Objectives of Training in the Subspecialty of Thoracic Surgery

2010
EDITORIAL REVISION – 2013
VERSION 1.1

This document applies to those who begin training on or after July 1st, 2010.

DEFINITION

Thoracic Surgery is that branch of surgery concerned with congenital and acquired diseases of the chest wall, mediastinum, lungs, trachea, pleura, esophagus, stomach and diaphragm.

GOALS

Upon completion of training, a resident is expected to be a competent specialist in Thoracic Surgery capable of assuming a consultant’s role in the specialty. The resident must acquire a working knowledge of the theoretical basis of the specialty, including its foundations in the basic medical sciences and research.

Only candidates certificated by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in General Surgery or Cardiac Surgery may be eligible for the Certificate of Special Competence in Thoracic Surgery.

Residents must demonstrate the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective patient-centered care and service to a diverse population. In all aspects of specialist practice, the graduate must be able to address issues of gender, age, sexual orientation, culture, ethnicity and ethics in a professional manner.

THORACIC SURGERY COMPETENCIES

At the completion of training, the resident will have acquired the following competencies and will function effectively as a:
Medical Expert

**Definition:**

As *Medical Experts*, Thoracic Surgeons integrate all of the CanMEDS Roles, applying medical knowledge, clinical skills, and professional attitudes in their provision of patient-centered care. *Medical Expert* is the central physician Role in the CanMEDS framework.

**Key and Enabling Competencies: Thoracic Surgeons are able to...**

1. **Function effectively as consultants, integrating all of the CanMEDS Roles to provide optimal, ethical and patient-centered medical care**
   1.1. Perform a consultation, including the presentation of well-documented assessments and recommendations in written and/or verbal form in response to a request from another health care professional
   1.2. Demonstrate use of all CanMEDS competencies relevant to Thoracic Surgery
   1.3. Identify and appropriately respond to relevant ethical issues arising in patient care and medical decision making
   1.4. Demonstrate the ability to prioritize professional duties when faced with multiple patients and problems
   1.5. Demonstrate compassionate and patient-centered care
   1.6. Demonstrate medical expertise in situations other than patient care

2. **Establish and maintain clinical knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to Thoracic Surgery**
   2.1. Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the clinical, socio-behavioural, and fundamental biomedical sciences relevant to Thoracic Surgery, including the following:
      2.1.1. The principles and practice of surgery, as well as pulmonary function, biostatistics, bioethics, transplantation, chemotherapy and radiation oncology
      2.1.2. The anatomy, embryology and diseases of the chest wall, mediastinum, lung, trachea, pleura, esophagus, stomach and diaphragm
      2.1.3. Respiratory physiology
      2.1.4. Esophageal physiology and esophageal motility tests
      2.1.5. Diseases of the heart and great vessels
   2.2. Describe the CanMEDS framework of competencies relevant to Thoracic Surgery
   2.3. Apply lifelong learning skills of the Scholar Role to implement a personal program to keep up-to-date, and enhance areas of professional competence
   2.4. Contribute to the enhancement of quality care and patient safety in Thoracic Surgery, integrating the available best evidence and best practices
3. **Perform a complete and appropriate assessment of a patient**
   
   3.1. Identify and explore issues to be addressed in a patient encounter effectively, including the patient’s context and preferences
   
   3.2. Elicit a history that is relevant, concise and accurate to context and preferences for the purposes of prevention and health promotion, diagnosis and/or management
   
   3.3. Perform a focused physical examination that is relevant and accurate for the purposes of prevention and health promotion, diagnosis and/or management of a Thoracic Surgery patient
   
   3.4. Select and interpret appropriate investigative methods in a resource-effective and ethical manner
       
       3.4.1. Esophageal function including esophageal motility tests
       
       3.4.2. Lung function including pulmonary function tests
       
       3.4.3. Interpretation of investigations relevant to Thoracic Surgery
       
       3.4.4. Diagnostic and interventional imaging
       
       3.4.5. Laboratory studies
       
       3.4.6. Microbiology
       
       3.4.7. Cardiac function
   
   3.5. Demonstrate effective clinical problem solving and judgment to address patient problems, including interpreting available data and integrating information to generate differential diagnoses and management plans
       
