AHS & SAGES

Hernia and Ab Wall Fellowship Certificate Requirements

(for Fellows)

The purpose of this certificate is to promote the development of advanced skills and knowledge required for the safe and effective practice of hernia and abdominal wall surgery, as endorsed by the American Hernia Society (AHS) and the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES).

Hernia and Abdominal Wall Fellowships in this specialty are accredited by the Fellowship Council, and AHS & SAGES award certificates to fellows who:

- Successfully graduate from an accredited fellowship training program.
- Meet the established minimum standards for certification in hernia surgery as recognized by AHS & SAGES.

This certificate reflects the highest level of training and competence in hernia and abdominal wall surgery.

Fellow Certificate Requirements

Fellows must complete procedure requirements with the following category minimum:

100 total core procedures minimum

To be completed as Primary Surgeon or as Teaching Assistant. If cases are performed robotically, the fellow must be the console surgeon for >50% of the case.

- 30 Inguinal Hernia Repairs
    - 15 of these must be done via an MIS approach (Laparoscopic or Robotic)
    - 10 of these must be recurrent hernias
- 30 Ventral/Incisional Hernia Repairs (3-10 cm width or length)
    - These could be performed via a variety of techniques including onlays, retrorectus, IPOM.
    - 15 of these must be performed as MIS extraperitoneal
- 25 Ventral/Incisional Hernia Repairs (>10cm width or length)
    - These can be either External Oblique releases or Transversus Abdominis releases or preperitoneal via any approach
- 15 Atypical hernia cases
    - These include operations for groin pain, repair of parastomal hernias, surgery for infected mesh including potential management of hernia recurrence concomitantly, hernias in the setting of an enteric fistula, subxiphoid, flank, suprapubic hernias.

In addition to the 100 core cases, fellows must complete the following additional requirements:

- **Clinical Evaluation Summaries**
  - Fellows must submit a minimum of 50 clinical evaluation encounters for complex hernia care, which may include the following scenarios:
    - Management of groin pain (inclusive of inguinal hernia)
    - Complex ventral hernia cases
    - Counseling patients on preoperative optimization (e.g., weight loss, botulinum toxin injections, smoking cessation)
    - Management of complications, including mesh infection and fistulas

- **Professional Commitment**
  - Obtain or maintain Active category membership in AHS and/or SAGES.
  - Membership in both organizations is strongly encouraged but not required.
  - Attend the AHS Annual Meeting, the SAGES Annual Meeting, or both during the fellowship period.
    - A photocopy of the conference badge or registration email to be submitted for confirmation of attendance.

- **Academic Productivity**
  - Fellows must achieve at least one the following:
    - Submit a hernia-related abstract to SAGES, AHS, or both, with the fellow serving as the principal author and presenter (upload submission confirmation).
    - Submit a hernia-related manuscript for publication.
    - Author a book chapter related to hernia care.
    - Develop a Quality Improvement project, such as the development of a hernia care pathway (description of the project required).

- **Program Director Attestation**
  - Confirmation of the fellow's competency and autonomy.
  - Verification that the fellow has successfully completed the required minimum time in the fellowship (e.g., 48 weeks).