

## Policies and Procedures:

### **Duty Hour Policy Resident and Fellow Stress and Fatigue Prevention, Identification and Management**

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#### **PURPOSE:**

The ACGME requires all training programs to educate faculty, residents and fellows to recognize the signs of stress and fatigue and to adopt and apply policies to prevent and counteract their potential negative effects.

#### **SCOPE:**

It is inevitable that there will be some stress, sleep loss and fatigue in the course of medical training. The development of strategies to minimize the effects of these in physicians is paramount. Learning to recognize and manage stress and fatigue is essential.

This policy complements the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Medical Education Program (UPMC-MEP) duty hour policy.

#### **DUTY HOUR REQUIREMENTS:**

- Duty periods for PGY-1 must not exceed 16 hours
- Duty periods for PGY-2 residents and above may be scheduled to a maximum of 24 hours of continuous duty in the hospital. Programs must encourage residents to use alertness management strategies in the context of patient care responsibilities especially after 16 hours of continuous duty between 10:00pm and 8:00am.
- Senior residents (PGY-3 and above for AP CP Track and PGY-2 and above for AP or CP Track) must be prepared to enter the unsupervised practice of medicine. This preparation must occur within the context of the 80 hour rule, maximum duty periods rule and day off rules. It is desirable that these residents have a minimum of 8 hours between duty periods but this may not be possible to ensure proper resident education and patient care. These circumstances must be monitored by the program director.
- Averaged over a 4 week period, inclusive of call, residents must be provided with 1 day free in 7 from all educational and clinical responsibilities. One day is defined as one continuous 24-hour period free from all clinical, educational and administrative activities and should be a "calendar day". At home call cannot be assigned on these free days. Programs should strive to ensure that the resident free day does not fall exclusively after 24 hours of in-house duty.
- PGY-1 residents should have 10 hours, and must have 8 hours, free of duty between scheduled duty periods.
- Intermediate residents (PGY-2 for AP CP Track) should have 10 hours free of duty, and must have 8 hours between scheduled duty periods. They must have at least 14 hours free of duty after 24 hours in-house duty.

**PREVENTION:  
DUTY HOURS**

**Compliance with the ACGME duty hour requirements is a critical factor in managing stress and fatigue in medical training.**

The Program Director via the program office and with the support of rotation directors, fellowship directors and local GME infrastructure systems has a process to record, report and monitor duty hours.

- a. The GME infrastructure provides an on-line tool – GMEROCS – that our program requires trainees to complete each week by Monday 11:30am. In the Comments section they must indicate the faculty person they worked with the previous week.
- b. The program office, rotation directors and fellowship directors develop rotation specific templates through which duty hours are reported by exception.
- c. Each trainee is educated on completion of the on-line time sheets and is instructed to complete them honestly and accurately.
- d. The program office monitors on-line time sheet completion by trainees and sends reminders to those who do not comply.
- e. Each month the program director reviews the duty hour report of each trainee. Each Fellowship Director also receives a report on each of their respective fellows.
- f. Non-compliance with ACGME duty hour requirements are addressed with the resident or fellow and the particular rotation director or fellowship director. Isolated events are brought to the trainee attention via email.
- g. Repeat events are assessed to identify whether non-compliance is due to individual trainee performance or is more systemic based on the rotation workload.
- h. Resident or Fellow Rotations with recurring duty hour violation are reviewed by the Program Sub-Committee or Fellowship Committee to identify improvements in work-load assignments to residents and fellows including reduction of non-essential tasks that do not serve an educational or direct patient care objective.
- i. Trainees are encouraged to communicate with the program director if they have concerns about duty hours.

**EDUCATION OF RESIDENTS, FELLOWS AND FACULTY:**

Residents and fellows are provided with information on stress and fatigue prevention, identification and management via:

- a. Being encouraged to take annual available Personal Paid-Time-Off and are counseled if they fail to do so.
- b. Communication of the ACGME duty hour requirements at the program and GME annual new recruit orientation session.
  - i. The program director has a separate orientation session with all new fellows and residents and provides hard copy information on the duty hour requirements.
  - ii. At this session a copy of this policy is also provided.
  - iii. The GME requires all new trainees to complete an on-line module on fatigue as part of its annual orientation.
- c. A lecture each year as part of the Laboratory Management curriculum series.
- d. Circulation of published articles on fatigue, stress and sleep deprivation to

- trainees and faculty – see item #8 under resources.
- e. Communicating the duty hour requirements to faculty.

**IDENTIFICATION OF STRESS AND FATIGUE:**

- a. Faculty and peers are encouraged to communicate to the Program Director when residents or fellows are suspected of having co-existent medical issues which impair sleep so that such can be referred for appropriate assessment.
- b. Residents, fellows and faculty are informed via this policy of the following events that might constitute alerts of stress, fatigue and/or sleep deprivation including:
  - i. Change in performance or work habits.
  - ii. Tardiness for scheduled work activities
  - iii. Poor or tardy conference attendance
  - iv. Poor personal hygiene
  - v. Repeated non-compliance with duty hour requirement
  - vi. Change in behavior pattern when interacting with faculty, peers or support staff

**MANAGEMENT:**

- a. Duty violations are addressed as indicated above via review of individual trainee violations and rotation work load by the program committee.
- b. Problems identified will be corrected and future performance monitored
- c. Residents and Fellows identified as having stress, fatigue or sleep deprivation concerns will be referred for appropriate help including the Resident and Fellows Assistance Program.

**RESOURCES:**

1. The Resident and Fellows Assistance Program (RFAP) – 412-647-3669
2. The SAFER (Sleep, Alertness and Fatigue Education in Residency) program developed by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) with representatives from the ACGME and AMA can be assessed through the GME Infonet – <http://gme.infonet.upmc.com> Resident and Fellow Information: Orientation Manual
3. Anonymous reporting of duty hour issues or to report problems contact GME Compliance Officer – 412-647-6426 or GME Ombudsman – 412-647-5815
4. American Academy of Sleep Medicine – [www.aasmnet.org](http://www.aasmnet.org)
5. Sleep Education <http://sleepeducation.com>
6. Academic Medicine Vol 81, No 1, January 2006
7. ACP Observer, December 2004
8. Lifa J, Shaw PF, Smoller BR: Perceptions of Stress Among Pathology Residents. Am J Clin Pathol 2007;128:911-919