

## **Rheumatology Milestones**

ACGME International, Inc. (ACGME-I)



Second Revision: March 2023 First Revision: May 2017

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## **Rheumatology Milestones**

The Milestones are designed only for use in evaluation of residents and fellows in the context of their participation in ACGME-I-accredited residency and fellowship programs. The Milestones provide a framework for the assessment of the development of the resident or fellow in key dimensions of the elements of physician competence in a specialty or subspecialty. They neither represent the entirety of the dimensions of the six domains of physician competence, nor are they designed to be relevant in any other context.

## **Understanding Milestone Levels and Reporting**

This document presents the Milestones, which programs use in a semi-annual review of resident or fellow performance, and then report to the ACGME-I. Milestones are knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other attributes for each of the ACGME-I Competencies organized in a developmental framework. The narrative descriptions are targets for resident/fellow performance throughout the educational program.

Milestones are arranged into levels. Tracking from Level 1 to Level 5 is synonymous with moving from novice to expert resident or fellow in the specialty or subspecialty. For each reporting period, the Clinical Competency Committee will review the completed evaluations to select the milestone levels that best describe each learner's current performance, abilities, and attributes for each subcompetency.

These levels *do not* correspond with post-graduate year of education. Depending on previous experience, more junior residents/fellows may achieve higher levels early in their educational program just as more senior residents/fellows may be at a lower level later in their educational program. There is no predetermined timing for a resident or fellow to attain any particular level. Residents and fellows may also regress in achievement of their milestones. This may happen for many reasons, such as over-scoring in a previous review, a disjointed experience in a particular procedure, or a significant act by the resident/fellow.

Selection of a level implies the resident/fellow substantially demonstrates the milestones in that level, as well as those in lower levels (see the diagram on page iv).

## **Additional Notes**

Level 4 is designed as a graduation *goal* but *does not* represent a graduation *requirement*. Making decisions about readiness for graduation and unsupervised practice is the purview of the program director. Furthermore, Milestones 2.0 include revisions and changes that preclude using the Milestones as a sole assessment in high-stakes decisions. Level 5 is designed to represent an expert resident or fellow whose achievements in a subcompetency are greater than the expectation. Milestones are primarily designed for formative, developmental purposes to support continuous quality improvement for individual learners, education programs, and the specialty. ACGME-I and its partners will continue to evaluate and perform research on the Milestones to assess their impact and value.

Examples are provided for some milestones within this document. Note: The examples are not the required element or outcome; they are provided as a way to share the intent of the element.

Some milestone descriptions include statements about performing independently. These activities must occur in conformance with ACGME-I supervision guidelines as described in the applicable Program Requirements, as well as with institutional and program policies. For example, a resident who performs a procedure independently must, at a minimum, be supervised through oversight.

A Supplemental Guide is also available to provide more context regarding the intent of each subcompetency, as well as examples for each level, assessment methods or tools, and other resources. The Supplemental Guide, like examples contained within the Milestones, is designed only to assist the program director and Clinical Competency Committee; it is not meant to demonstrate any required element or outcome.

The diagram below presents an example set of milestones for one subcompetency in the same format as the ACGME-I Report Worksheet. For each reporting period, a resident's/fellow's performance on the milestones within each subcompetency will be indicated by selecting the Milestones Level that best describes that individual's performance in relation to those milestones.

Systems-Based Practice 1: Patient Safety and Quality Improvement				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Demonstrates knowledge of common patient safety events	Identifies system factors that lead to patient safety events	Participates in analysis of patient safety events (simulated or actual)	Conducts analysis of patient safety events and offers error prevention strategies (simulated or actual)	Actively engages teams and processes to modify systems to prevent patient safety events
Demonstrates knowledge of how to report patient safety events	Reports patient safety events through institutional reporting systems (simulated or actual)	Participates in disclosure of patient safety events to patients and their families (simulated or actual)	Discloses patient safety events to patients and their families (simulated or actual)	Role models or mentors others in the disclosure of patient safety events
Demonstrates knowledge of basic quality improvement methodologies and metrics	Describes local quality improvement initiatives (e.g., community vaccination rate, infection rate, smoking cessation)	Participates in local quality improvement initiatives	Demonstrates the skills required to identify, develop, implement, and analyze a quality improvement project	Creates, implements, and assesses quality improvement initiatives at the institutional or community level
		$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ $\Box$ $\overline{\mathbf{C}}$		
Comments:			Not Yet C	Completed Level 1
middle of a leve	nat level and in lower	Selecting a response between levels indica in lower levels have b demonstrated as well milestones in the high	ates that milestones been substantially as <b>some</b>	