       3.5.1. Develop an appropriate plan of care and interpret laboratory and radiological investigations
       
       3.5.2. Manage with proficiency and expertise thoracic surgical emergencies including thoracic trauma
       
       3.5.3. Manage patients pre and post-operatively, including critical care management
   

4. **Use preventive and therapeutic interventions effectively**
   
   4.1. Implement management plans in collaboration with patients and their families
   
   4.2. Demonstrate appropriate and timely application of preventive and therapeutic interventions relevant to Thoracic Surgery
       
       4.2.1. Recommend an appropriate therapeutic plan taking into account such matters as age, general health, risk/benefit ratio, and prognosis
   
   4.3. Ensure appropriate informed consent is obtained for therapies
   
   4.4. Ensure patients receive appropriate end-of-life care
5. Demonstrate proficient and appropriate use of procedural skills, both diagnostic and therapeutic

5.1. Demonstrate effective, appropriate, and timely performance of diagnostic procedures relevant to Thoracic Surgery

5.1.1. Bronchoscopy including interventional techniques

5.1.2. Upper gastrointestinal endoscopy including interventional techniques

5.2. Demonstrate effective, appropriate and timely performance of therapeutic procedures relevant to Thoracic Surgery including both open and minimally invasive procedures

5.2.1. Surgical techniques:

5.2.1.1. Thoracoscopy

5.2.1.2. Mediastinoscopy

5.2.1.3. Therapeutic airway and esophageal procedures

5.2.1.4. Surgery of the mediastinum and pericardium

5.2.1.5. Chest wall resection and reconstruction

5.2.1.6. Pulmonary resection

5.2.1.7. Esophageal and gastric resection and reconstruction

5.2.1.8. Tracheal resection and reconstruction

5.2.1.9. Surgery of the diaphragm

5.2.2. Surgical procedures for the following clinical problems, including the surgical management of complications of thoracic procedures for:

5.2.2.1. Gastro-esophageal reflux disorders

5.2.2.2. Acute airway obstruction

5.2.2.3. Thoracic infection

5.2.2.4. Chest trauma

5.2.2.5. Airway hemorrhage

5.2.2.6. Esophageal motility disorders

5.2.2.7. Mediastinal sepsis

5.2.2.8. Thoracic malignant disease

5.2.2.9. Pleural disease

5.2.2.10. Diaphragmatic hernias

5.2.2.11. Benign lung disease

5.2.2.12. Thoracic outlet syndrome

5.2.2.13. Myasthenia gravis

5.2.2.14. Hyperhidrosis
5.2.3. Demonstrate knowledge of the management of patients with lung transplantation for pulmonary diseases

5.3. Ensure appropriate informed consent is obtained for procedures
5.4. Document and disseminate information related to procedures performed and their outcomes
5.5. Ensure adequate follow-up is arranged for procedures performed

6. Seek appropriate consultation from other health professionals, recognizing the limits of one’s own expertise
6.1. Demonstrate effective, appropriate, and timely consultation of another health professional as needed for optimal patient care
6.2. Arrange appropriate follow-up care services for a patient and their family

Communicator

Definition:

As Communicators, Thoracic Surgeons effectively facilitate the doctor-patient relationship and the dynamic exchanges that occur before, during, and after the medical encounter.

Key and Enabling Competencies: Thoracic Surgeons are able to...

