

Graduate Medical Education

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY & TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR GME

GENERAL STATEMENT: Graduate Medical Education (GME) at University of Iowa Health Care is governed by the overarching University of Iowa policy on *Human Rights (Operations Manual, II Community Policies, Division I Human Rights, Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity, Chapter 3, Section 3.1)*, which states, “The university is committed to the principle of equal opportunity including access to facilities. Differences in treatment are prohibited when based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth and related conditions), disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preferences. This principle must be observed in the internal policies and practices of the university; specifically in the admission, housing, and education of students; in policies governing programs of extracurricular life and activities; and in the university’s treatment of its applicants and its employees. Consistent with state and federal law, reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities and to employees with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, and to accommodate religious practices. The university shall work cooperatively with the community in furthering these principles.” GME strives to make reasonable accommodations for the functional limitations of applicant and existing residents, whether medical or dental, and fellows, (collectively, “Trainees”), with disabilities. Like all staff, faculty, and students, Trainees are protected from coercion, retaliation, interference, or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in the investigation of a complaint. Inquiries about anti-discrimination and retaliation policies and complaints should be directed to the Division of Access Opportunity and Diversity (EOD).

UI Health Care’s commitment to diversity acknowledges that physicians and dentists with disabilities offer unique perspectives. In that regard, UI Health Care seeks to foster an environment for Trainees based on equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency while also meeting the training requirements mandated by its GME programs via the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), certifying boards, and UI Health Care [Bylaws](#). All applicants and Trainees at UI Health Care must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical and emotional capabilities to meet the Technical Standards described in this policy, with or without accommodation.

- I. **TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION & RETENTION:** Technical standards are criteria that go beyond academic requirements or training prerequisites for acceptance as a GME Trainee and are essential to meeting the academic and clinical requirements of the particular GME training program, though additional performance expectations may occur in certain GME programs. Trainees with or without disabilities, applying to and continuing in a GME program will be expected to meet the same requirements and will be held to the same fundamental standards. Beginning and continuing in a GME training program assumes a certain level of cognitive and technical skill. Although not all Trainees are expected to gain the same level of proficiency with all technical skills, some skills are so essential that mastery must be achieved, with the assistance of reasonable accommodations where necessary. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to assist in learning, performing and satisfying the technical standards, in compliance with the law and University policy. Applicants and active Trainees must possess the capability to complete the entire curriculum of the GME program, with or without accommodation. Abilities and skills required are noted in six areas below. Technological accommodation can be made for some disabilities in certain of these areas, but each Trainee must meet the essential technical standards in a way such that the Trainee will be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner and progress to the point of autonomous practice in the Trainee’s GME specialty or sub-specialty training program. The use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable in many clinical situations as it implies that the Trainee’s judgment must be mediated by someone else’s power of selection and observation.

The technical standards are:

- Observation – Trainees must have the functional ability to observe and must have sufficient use of the senses necessary to perform all necessary physical examinations and patient care pursuant to their specialized area of training.
- Communication – Trainees must be able to relate reasonably to patients and establish sensitive, professional relationships with patients, peers, colleagues and staff. They must be able to communicate to the patient and to their colleagues with accuracy, clarity and efficiency.
- Motor – Trainees must be able to participate in diagnostic maneuvers, procedures and treatments required for their specialty.
- Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities – Trainees must be able to analyze, synthesize, solve problems, and reach reasonable diagnostic and therapeutic judgments. Trainees must be able to display good judgment in the assessment and treatment of patients. They must be able to respond with prompt and appropriate action in emergent situations.
- Behavioral and Social Attributes – Trainees must be able to accept criticism and respond with appropriate modification of their behavior. They must possess the perseverance, diligence, and consistency necessary to complete the training program's curriculum, gain progressive independence according to the timeline outlined by the Program Director's established curriculum and enter the autonomous practice of medicine at the completion of the program. They must demonstrate professional and ethical demeanor and behavior in all dealings with peers, faculty, staff and patients.
- Cultural Competency – Trainees must be able to communicate with and care for persons whose culture, sexual orientation or religious beliefs are different from their own. They must be able to provide patient care for any patient regardless of the Trainee's and patient's race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. Similarly, Trainees must be able to interact professionally with colleagues and other healthcare professionals without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual.

II. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS: Whether it is an applicant or a current Trainee, GME does not discriminate in access to its programs on the basis of disability. Reasonable accommodations for disabilities are determined on a case-by-case basis through an assessment of individual needs and an interactive process. Any documents containing disability related information are confidential and maintained securely in the Program and/or in the GME Office or in University of Iowa Health Care HR offices, as appropriate.

III. PROCESS: As noted above, to remain in good standing, medical residents and fellows and dental residents with and without disabilities are required to meet the technical standards set forth in this policy and any other achievement standards determined by the faculty, the particular standards of the training program and of the respective specialty or sub-specialty. The process for considering reasonable accommodation(s) for any disability (pre-dating entry to the program or newly acquired) is as follows:

- Accommodation Request – Leave and Disability –
 - A *new* (incoming) Trainee seeking reasonable accommodation(s) for a disability pre-dating entry to the program must contact the Leave and Disability (LDA) office within UI Health Care Human Resources to initiate the interactive process, preferably no later than the end of the first week of training. The LDA office will collect necessary information, including but not limited to satisfactory written documentation of the need for accommodation.
 - A *current* Trainee who is experiencing new difficulties related to an existing disability or a new disability and would like to engage in the interactive process regarding reasonable accommodation(s) must also contact the LDA office as soon as reasonably possible to initiate the process.



- Interactive Accommodation Process – The Program Director will work with the Trainee, the LDA office and in some cases, the Trainee’s health care provider, in an interactive process to develop a plan for reasonable accommodation(s) consistent with the needs and the interests of the Trainee and training program.

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