

Program-Specific Trainee Position Description and Essential Functions

5/1/2026

Trainee Position Description and Essential Functions

Geriatric Psychiatry Fellowship Program

Position Identification: Geriatric Psychiatry Fellow

Position Summary: Psychiatry is a medical specialty focused on the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of behavioral, addictive, and emotional disorders. Graduates will possess sound clinical judgment, requisite skills, and a high order of knowledge about the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of all psychiatric disorders, including substance use disorders, together with other common medical and neurological disorders that relate to the practice of psychiatry. (Adapted from https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pfassets/programrequirements/2026-prs/400_psychiatry_2026.pdf)

For the purpose of this document, the term “Resident” includes medical and dental residents and fellows, including those in ACGME, CODA and non-ACGME accredited programs.

General Overview of the Resident Role

A resident’s responsibilities include patient care responsibilities within the scope of their clinical privileges commensurate with level of training and other responsibilities required of all members of the medical staff. Under the supervision of attendings, general responsibilities of the resident may include:

- Initial and ongoing assessment of patients’ medical, physical and psychosocial status
- Performing history and physical examination
- Developing assessment and treatment plan
- Performing rounds
- Recording documentation, including progress notes, admission notes, procedure notes and discharge summaries
- Ordering tests, examinations, medications and therapies
- Collaborating with interprofessional team members to arrange for discharge, referral, and after care. Providing patient education and counseling about health status, test results, disease processes and transition of care planning
- Performing procedures
- Teaching and evaluating junior learners, such as medical students

UW GME Expectations for Professional Behavior

- All residents must comply with the [UW Medicine Policy on Professional Conduct](#) and the UW Medicine [Compliance Code of Conduct](#)
- ACGME Competencies in Professionalism, including fitness for duty (See [ACGME Common Program Requirements](#))
- All residents must comply with [GME Policies](#), including the Resident and Fellow Position Appointment Agreement (RFP)

Essential Functions

Essential functions are the fundamental job duties of the position that cannot be eliminated or substantially modified without changing the nature of the position.

A job function may be considered essential for the following reasons:

- The reason the position exists is to perform that function
 - Resident educational requirements and patient care responsibilities
- A limited number of available residents can perform that function
- Varies by program, rotation, year, risk pools, etc.
- The function may be highly specialized so that the trainee in the position is hired for their expertise or ability to perform the particular function
 - Cannot easily hire more trainees, especially of a specific R level
- The percentage of time spent on a function does not determine whether or not it is essential.

Essential functions for GME residents must include consideration of:

- ACGME program requirements
- Specialty board requirements
- UW program requirements
 - Unique to each UW training program and must consider:
 - Complexity of rotations/service requirements
 - Size of program
 - Structure and depth of risk pools
 - Please refer to the program's [Clinical Coverage Policy](#)
 - Inclusive of the hospital system requirements:
 - Rotations dependent on residents' service for patient care
 - Coverage options available

A resident must perform the position's essential job functions ***with or without an approved reasonable accommodation***. Reasonable accommodation means modifying or adjusting practices, procedures, policies, job duties, or the work or application environment so that a qualified individual with a disability **can still perform a position's essential functions**. Approved reasonable accommodations are determined via an interactive process involving the resident, DSO/HR/GME and the program.

Essential functions ensure the safe and smooth delivery of education and patient care and are identified in alignment with program aims to facilitate trainee readiness for independent practice across an appropriate range of clinical settings for that specialty. Transparent documentation of a program's essential functions is also an important resource for applicants evaluating the training program during recruitment.

Essential Program Administrative Functions

Onboarding

The Resident must:

- comply with all program and institutional tasks required for credentialing and onboarding by the requested deadlines
- participate in de-escalation training that may include physical maneuvers to escape from unsafe situations, for example, severe patient agitation or aggression.