1. Develop rapport, trust, and ethical therapeutic relationships with patients and families
   1.1. Recognize that being a good communicator is a core clinical skill for physicians, and that effective physician-patient communication can foster patient satisfaction, physician satisfaction, adherence and improved clinical outcomes
   1.2. Establish positive therapeutic relationships with patients and their families that are characterized by understanding, trust, respect, honesty, compassion and empathy
       1.2.1. Communicate indications, contraindications, risks and benefits of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures effectively
   1.3. Respect patient confidentiality, privacy and autonomy
   1.4. Listen effectively
   1.5. Facilitate a structured clinical encounter effectively
2. **Accurately elicit and synthesize relevant information and perspectives of patients and families, colleagues, and other professionals**
   
   2.1. Gather information about a disease and about a patient’s beliefs, concerns, expectations and illness experience
   
   2.2. Seek out and synthesize relevant information from other sources, such as a patient’s family, caregivers and other professionals
       
       2.2.1. When appropriate, include all members of the health care team in discussions of therapeutic plans

3. **Convey relevant information and explanations accurately to patients and families, colleagues and other professionals**
   
   3.1. Deliver information to a patient and family, colleagues and other professionals in a humane manner and in such a way that it is understandable, encourages discussion and participation in decision-making
       
       3.1.1. Demonstrate effective use of interpreters
       
       3.1.2. Appreciate how differences in culture and social identity and background affect patient/families responses to therapeutic suggestions and diagnosis

4. **Develop a common understanding on issues, problems and plans with patients, families, and other professionals to develop a shared plan of care**
   
   4.1. Identify and explore problems to be addressed from a patient encounter effectively, including the patient’s and family’s context, responses, concerns, and preferences
   
   4.2. Respect diversity and difference, including but not limited to the impact of gender, religion and cultural beliefs on decision-making
   
   4.3. Encourage discussion, questions, and interaction in the encounter
   
   4.4. Engage patients, families, and relevant allied health professionals in shared decision-making to develop a plan of care
   
   4.5. Address challenging communication issues effectively, such as obtaining informed consent, delivering bad news, and addressing anger, confusion and misunderstanding

5. **Convey effective oral and written information about a medical encounter**
   
   5.1. Maintain clear, accurate, and appropriate records (e.g., written or electronic) of clinical encounters and plans
   
   5.2. Present verbal reports of clinical encounters and plans
   
   5.3. Present medical information to the public or media, including social media, about a medical issue
       
       5.3.1. Demonstrate expertise in situations other than those involving direct patient care
Collaborator

**Definition:**

As *Collaborators*, Thoracic Surgeons effectively work within a health care team to achieve optimal patient care.

**Key and Enabling Competencies: Thoracic Surgeons are able to...**

1. **Participate effectively and appropriately in an interprofessional health care team**
   1.1. Describe the specialist’s roles and responsibilities to other professionals
   1.2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of other professionals within the health care team
      1.2.1. Describe the unique aspects of care provided by nursing, physiotherapy, respiratory therapy, dietician, occupational health, speech pathologist, social worker and ethicist relevant to Thoracic Surgery practice
   1.3. Recognize and respect the diversity of roles, responsibilities and competences of other professionals in relation to their own
      1.3.1. Seek the advice or assistance of other members of the health care team when their expertise can improve patient care
      1.3.2. Consult with other physicians for corroboration or complementary care
   1.4. Work with others to assess, plan, provide and integrate care for individual patients (or groups of patients)
   1.5. Work with others to assess, plan, provide and review other tasks, such as research problems, educational work, program review or administrative responsibilities
   1.6. Participate in interprofessional team meetings to discuss problems in investigation and therapy
   1.7. Enter into interdependent relationships with other professions for the provision of quality care
   1.8. Respect team ethics, including confidentiality, resource allocation and professionalism
   1.9. Demonstrate leadership in a health care team, as appropriate

2. **Work with other health professionals effectively to prevent, negotiate, and resolve interprofessional conflict**
   2.1. Demonstrate a respectful attitude towards other colleagues and members of an interprofessional team
2.2. Work with other professionals to prevent conflicts
2.3. Employ collaborative negotiation to resolve conflicts
2.4. Respect differences and address misunderstandings and limitations in other professionals
2.5. Recognize one’s own differences, misunderstanding and limitations that may contribute to interprofessional tension
2.6. Reflect on interprofessional team function

Manager

Definition:

As Managers, Thoracic Surgeons are integral participants in health care organizations, organizing sustainable practices, making decisions about allocating resources, and contributing to the effectiveness of the health care system.