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Patient Care 1: Gathers an Essential and Accurate Patient History					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
Acquires a basic rheumatic history Reviews available medical records	Integrates a rheumatic history with a comprehensive medical history, including functional aspects Identifies relevant findings in the medical record	Acquires a tailored comprehensive rheumatic history, including historical subtleties and psychosocial aspects Independently requests additional information to supplement available medical records	Integrates the current patient history with the complete medical record, supplemental information, and disease activity measures	Is identified as a role model in interpreting subtleties and resolving ambiguities in the patient history	
Comments:			Not Yet Co	ompleted Level 1	
			Not Yet As	ssessable	

Patient Care 2: Physical Examination				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Identifies the elements of a comprehensive physical examination	Performs all elements of a comprehensive physical examination	Performs a tailored comprehensive physical examination including advanced techniques, when applicable	Performs a tailored comprehensive physical examination that elicits subtle findings	Is identified as a role model for performing and interpreting a comprehensive, accurate physical and musculoskeletal examination
Identifies the elements of a musculoskeletal examination	Performs all elements of a musculoskeletal examination	Performs a tailored comprehensive musculoskeletal examination including advanced techniques, when applicable	Performs a tailored comprehensive musculoskeletal examination that elicits subtle findings	
Comments:			Not Yet C Not Yet A	ompleted Level 1

Patient Care 3: Comprehensive Management Plan Development					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
With supervision, formulates a differential diagnosis for a patient	Independently formulates a broad differential diagnosis for typical disease presentations	Independently formulates a prioritized differential diagnosis for typical disease presentations	Independently formulates a prioritized differential diagnosis with consideration of typical and atypical disease presentations	Independently formulates a prioritized differential diagnosis with consideration of newly recognized and emerging conditions	
Demonstrates an awareness of disease activity measures With supervision, develops a management plan	Identifies applicable disease activity measures Independently develops a management plan for a patient with common disease presentations	Incorporates and interprets the results of disease activity measures Independently recognizes disease acuity, and with supervision, develops a prioritized management plan	Independently develops and implements a prioritized management plan with consideration of acuity and complexity of disease presentation	Is identified as an expert resource for management of a focused disease area	
Comments:	Comments: Not Yet Completed Level 1				

Patient Care 4: Therapeutics, Including Immunomodulatory Agents				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Identifies indications and adverse effects of medications used to treat patients with common rheumatic conditions	Prescribes and monitors medications used in patients with common rheumatic conditions	Prescribes, monitors, and assesses the response to pharmacotherapy used in the management of patients with common rheumatic conditions	Integrates best available evidence to prescribe, monitor, and assess the response to pharmacotherapy used in the management of patients with common and complex rheumatic conditions	Develops a clinical practice pathway for management of patients with rheumatic conditions
	Evaluates for comorbidities that may alter therapeutic recommendations	Modifies treatment plans to address comorbidities, with supervision	Independently modifies treatment plans to address comorbidities	
Comments: Not Yet Completed Level 1  Not Yet Assessable				

Patient Care 5: Procedures				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Identifies indications for joint and soft tissue aspirations and injections, and discusses principles of informed consent	Performs common joint and soft tissue injections and aspirations with direct supervision, including independently discussing risks and benefits, obtaining informed consent, identifying anatomic landmarks, and demonstrating aseptic technique	Performs common joint and soft tissue aspirations and injections, with indirect supervision	Independently performs common joint and soft tissue aspirations and injections	Independently performs complex joint and soft tissue aspirations or injections, including unusual sites, anatomic abnormalities, or incorporating imaging guidance
	Recognizes the role of musculoskeletal ultrasound in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with rheumatic conditions	Interprets the findings of musculoskeletal ultrasound for common conditions, with supervision	Independently interprets the findings of musculoskeletal ultrasound for common conditions, and recognizes the role of ultrasound in non- musculoskeletal rheumatic conditions	Independently performs and interprets point-of- care diagnostic ultrasound and uses ultrasound to guide invasive procedures
Comments:				
comments.			Not Yet Co Not Yet As	ompleted Level 1     Image: Completed Level 1       ossessable     Image: Completed Level 1

