

Using EPAs & Milestones to create high quality narrative feedback



You have just observed a learner & the patient encounter seems to have gone quite well. They are not quite at the level where you would trust them to perform without supervision, but they are doing much correctly.

You know that they are “almost trusted” with this task but **what do you say** in your narrative comments? Experts sometimes have difficulty breaking large tasks down into smaller component parts because they do them automatically.

EPAs (Entrustable Professional Activities) in UGME are the essential tasks students are expected to be able to perform on **day 1 of residency**. These tasks come with **milestones** describing the behaviours & skills necessary to become competent. These very milestones are your key to providing high quality, effective feedback as they work towards this end goal.



Let's look at an example.

You have just watched a learner perform a history but are unsure of what to say in the narrative comments of the EPA. The **description of the EPA & its accompanying milestones** are the keys to unlocking a wealth of information you can use.

EPA 1 - Obtain a history and perform a physical examination adapted to the patient's clinical situation

Description: The learner performs a **complete and focused** history and physical or mental status examination in a **prioritized, organized** manner, **tailored to the clinical situation and specific patient encounter**. The encounter is conducted with **respect**, in a manner **sensitive** to the patient's particular circumstances including sexual/gender orientation and cultural/religious beliefs.

Milestones:

- Obtains the **appropriate data** from the patient (family/caregiver/advocate) for the specific patient encounter in a culturally safe manner.
- Establishes a **rapport** with the patient (family/caregiver/advocate)
- Performs a physical exam or mental status exam **appropriately tailored** to the clinical case
- Demonstrates **specific physical exam skills** appropriate to the clinical case
- **Integrates** all these elements along with **other sources of information**

So, instead of “good job with the history, you just need a bit more practice”, you could say something like:

- Established **good rapport** with the patient. Started with **open ended questions**, then became **more close ended** to clarify. Hx was **organized**.

OR

- **Approach** to Hx of patient with hypertension was **focused & organized**. It's good to prioritize smoking & activity level. **Remember** to ask about family history, specifically about hypertension and CV disease.

OR

- You were very **respectful of the patient's gender identity** & were sensitive, listening carefully to **their concerns** about discrimination in healthcare. **Consider asking about preferred pronouns, or set an example by offering yours**.