriate continuing professional development and statutory and mandatory training
- demonstrating an ability to learn and reflect on their professional practice.

Domain 2: Professional skills

Practical skills
We have set out below some basic practical skills that are fundamentally important to safe and effective patient care. Doctors in training must be:

- literate
- numerate
- articulate
- able to give clear, accurate and legible written instructions
- able to give clear, accurate and comprehensible verbal instructions
- able to make accurate and contemporaneous records of their observations or findings
- able to demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the legal aspects of digital and written records
- able to demonstrate an appropriate understanding of information governance and data protection
- able to demonstrate appropriate IT skills, including word processing and data collection.

Clinical skills
For the many clinical specialties that involve direct patient contact, doctors should have some key generic clinical skills.

History taking, diagnosing and medical management
Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can:

- take a relevant and detailed patient history
- perform accurate clinical examinations
- show appropriate clinical reasoning by analysing physical and psychological findings
- formulate an appropriate differential diagnosis
- formulate an appropriate diagnostic and therapeutic management plan, taking into account the urgency required
- explain clinical reasoning behind diagnostic and clinical management decisions.

Consent
Doctors in training must demonstrate and understand the requirements and processes associated with consent, including:

- making sure patients are accurately identified
- obtaining valid informed consent from the patient
- mental capacity issues
- safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- resuscitation status and patient consent
- confidentiality.
Prescribing medicines safely
Doctors in training must be able to:

- prescribe safely and use appropriate approaches and strategies to make sure medicines are managed and used safely
- review and monitor appropriate therapeutic interventions relevant to their scope of clinical practice
- prescribe antimicrobial drugs appropriately
- prescribe medications and use other therapies in line with the latest evidence
- comply with safety checks, contributing to reporting systems, and following other monitoring processes
- understand the challenges of safe prescribing in people with multiple long-term conditions and frail elderly people
- manage adverse incidents and therapeutic interactions appropriately.*

Using medical devices safely
Doctors in training must:

- understand the importance of being trained in the use of specialist medical equipment and devices
- make sure medical devices are used safely by complying with safety checks, contributing to reporting systems, and following other appropriate maintenance and monitoring processes
- understand the design features and safety aspects associated with the safe use of medical devices
- know how to safely operate medical devices after appropriate training.

Humane interventions
Doctors in training must demonstrate clinical judgement and intervene appropriately to make sure patients have adequate:

- nutrition
- hydration and rehydration
- pain management
- palliative care at the end of their life
- cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Infection control and communicable disease
Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can:

- appropriately prevent, manage and treat infection, including controlling the risk of cross-infection
- work appropriately within the wider community to manage the risk posed by communicable diseases.

Domain 3: Professional knowledge

Professional requirements
Doctors in training must be aware of and adhere to the GMC’s professional requirements, including:

- meeting the standards expected of all doctors, set out in Good medical practice
- keeping up to date with the GMC’s guidance*
- taking part in revalidation, which involves understanding their scope of practice and the role and responsibility of the responsible officer
- completing continuing professional development to keep their knowledge and skills up to date†
- working within appropriate clinical governance frameworks.


**National legislation**
Doctors in training must be aware of their legal responsibilities and be able to apply in practice any national legislation governing, for example:

- employment law, particularly as it relates to them as an employee
- mental capacity
- mental health
- safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults
- genital mutilation
- equality and diversity, including the nine protected characteristics* 
- data protection and confidentiality
- other legislation relevant to medical practice
- health and safety legislation, including hazardous substances
- the working time directive
- establishing and certifying death
- referral to the coroner.

**The healthcare system**
Doctors in training must be aware of and understand:

- the structure of the National Health Service (NHS), the independent sector and the wider health and social care landscape
- the local healthcare system and its relationship to social care
- how services are commissioned, funded and audited
- how services are held publically accountable
- the law on patient and carer involvement and shared decision making.

*The Equality Act 2010 specifies nine protected characteristics that cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.*
Promoting health and preventing illness
Doctors in training must be aware of and understand:

- the factors affecting health inequalities
- the relationship of the physical environment to health
- basic principles of public health, including promoting health, vaccination and preventing illness
- basic principles of global health
- the responsibilities of carers, who will play an increasing role with an ageing population
- how to manage health and social care of local populations through:
  - community engagement
  - family and community-based interventions
  - global and multicultural aspects of delivering evidence-based, sustainable healthcare.

