

## What essential core skills are needed to become a Doctor?

**What is this guide for?** This guide provides you with an overview of the 'core skills', mainly procedural, that you need to develop competence in during your undergraduate training. This list is guided by the GMC document 'Tomorrow's Doctors'. Following qualification, during your Foundation period and beyond, you will have more opportunity to practice these skills. Your competence in performing each skill will reach a higher level but will constantly need to be revisited, self-assessed and further developed.

**Where in the curriculum do I learn these skills?** You will learn how to perform these different skills throughout the curriculum. As you are about to progress to a different Unit, the Handbook will provide a list of skills that you need to develop a specific level of competence in. The level of competence required in a Unit will vary so that for one skill, it is expected that you should perform the skill accurately independently whereas with another skill, in the same Unit, at that stage in your learning, it is expected that you need to perform the skill with supervision. It is important for you to note that CSC indicates clinical skills classroom only and applies to skills at a stage in your learning that should not be practiced outside a CSC, practised changes to be performed. An exception is where there is a learning opportunity and you are under supervision of a qualified Doctor who has informed verbal consent from their patient.

**What does developing competence in these skills require?** To be able to perform these skills in a safe professional manner with the correct technique, you need to have knowledge, skills and the right attitude. Hence, performing a skill is not just about the physical action. For instance, measuring BP requires an understanding of which size of cuff is right to use for your patient as part of the evidence base surrounding development of competence with this skill. Depending on the stage of your learning in the curriculum, you may need to not only carry out the correct physical steps required but embed the procedure within a consultation with the patient.

**Who teaches these skills?** Many teachers across the curriculum teach these skills. Teachers include physicians & surgeons, GPs, junior doctors, clinical fellows, and nurses trained as clinical skills teachers, ward nursing staff and Year 5 medical students.

**Where in the University and NHS will I be learning these skills?** Teaching of these skills starts in the University and Academy Clinical Skills Classrooms and progresses to the GP surgeries/Wards/Out-patients/Emergency departments.

**Are these the only procedural skills I will be expected to learn in the curriculum?** No, during the different Units you progress through, you will have opportunities and requirements to develop additional competencies to broaden your experience and understanding in the speciality areas.

**Do I have to keep a log of my clinical experience in these areas?** In many Units you will be given a logbook to record your clinical experience and competence in the areas outlined in this guide. You will require a signature to demonstrate you have learnt the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude required for each skill listed.

**Where are these skills assessed in the curriculum?** Formative assessment is provided formally in teaching sessions and informally where for instance you ask a junior doctor to observe and feedback on your ability to insert an intravenous catheter whilst 'on-take'. Each Unit has their own summative assessment which in addition to Finals in year 5 will assess competence in relation to these procedures.



# What essential core skills are needed to become a Doctor?

## Year 1

Hand washing & hygiene  
Consultation skills  
-Introduction & explanation  
-Listening & responding  
-Closure & thanking  
-Reflection on Patient encounter  
Pulse & blood pressure measurement  
Interpreting a normal ECG

## Year 2

Yr 1 core skills list  
Hand washing & Infection control  
Need to know correct technique for:  
'Moving & Handling' Patients  
Basic life support  
Consultation skills  
-Facilitating history taking  
-Introduction of consultation process & content  
-Introduction to breaking bad news  
Introduction to history taking & examination  
Recording & presenting clinical information  
Measuring & interpreting normal & abnormal:  
-Blood pressure & vital signs  
-Peak flow & spirometry  
-Urinalysis  
-Capillary blood glucose measurement  
Interpreting Normal Chest X Ray  
Interpreting normal arterial gases  
Interpret growth charts

## Year 3

Yrs 1-2 core skills list  
History taking & examination in medicine, surgery, psychiatry & specialties  
Record drug histories  
Draw up prioritized differential diagnoses, problem lists and investigation plans  
Build professional relationships  
Consultation skills:  
-Listening, questioning, responding & sharing concerns  
-Understanding body language, non-verbal and verbal 'signals'  
-Integrating clinical and communication skills  
-Library skills, literature reviews of clinical topics  
Measuring & interpreting  
-Blood pressure, vital signs & early warning scores (EWS)  
-Respiratory function tests, oximetry & arterial gases  
Performing:  
-Otoscopy & ophthalmoscopy  
-GALS & joint examination  
-Venepuncture & IV cannula insertion  
-Insertion blood in correct bottles & label  
-Take blood cultures  
-Take nose, throat & skin swabs  
-Dispose clinical waste correctly  
-IM & SC injections  
-Bladder catheterisation CSC  
-Administration of oxygen therapy CSC  
-12-lead ECG  
-Use of a nebuliser CSC  
-Vascular ABPI's  
-Rectal examination CSC  
-Faecal occult testing  
-Suturing & basic wound care CSC  
Bag-valve-mask ventilation CSC  
Recognise pre-critical/critical illness (EWS)  
Look up drug information in the BNF  
Mock patient discussion & prescription of:  
-Analgesics in simple musculoskeletal pain  
-Fluid therapy in shock  
Mock procedural discussions & consent of listed procedures above  
Look up & interpret:  
-Normal & abnormal blood investigations  
-Abnormal chest & abdominal x-ray & ECG

## Year 4

Yrs 2-3 core skills list  
History taking & examination in children/teenagers/pregnancy  
Take a sexual health history  
Consultation skills  
-Life style change & communicating risk  
-Negotiation  
Consultation in special areas  
-Multi-professional teams/team meetings  
-Dementia, dysphasia & dysarthria  
-Sensory impairment  
-Use of next of kin/collateral  
-Use of 3-way consultation  
-English is not the first language  
-Severe Mental/Physical Disability  
-Use of communication aides  
-British sign language  
-Difficult/angry/violent patients  
Identify ethical principles of medical care and apply to clinical dilemmas  
Demonstrate research skills that evaluate/appraise clinically research  
Measuring & Interpreting  
-Blood pressure & vital signs  
-Blood pressure lying & standing  
-Cognitive function (MTS, MMSE)  
-Depression rating (GDS)  
-Barthel (ADL)  
Perform:  
-Cervical smear CSC  
-Pregnancy test  
-Instruct patient on inhaler technique  
-Bag-valve-mask ventilation  
-Rectal examination  
-Pelvic examination CSC  
-Bladder catheterisation  
-Nasogastric tube insertion CSC  
Interpreting blood results:  
-Hb, WCC, U&E, LFT, Cal&P, TFT

## Year 5

Yr 2-4 core skills list  
Intermediate life support  
Clerking with full management plans for common medical problems (CMP)  
Focused consultations with full management plans  
Focused presentations for ward rounds  
Ward round note taking  
Review prescribing (with BNF) and identify potential changes in:  
-Falls, hyponatraemia, post hypotension  
-Constipation  
-Acute renal failure  
-Abnormal liver function tests  
-Skin rashes  
Undertake mock prescribing for (with BNF/guidelines)  
+/- consultation:  
-Constipation  
-Pain  
-Asthma/COPD  
-Community acquired pneumonia  
-MI/ACS  
-TIA/Cerebral Infarction  
-Hypertension  
-Paracetamol overdose  
-IV fluid therapy  
Take blood for xmatching  
Give blood transfusion CSC  
Anticipatory prescribing for end of life  
Role-play consultation & decision-making in  
-Resuscitation/DNAR  
-Escalation/Not for escalation mgt plans  
-Feeding/hydration in severe stroke  
Write mock discharge summaries for CMPs  
Perform suturing