Key and Enabling Competencies: Thoracic Surgeons are able to...

1. Participate in activities that contribute to the effectiveness of their health care organizations and systems
   1.1. Work collaboratively with others in their organizations
   1.2. Participate in systematic quality process evaluation and improvement, such as patient safety initiatives
   1.3. Describe the structure and function of the health care system as it relates to Thoracic Surgery, including the roles of physicians
   1.4. Describe principles of health care financing, including physician remuneration, budgeting and organizational funding

2. Manage their practices and careers effectively
   2.1. Set priorities and manage time to balance patient care, practice requirements, outside activities and personal life
   2.2. Manage a practice including finances and human resources
   2.3. Implement processes to ensure personal practice improvement
   2.4. Employ information technology appropriately for patient care

3. Allocate finite health care resources appropriately
   3.1. Recognize the importance of just allocation of health care resources, balancing effectiveness, efficiency and access with optimal patient care
   3.2. Apply evidence and management processes for cost-appropriate care
4. Serve in administration and leadership roles, as appropriate
   4.1. Chair or participate effectively in committees and meetings
   4.2. Lead or implement change in health care
   4.3. Plan relevant elements of health care delivery, including but not limited to work schedules

Health Advocate

**Definition:**

As *Health Advocates*, Thoracic Surgeons responsibly use their expertise and influence to advance the health and well-being of individual patients, communities, and populations.

**Key and Enabling Competencies: Thoracic Surgeons are able to...**

1. **Respond to individual patient health needs and issues as part of patient care**
   1.1. Identify the health needs of an individual patient
   1.2. Identify opportunities for advocacy, health promotion and disease prevention with individuals to whom they provide care
      1.2.1. Participate in patient education
      1.2.2. Assist patients in the acquisition and interpretation of health care information, including the role of genetics and lifestyle practices in the genesis of thoracic disease
      1.2.3. Promote the prevention of thoracic disease by counselling patients about smoking cessation and by encouraging the avoidance of occupational and environmental exposure

2. **Respond to the health needs of the communities that they serve**
   2.1. Describe the practice communities that they serve
      2.1.1. Describe the epidemiology of thoracic disease
      2.1.2. Describe the impact of environmental toxins in the genesis of particular patient complaints
      2.1.3. Identify the role of preventive medicine for thoracic diseases
      2.1.4. Describe methods of patient education and preventive medicine intervention for thoracic diseases
   2.2. Identify opportunities for advocacy, health promotion and disease prevention in the communities that they serve, and respond appropriately
   2.3. Appreciate the possibility of competing interests between the communities served and other populations
3. **Identify the determinants of health for the populations that they serve**
   3.1. Identify the determinants of health of the populations, including barriers to access to care and resources
   3.2. Identify vulnerable or marginalized populations within those served and respond appropriately

4. **Promote the health of individual patients, communities, and populations**
   4.1. Describe an approach to implementing a change in a determinant of health of the populations they serve
   4.2. Describe how public policy impacts on the health of the populations served
   4.3. Identify points of influence in the health care system and its structure
   4.4. Describe the ethical and professional issues inherent in health advocacy, including altruism, social justice, autonomy, integrity and idealism
   4.5. Appreciate the possibility of conflict inherent in their role as a health advocate for a patient or community with that of manager or gatekeeper
   4.6. Describe the role of the medical profession in advocating collectively for health and patient safety

**Scholar**

**Definition:**

As *Scholars*, Thoracic Surgeons demonstrate a lifelong commitment to reflective learning, as well as the creation, dissemination, application and translation of medical knowledge.

