



Technical Standards Statement

Individuals applying to the Rocky Mountain College Physician Assistant Program must meet certain basic/essential requirements (referred to as the Technical Standards) that are necessary for obtaining employment and performing as a Physician Assistant. The Technical Standards each student must master include cognitive, physical and behavioral characteristics. Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis, but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. All students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the program core faculty. The following skills are required of each Physician Assistant student, with or without accommodation:

1. Observation Skills

The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations in animals, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensation.

2. Communication Skills

A candidate should be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but reading and writing. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team and patients.

3. Motor Skills

Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A candidate should be able to do basic laboratory tests, carry out diagnostic procedures, and read EKGs and X-rays. A candidate should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment of patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physician assistants are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

4. Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physician assistants, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, the candidate should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes

A candidate must possess the emotional health and stability required for full utilization of her/his intellectual abilities. Intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admission and education processes.