DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY | DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY MEDICINE

Policies and Procedures

Subject: Wellness	
Created: Sept 2021	Revised: Sept 2024
Reviewed and approved by the Residency Program Committee: Dec 2024	Next review date: Dec 2027

Purpose

- Dalhousie Family Medicine recognizes that resident wellness is an important priority. In addition, it acknowledges that there can be physical and/or psychological stressors associated with the demands of residency training (long, irregular work hours, challenging clinical encounters, exams, financial stresses etc.).
- This policy reflects the program's commitment towards a safe, inclusive and healthy learning environment, for both faculty and trainees, by supporting a culture of wellness in all clinical and academic settings

Resident Responsibilities

- Report fit for duty and ensure they are able to perform clinical duties in a safe and effective manner.
- Self assess for any illness or disability (physical, mental or emotional) that may impact their ability to safely and effectively carry out their clinical and academic duties.
- Seek out appropriate help or support early when health or wellness concerns arise and commit to appropriate follow up.
- When recognizing illness or disability (physical, mental or emotional) in another trainee, encourage them to seek out assistance through their local site resources, program or Resident Affairs.
- When learning environment concerns arise seek out support for discussion and possible reporting of same (ie with resident affairs, program, trusted mentor)

Faculty Responsibilities

- Report fit for duty and ensure they are able to perform clinical duties in a safe and effective manner.
- Create and model safe and healthy work and learning environment for all trainees. Be aware of processes to intervene and mitigate learning environment concerns as they may arise.
- Recognize when a trainee's performance may be impacted by physical, mental or emotional problems, including excessive fatigue, and take steps to ensure the safety of the resident and patients.
- When required, allow time for attendance of appointments to address acute illness or injury (mental or physical).

Program Responsibilities

- The training sites and program will continue to work towards creating a safe and healthy work environment for all learners that encompasses both the physical space and the maintenance of physical, psychological and emotional safety in the learning environment.
- There will be resident representation on Site Cabinets and the Residency Program Committee by the Associate Chief Residents and Program Chief Resident respectively. They are encouraged to identify and bring forward any concerns related to resident wellness to their respective committees.
- There will be resident representation on the DFM Wellness Committee.
- The program will seek to identify any themes or factors that impact resident wellbeing and act to optimize these factors in support of resident wellness.
- The program will be aware of the PGME policies and guidelines on wellness as well as the Collective Agreement set out by the Maritime Resident Doctors.
- The program will be aware of overarching Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine and PGME policies and guidelines on professionalism and learner mistreatment and be proactive in addressing related concerns which may impact residents and faculty.
- Maintain the confidentiality of all learners experiencing challenges with physical, mental or emotional wellbeing and help facilitate appropriate support. Exceptions may be made to this when there are concerns regarding the safety of the resident or others.
- Encourage learners to access local resources as well as the office of Resident Affairs and/or the Office of Professional Affairs when needed.
- Allow time away from training to address illness (physical or mental) when required. This will be undertaken per the Collective Agreement.

Resources

- PGME Policies
    - Resident Safety Policy
    - Personal Harassment Policy for Postgraduate Medical Trainees
    - Fatigue Risk Management Guidelines
    - Wellness Guidelines for Postgraduate Medicine
    - Professionalism
- Health Resources – Office of Resident Affairs
- Office of Professional Affairs
- PGME Report Positive or Negative Behaviour
- College of Family Physicians of Canada Four Principles of Family Medicine
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of New Brunswick
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Prince Edward Island
- Canadian Medical Association Code of Ethics
- Dalhousie University Office of Equity and Inclusion