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Respectfully receives a consultation request	Clearly and concisely responds to a consultation request	Verifies understanding of recommendations with the primary team when providing consultation	Integrates recommendations from different members of the health care team and effectively conveys consultative assessment and rationale to all health care team members	Is identified as a role model for the provision of consultative care across the spectrum of disease complexity and acuity
With supervision,	Independently recognizes	Recognizes disease	Mobilizes resources to	
recognizes disease	disease acuity	acuity and prioritizes	provide care in high-	
acuity		management steps	acuity situations	

Medical Knowledge 1: Possesses Clinical Knowledge				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Identifies key features of common rheumatic conditions	Demonstrates broad knowledge of common rheumatic conditions	Demonstrates knowledge of less common rheumatic conditions as well as common rheumatic conditions associated with higher complexity	Integrates knowledge of the pathogenesis, epidemiology, clinical expression, treatments, and prognosis of a broad range of rheumatic conditions	Is identified as a subject matter expert in basic and/or clinical science of
Demonstrates basic knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and other basic sciences	Demonstrates basic knowledge of anatomy, genetics, immunology, metabolism, and other basic sciences pertaining to rheumatic conditions	Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of anatomy, genetics, immunology, metabolism, and other basic sciences pertaining to rheumatic conditions	Integrates knowledge of anatomy, genetics, immunology, metabolism, and other basic sciences pertaining to a broad range of rheumatic conditions	rheumatic conditions
Comments:	Comments: Not Yet Completed Level 1			

Medical Knowledge 2: Knowledge of Diagnostic Testing					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
Explains the rationale, risks, and benefits for common diagnostic testing in patients being evaluated for rheumatic conditions	Integrates value and test characteristics into diagnostic strategies in patients with uncomplicated rheumatic conditions	Integrates value and test characteristics into diagnostic strategies in patients with complex rheumatic conditions	Integrates and reconciles information, including non-specific and/or conflicting diagnostic test results, to form a cohesive evaluation	Is identified as an expert in testing strategies and in the selection and interpretation of complex, new, or emerging tests	
Comments:			Not Yet C Not Yet As	ompleted Level 1	

Medical Knowledge 3: So	cholarly Activity			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Identifies areas worthy of scholarly investigation, with supervision	Designs a scholarly activity with a mentor(s)	Engages in scholarly work, incorporates feedback, and participates in critical appraisal and analysis of project data	Produces scholarly work suitable for dissemination as an abstract or presentation	Disseminates independent scholarly work that has generated new medical knowledge, educational programs, or process improvement
Comments:			Not Yet C Not Yet A	ompleted Level 1

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Demonstrates knowledge of common patient safety events	Identifies system factors that lead to patient safety events	Participates in analysis of patient safety events (simulated or actual)	Conducts analysis of patient safety events and offers error prevention strategies (simulated or actual)	Actively engages teams and processes to modify systems to prevent patient safety events
Demonstrates knowledge of how to report patient safety events	Reports patient safety events through institutional reporting systems (simulated or actual)	Participates in disclosure of patient safety events to patients and their families (simulated or actual)	Discloses patient safety events to patients and their families (simulated or actual)	Role models or mentors others in the disclosure of patient safety events
Demonstrates knowledge of basic quality improvement methodologies and metrics	Describes local quality improvement initiatives (e.g., community vaccination rate, infection rate, smoking cessation)	Participates in local quality improvement initiatives	Demonstrates the skills required to identify, develop, implement, and analyze a quality improvement project	Creates, implements, and assesses quality improvement initiatives at the institutional or community level

Systems-Based Practice	2: System Navigation for F	Patient-Centered Care		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Demonstrates knowledge of care coordination	Coordinates care of patients in routine clinical situations, effectively utilizing the roles of the interprofessional teams	Coordinates care of patients in complex clinical situations, effectively utilizing the roles of the interprofessional teams	Role models effective coordination of patient- centered care among different disciplines and specialties	Analyzes the process of care coordination and leads in the design and implementation of improvements
Identifies key elements for safe and effective transitions of care and hand-offs	Performs safe and effective transitions of care/hand-offs in routine clinical situations	Performs safe and effective transitions of care/hand-offs in complex clinical situations	Role models and advocates for safe and effective transitions of care/hand-offs within and across health care delivery systems, including outpatient settings	Improves quality of transitions of care within and across health care delivery systems to optimize patient outcomes
Comments: Not Yet Completed Level 1				