**Key and Enabling Competencies: Thoracic Surgeons are able to...**

1. **Maintain and enhance professional activities through ongoing learning**
   1.1. Describe the principles of maintenance of competence
   1.2. Describe the principles and strategies for implementing a personal knowledge management system
   1.3. Recognize and reflect on learning issues in practice
   1.4. Conduct a personal practice audit
   1.5. Pose an appropriate learning question
   1.6. Access and interpret the relevant evidence
   1.7. Integrate new learning into practice
   1.8. Evaluate the impact of any change in practice
   1.9. Document the learning process
1.10. Discuss the importance of continuing medical education (CME) for Thoracic Surgeons

2. Critically evaluate medical information and its sources, and apply this appropriately to practice decisions
   2.1. Describe the principles of critical appraisal
      2.1.1. Discuss the application of statistical methods to critical appraisal
      2.1.2. Describe how to access reliable medical information
   2.2. Critically appraise retrieved evidence in order to address a clinical question
      2.2.1. Critically appraise thoracic surgical literature as it relates to patient diagnoses, investigations and treatment
   2.3. Integrate critical appraisal conclusions into clinical care

3. Facilitate the learning of patients, families, students, residents, other allied health professionals, the public and others, as appropriate
   3.1. Describe principles of learning relevant to medical education
   3.2. Identify collaboratively the learning needs and desired learning outcomes of others
   3.3. Select effective teaching strategies and content to facilitate others’ learning
   3.4. Demonstrate an effective lecture or presentation
      3.4.1. Teach other health care professionals about Thoracic Surgery topics
   3.5. Assess and reflect on a teaching encounter
   3.6. Provide effective feedback
   3.7. Describe the principles of ethics with respect to teaching

4. Contribute to the development, dissemination, and translation of new knowledge and practices
   4.1. Describe the principles of research and scholarly inquiry
      4.1.1. Apply outcome-based methodology to interpretation of clinical information
      4.1.2. Describe the important role of clinical and basic research in thoracic practice
   4.2. Describe the principles of research ethics
   4.3. Pose a scholarly question
   4.4. Conduct a systematic search for evidence
   4.5. Select and apply appropriate methods to address the question
4.6. Disseminate the findings of a study

Professional

Definition:

As Professionals, Thoracic Surgeons are committed to the health and well-being of individuals and society through ethical practice, profession-led regulation, and high personal standards of behaviour.

Key and Enabling Competencies: Thoracic Surgeons are able to...

1. Demonstrate a commitment to their patients, profession, and society through ethical practice
   1.1. Exhibit appropriate professional behaviors in practice, including honesty, integrity, commitment, compassion, respect and altruism
   1.2. Demonstrate a commitment to delivering the highest quality care and maintenance of competence
   1.3. Recognize and appropriately respond to ethical issues encountered in practice
   1.4. Manage conflicts of interest
   1.5. Recognize the principles and limits of patient confidentiality as defined by professional practice standards and the law
   1.6. Maintain appropriate boundaries with patients
   1.7. Describe the ethical and legal standards relating to patient confidentiality

2. Demonstrate a commitment to their patients, profession and society through participation in profession-led regulation
   2.1. Demonstrate knowledge and an understanding of the professional, legal and ethical codes of practice
   2.2. Fulfill the regulatory and legal obligations required of current practice
   2.3. Demonstrate accountability to professional regulatory bodies
   2.4. Recognize and respond to others’ unprofessional behaviours in practice
   2.5. Participate in peer review

3. Demonstrate a commitment to physician health and sustainable practice
   3.1. Balance personal and professional priorities to ensure personal wellbeing and a sustainable practice
3.2. Strive to heighten personal and professional awareness and insight
   3.2.1. Demonstrate personal and professional attitudes consistent with a consulting surgeon role

3.3. Recognize other professionals in need and respond appropriately

REVISED – Specialty Standards Review Committee – June 2010
EDITORIAL REVISION – Office of Specialty Education – June 2013