Program Tasks and Documentation

The Resident must:

- participate in all requests for schedule preferences, requests for absence or schedule changes of requests for clinical coverage on the requested timelines or deadlines.
- complete in a timely manner all evaluations requested for medical students, peer residents, faculty or other members of the team
- complete MedHub clinical and educational hour logs
- complete case or procedure logs
- complete the annual ACGME Resident Survey
- complete the program's annual confidential internal survey
- complete required examination preparation and/or testing requirements, to include USMLE or COMLEX Step 3, in-training examinations and program-specific guidelines for national board certification
- attendance at all required program meetings, including semiannual meetings, mentorship meetings, program retreats, etc.
- adhere to the expectations outlined in the [Policy: Expectations of Program Residents](#)

Essential Program Core Educational Functions

Didactics

The Resident must:

- comply with all standards for attendance at didactics or other core educational activities
- adhere to the preferred mode of attendance (in-person, virtual, hybrid)
- adhere to didactic and T-group attendance minimum requirement of 85%.

Scholarship

The Resident must:

- comply with all program or specialty requirements for research or scholarship, quality improvement, national or regional conference presentation, publication or scholarly writing or teaching and presentations internal to the program (e.g. journal club, didactics, case conference, M&M, etc.)
- adhere to the expectations outlined in the [Policy: Expectations of Program Residents](#)

Essential Patient Care Functions

Presence and preparedness

The Resident must:

- present to work as physically, mentally and emotionally fit for duty
- arrive at the patient care setting on schedule
- arrive at work in attire appropriate for the professional and safe delivery of patient care

- meet expectations for chart review or pre-rounding
- satisfy expectations that preceded sign-out and/or departure from the clinical setting, including an appropriate handoff and follow up on all patient assessments/data/studies that will alter care in the near term.
- adhere to the expectations outlined in the [Policy: Expectations of Program Residents](#)

Administrative

The Resident must:

- complete patient health record documentation on the schedule prescribed by the program or medical center. (Examples include but are not limited to progress notes/visit summaries, discharge summaries, operative or procedure notes, perioperative records)
- comply with expectations for EHR inbox management, including timely responses to messages from patients, medical staff and tracking and patient follow up of expected results
- adhere to the expectations outlined in the [Policy: Expectations of Program Residents](#)

Patient Care Communication

The Resident must:

- respond in a timely manner to pages, phone calls and Epic Secure Chat
- remain within the program-prescribed geographic range while on call or eligible for coverage
- adhere to the expectations outlined in the [Policy: Expectations of Program Residents](#)

Patient Care Volumes

The Resident must:

- work toward (with supervision) or meet benchmarks for patient care volumes in all clinical settings
- appropriately request and utilize supervision
- work toward or ultimately meet procedure certification standards

Consultation

The Resident must:

- appropriately respond to, triage, and staff consultations in a timely manner
- document findings and recommendations in a timely manner
- communicate with the requesting service directly (e.g., in-person, phone) in advance of and following the assessment
- ensure that consultations are staffed and finalized with a faculty member in a timely manner
- provide psychiatric consultation in all our core hospitals and outpatient settings.

Essential Shift and Schedule Functions

Settings

- complete assigned shifts in settings deemed essential by the program, such as inpatient units, emergency department, and outpatient general and specialty clinics

- complete assigned shifts in Harborview, UW, Seattle Children's Hospital, and VA Medical Centers as well as various community settings throughout Seattle and the WWAMI region

The Resident must:

- complete shifts of all lengths deemed essential by the program, which may include daytime, swing,
- nights, weekends, and holidays
- *Shifts must not exceed ACGME limits of up to 28 hours per shift, and up to 80 hours per week averaged over a 4-week period*
- where appropriate, comply with designated break lengths (to meet personal needs and not impact patient care)
- comply with the residency [call policies](#) when necessary

Call Responsibilities

The Resident must:

- complete assigned shifts of overnight call, as deemed essential by the program
- complete assigned shifts of home call, as deemed essential by the program
- remain within the prescribed geographic range while on call or eligible for coverage
- comply with the residency [call policies](#) when necessary