Systems-Based Practice	3: Physician Role in Health	n Care Systems		
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Identifies key components of the complex health care system (e.g., hospital, skilled nursing facility, finance, personnel, technology)	Describes how components of a complex health care system are interrelated, and how this impacts patient care	Discusses how individual practice affects the broader system (e.g., length of stay, readmission rates, clinical efficiency)	Manages various components of the complex health care system to provide efficient and effective patient care and transition of care	Advocates for or leads systems change that enhances high value, efficient, and effective patient care and transition of care
Describes the principles of cost-effective care	Delivers care with consideration of each patient's payment model	Engages with patients in shared decision making, informed by cost-effective care principles	Advocates for patient care needs (e.g., community resources, patient assistance resources) regardless of ability to pay	Participates in health policy advocacy activities
Comments: Not Yet Completed Level 1				

Practice-Based Learning	and Improvement 1: Evide	ence-Based and Informed P	Practice	
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Demonstrates how to access and use available evidence, and incorporate patient preferences and values in order to take care of a routine patient	Articulates clinical questions and elicits patient preferences and values in order to guide evidence-based care	Locates and applies the best available evidence, integrated with patient preference, to the care of complex patients	Critically appraises and applies evidence, even in the face of uncertainty and conflicting evidence, to guide care tailored to the individual patient	Coaches others to critically appraise and apply evidence for complex patients, and/or participates in the development of guidelines
Comments:			Not Yet C	ompleted Level 1

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Accepts responsibility for personal and professional development by establishing goals	Demonstrates openness to performance data (feedback and other input) in order to inform goals	Seeks performance data episodically, with adaptability and humility	Intentionally seeks performance data consistently, with adaptability and humility	Role models consistently seeking performance data with adaptability and humility
Identifies the factors which contribute to gap(s) between expectations and actual performance	Analyzes and reflects on the factors which contribute to gap(s) between expectations and actual performance	Analyzes, reflects on, and institutes behavioral change(s) to narrow the gap(s) between expectations and actual performance	Challenges assumptions and considers alternatives in narrowing the gap(s) between expectations and actual performance	Coaches others on reflective practice
Actively seeks opportunities to improve	Designs and implements a learning plan, with prompting	Independently creates and implements a learning plan	Uses performance data to measure the effectiveness of the learning plan and, when necessary, improves it	Facilitates the design and implementation of learning plans for others

Professionalism 1: Professional Behavior and Ethical Principles				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Identifies and describes potential triggers for professionalism lapses	Demonstrates insight into professional behavior in routine situations	Demonstrates professional behavior in complex or stressful situations	Recognizes situations that may trigger professionalism lapses and intervenes to prevent lapses in self and others	Coaches others when their behavior fails to meet professional expectations
Describes when and how to appropriately report professionalism lapses, including strategies for addressing common barriers	Takes responsibility for own professionalism lapses	Recognizes need to seek help in managing and resolving complex ethical situations	Recognizes and utilizes appropriate resources for managing and resolving ethical dilemmas as needed (e.g., ethics consultations, literature	Identifies and seeks to address system-level factors that induce or exacerbate ethical problems or impede their
Demonstrates knowledge of the ethical principles underlying informed consent, surrogate decision making, advance directives, confidentiality, error disclosure, stewardship of limited resources, and related topics	Analyzes straightforward situations using ethical principles	Analyzes complex situations using ethical principles	review, risk management/legal consultation)	resolution
Comments:			Not Yet C	ompleted Level 1

Professionalism 2: Accountability/Conscientiousness					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
Takes responsibility for failure to complete tasks and responsibilities, identifies potential contributing factors, and describes strategies for ensuring timely task completion in the future	Performs tasks and responsibilities in a timely manner with appropriate attention to detail in routine situations	Performs tasks and responsibilities in a timely manner with appropriate attention to detail in complex or stressful situations	Recognizes situations that may impact others' ability to complete tasks and responsibilities in a timely manner	Takes ownership of system outcomes	
Responds promptly to requests or reminders to complete tasks and responsibilities	Recognizes situations that may impact own ability to complete tasks and responsibilities in a timely manner	Proactively implements strategies to ensure that the needs of patients, teams, and systems are met			
Comments:			Not Yet C	ompleted Level 1	