Domain 4: Communication capabilities
Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can communicate effectively, assertively, respectfully and be able to share decision making, while maintaining appropriate situational awareness and professional judgement. They must do this:

- with patients, relatives, carers and guardians by:
  - demonstrating effective consultation skills
  - establishing a constructive doctor-patient partnership with the ability to display empathy and compassion
  - sharing decision making by informing the patient, prioritising the patient’s wishes, and respecting the patient’s beliefs, concerns and reasonable expectations
  - demonstrating effective listening skills
  - communicating effectively and sensitively when breaking bad news
  - effectively managing challenging conversations or consultations
  - using an interpreter or translation services where appropriate
  - making arrangements to communicate effectively with someone who has impaired hearing, speech or sight
  - making appropriate arrangements where culture does not permit certain conversations with a male doctor
- delivering an honest apology and effective explanation where appropriate
- communicating, consulting and sharing information with carers
- with colleagues in the multidisciplinary team by:
  - exploring and resolving diagnostic and management challenges
  - applying management and teamworking skills, including influencing, negotiating, continuously re-assessing priorities and effectively managing complex, dynamic situations
  - ensuring continuity and coordination of patient care through the appropriate transfer of information
  - demonstrating safe and effective handover, both verbally and in writing
- individually by:
  - maintaining appropriate situational awareness and sensitivity to the impact of their comments on others
  - raising safety concerns appropriately through clinical governance systems.

**Domain 5: Capabilities in leadership and teamworking**

Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can lead and work effectively in a team by:

- showing awareness of their leadership responsibilities
- understanding direct and shared leadership
- appreciating their leadership style and their impact on others
- thinking critically about decision making, reflecting on decision-making processes and explaining those decisions to others
- making appropriate, time-sensitive decisions, informed by an understanding of the psychology of decision making, fixation error* and cognitive biases†
- showing appropriate followership, which is actively participating and contributing to the work and success of a team
- supervising, challenging, influencing, appraising and mentoring colleagues and peers to enhance performance and to support development
- challenging and critically appraising performance of colleagues, peers and systems
- promoting and participating in multidisciplinary, inter-professional teamworking
- promoting an open and transparent culture.

* The inability to reassess and consider new possibilities, leading to error and mismanagement of conditions or circumstances.
† Patterns of concrete thinking that affect the quality of judgements and decisions by not considering all appropriate circumstances.
Domain 6: Capabilities in patient safety and quality improvement

Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can participate in and promote activity to improve the quality and safety of patient care and clinical outcomes. To do this, they must:

- understand the importance of raising and acting on concerns
- understand the importance of sharing good practice
- understand basic Human Factors principles and practice at individual, team, organisational and system levels
- understand multidisciplinary, inter-professional teamworking
- promote and participate in inter-professional learning
- promote patient involvement
- understand human error and its mitigation, including fixation error and cognitive biases
- understand risk management and its mitigation, such as through root cause analysis
- reflect on their personal behaviour and practice
- effectively debrief their own performance and that of others
- take part in revalidation
- make changes to their practice in response to learning opportunities
- contribute to improvements in a practice setting or wider clinical environment through examining information from audit, inquiries, critical incidents or complaints, and implementing appropriate changes
- design and implement quality improvement projects that improve clinical effectiveness and patients’ safety and experience by:
  - using data to identify areas for improvement
  - employing quality improvement methods, such as plan, do, study, act cycles
  - engaging with stakeholders, including patients, doctors and managers, to plan and implement change
  - measuring and evaluating the impact of improvement.
Domain 7: Capabilities in dealing with complexity and uncertainty

Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can:

- show appropriate professional judgement in a wide range of clinical and non-clinical contexts and circumstances
- adapt management of medical problems to take account of patients’ wishes, comorbidities and long-term conditions
- understand that health and well-being is a complex biomedical, psychological and sociological outcome
- adapt management to patients at extremes of age, including frail elderly people
- understand requirements for recovery and rehabilitation
- recognise patients with common mental health conditions (eg depression, dementia or delirium), manage them and, if appropriate, refer them to colleagues with relevant expertise.

Domain 8: Capabilities in safeguarding vulnerable groups

Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can:

- recognise safeguarding issues for children and vulnerable adults and act on these appropriately
- understand mental capacity and the importance of protecting the safety of individuals and society
- understand the needs and support required for people with learning disabilities
- understand positive behavioural support and when and how to restrain and safeguard vulnerable adults in distress
- recognise where addiction (to drugs, alcohol or smoking), obesity, environmental exposure or social deprivation issues are contributing to ill health and act on this information
- understand the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the disability discrimination requirements.
Domain 9: Capabilities in education and training

Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can:

- provide safe clinical supervision of learners and other doctors in training
- plan and deliver effective education and training activities
- take part in induction and orientation
- provide supportive developmental feedback, both verbally and in writing
- create effective learning opportunities
- evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness of their educational activities
- assess fairly and objectively the performance of learners and other doctors in training
- understand how to raise concerns about the performance of a learner or another doctor in training who is under their supervision
- understand how to balance the needs of the service to patients with the needs of education, safely and appropriately.

Domain 10: Capabilities in research

Doctors in training must demonstrate that they can:

- practise in line with the latest evidence
- critically appraise literature
- understand and apply basic research principles
- understand basic principles of research governance and how they should apply relevant ethical guidelines to research activities
- draw from public health epidemiology* and other data sources, and conduct literature searches and reviews.

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* The study of how often diseases occur in different groups of people and why.