Essential Cognitive Functions

Functions/details specific to the program:

- Analyze, synthesize, and apply knowledge from clinical experience, readings, and didactic learning to support clinical decision-making.
- Develop and demonstrate sound clinical judgment in diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of illness.
- Identify, prioritize, and manage patient care and professional responsibilities to support safe, timely, and effective outcomes.
- Apply clinical reasoning effectively in situations involving uncertainty and changing conditions.
- Seek guidance and incorporate input from others as appropriate to support patient care and professional development.
- Reflect on performance and integrate feedback to support continuous improvement.
- Adapt to evolving clinical environments and changing patient care needs.
- Demonstrate reliability through consistent participation in responsibilities and timely completion of assigned tasks.
- Operate effectively in dynamic clinical environments with frequent interruptions and competing priorities.
- Provide guidance, support, and teaching to junior learners, including medical students.

Essential Communication Functions

(including verbal and written)

Functions/details specific to the program:

Residents are expected to have advanced communication skills and to gain and demonstrate higher levels of competence as they progress through the training program. With appropriate training, residents must:

- Gather, interpret, and exchange information effectively with patients, families, and members of the healthcare team.
- Communicate clinical information clearly and in a patient-centered manner to support understanding and shared decision-making.
- Facilitate safe and effective transitions of care, including handoffs, discharges, and referrals.
- Communicate care plans and updates to appropriate members of the healthcare team to ensure continuity and quality of care.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to the perspectives, needs, and emotions of others.
- Collaborate effectively with members of the healthcare team across roles and settings to support coordinated, high-quality care.
- Engage respectfully with individuals from diverse social, cultural, and lived experiences.
- Contribute to a professional, inclusive, and respectful care and learning environment.

Essential physical functions

(including senses, stances and mobility, manipulation and technical skills)

Functions/details specific to the program:

Physical Functioning

Residents must have the physical capacity, with or without accommodation, to do the following:

- Perform a physical examination including eliciting information by palpation, inspection, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers.
- Respond to and perform appropriate action in emergency situations or chaotic clinical environments as needed
- Demonstrate the use of precautions to avoid posing risks to patients, self, other learners, and healthcare team.
- Residents must be able to attend didactics and other teaching sessions in person each week to allow for interactive learning and increased well-being through connection and community-building.
- Perform clinical procedures and technical aspects of patient care competently to support safe and effective diagnosis and treatment.
- Conduct patient assessments to gather and interpret clinical information, supporting comprehensive medical and psychosocial evaluation.
- Sustain performance of clinical responsibilities over scheduled shifts to ensure continuity and quality of patient care.

Please reference [ACGME Psychiatry Program Requirements](#) and [Milestones](#).

Statement Of Nondiscrimination

The University of Washington prohibits discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns, make complaints, or direct inquiries to the Civil Rights Compliance Office. [View the Statement of Nondiscrimination.](#)

Key Principles for ADA-Compliant Language:

- Focus on results, not methods
- Essential function is a completed task, not how that task is completed

More Inclusive Term	Example of Physical Demand
Move/traverse	Walk, run
Ascend/descend	Climb
Transport	Carry
Relocate	Lift
Stationary position	Sit, stand
Position, detect, operate	Feel, handle
Maneuver	Pull, push
Attain	Reach
Retrieve from ground level	Squat
Repetitive movement	Performing a task repeatedly
Communicate	Speak, talk, hear
Communicate in written language	Write
Input data	Use keyboard
Position self (to move)	Crouching, stooping, crawling
Work atop	Balance
Determine, identify, assess, recognize	See
Assess	Hear
Review	Read
Adhere	Remember
Apply	Think

This document reflects requirements, established practices, policies, procedures, and resources as of the date of publication; however, parts of this document may be updated from time to time in accordance with changes in the law and applicable requirements, established practices, policies, procedures, and resources. Continued participation by a resident in the program will demonstrate agreement by the resident to adhere to the updates. The program will communicate such change annually or when there are interim updates.