Professionalism 3: Self-Awareness and Help-Seeking					
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
Recognizes status of personal and professional well-being, with assistance	Independently recognizes status of personal and professional well-being	With assistance, proposes a plan to optimize personal and professional well-being	Independently develops a plan to optimize personal and professional well-being	Coaches others when emotional responses or limitations in knowledge/ skills do not meet professional expectations	
Recognizes limits in the knowledge/skills of self or team, with assistance	Independently recognizes limits in the knowledge/ skills of self or team and demonstrates appropriate help-seeking behaviors	With assistance, proposes a plan to remediate or improve limits in the knowledge/skills of self or team	Independently develops a plan to remediate or improve limits in the knowledge/skills of self or team		
Comments:			Not Yet C	ompleted Level 1	

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Uses language and nonverbal behavior to demonstrate respect and establish rapport	Establishes a therapeutic relationship in straightforward encounters using active listening and clear language	Establishes a therapeutic relationship in challenging patient encounters	Easily establishes therapeutic relationships, with attention to patient/ family concerns and context, regardless of complexity	Mentors others in situational awareness and critical self-reflection to consistently develop positive therapeutic relationships
Identifies common barriers to effective communication (e.g., language, disability) while accurately communicating own role within the health care system	Identifies complex barriers to effective communication (e.g., health literacy, cultural)	When prompted, reflects on personal biases while attempting to minimize communication barriers	Independently recognizes personal biases while attempting to proactively minimize communication barriers	Role models self- awareness while identifying a contextual approach to minimize communication barriers
Identifies the need to adjust communication strategies based on assessment of patient/ family expectations and understanding of their health status and treatment options	Organizes and initiates communication with patient/family by introducing stakeholders, setting the agenda, clarifying expectations, and verifying understanding of the clinical situation	With guidance, sensitively and compassionately delivers medical information, elicits patient/ family values, goals, and preferences, and acknowledges uncertainty and conflict	Independently, uses shared decision making to align patient/family values, goals, and preferences with treatment options to make a personalized care plan	Role models shared decision making in patient/family communication, including those with a high degree of uncertainty/conflict

Interpersonal and Communication Skills 2: Interprofessional and Team Communication				
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Respectfully requests a consultation	Clearly and concisely requests a consultation	Checks own understanding of consultant recommendations	Coordinates recommendations from different members of the health care team to optimize patient care	Role models flexible communication strategies that value input from all health care team members, resolving conflict when needed
Respectfully receives a consultation request	Clearly and concisely responds to a consultation request	Checks understanding of recommendations when providing consultation		
Uses language that values all members of the health care team	Communicates information effectively with all health care team members	Uses active listening to adapt communication style to fit team needs		
	Solicits feedback on performance as a member of the health care team	Communicates concerns and provides feedback to peers and learners	Communicates feedback and constructive criticism to superiors	Facilitates regular health care team-based feedback in complex situations
Comments:	Comments: Not Yet Completed Level 1			

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Accurately records information in the patient record	Demonstrates organized diagnostic and therapeutic reasoning through notes in the patient record	Concisely reports diagnostic and therapeutic reasoning in the patient record	Communicates clearly, concisely, timely, and in an organized written form, including anticipatory guidance	Models feedback to improve others' written communication
Safeguards patient personal health information	Demonstrates accurate, timely, and appropriate use of documentation shortcuts Documents required data in formats specified by institutional policy	Appropriately selects direct (e.g., telephone, in- person) and indirect (e.g., progress notes, text messages) forms of communication based on context	Achieves written or verbal communication (e.g., patient notes, email) that serves as an example for others to follow	Guides departmental or institutional communication around policies and procedures
Communicates through appropriate channels as required by institutional policy (e.g., patient safety reports, cell phone/pager usage)	Respectfully communicates concerns about the system	Uses appropriate channels to offer clear and constructive suggestions to improve the system	Initiates difficult conversations with appropriate stakeholders to improve the system	Facilitates dialogue regarding systems issues among larger community stakeholders (institution, health care system, field)