

POLICY

Department of Family Medicine Postgraduate Program

Elective Process

Under normal circumstances not more than four (4) weeks should be taken outside the Atlantic Provinces. Exceptions for extending this time beyond four (4) weeks include the following:

1. Extenuating Circumstances
2. Training in areas that are not available at Dalhousie (eg. Global Health electives)

A special request **must** be put forward to your Site Director for approval if you would like to do more than four (4) weeks outside of the Atlantic Provinces because of special circumstances

The Elective Request form must be completed and submitted to your Site Administrator *at least* three months prior to your elective.

Site Director or designate to address elective plans at six (6) month bi-annual review meetings

- Checklist for Electives
 1. Name and location of clinical learning experience (CLE) (including university affiliation if relevant).
 2. Supervisor's name and complete mailing address.
 3. Objectives developed.
 4. Appropriate licensure arranged (this is the responsibility of the resident).
 5. Elective confirmed with supervisor by the Site Director or Site Administrator by email.
 6. All required letters sent to the Site Director or Site Administrator.

Elective experiences are generally expected to be a minimum of two weeks in duration, in order to ensure sufficient exposure to the clinical competencies expected from the experience, and to ensure the ability of the faculty to adequately evaluate the resident. However, some experiences might be sufficient with one-week exposures. For this reason, a **limited number of one-week electives** may be completed by a resident, with approval by the Site Director.

The purpose of elective time is to:

- Satisfy unmet program objectives and required competencies.
- Meet program objectives not easily achievable at the home site.
- Enable residents to explore a horizontal experience during their Core Family Medicine experiences (see below for specific requirements).
- Enable residents who have selected large resident projects to spend up to two weeks of structured time to achieve specific milestones in their projects (see below for specific requirements).

Elective experiences must:

- Be based on defined learning objectives identified by the resident and/or Site Director and approved by the Site Director.
- Be supervised by a physician with a faculty appointment.
- Be the equivalent to a full-time work week.
- Provide daily feedback with the use of field notes, and provide an ITAR completed by the supervising physician at the end of the experience.

Research Electives:

There will be opportunity for select residents to take a one (1) or two (2) week research elective to assist in the development and completion of a **residency research project as per the resident project guide**. The following guidelines must be adhered to for the elective to be approved:

- A research elective supervisor must be secured for supervision for the duration of the elective. This supervisor should be the supervisor for the residency research project.
- The following must be submitted electronically via e-mail to the Site Director at least three (3) months in advance of the intended commencement of the elective for approval:
 - A written curriculum detailing the scheduled activities and time required for the activities and signed by the research elective supervisor for the research elective.
 - A copy of the residency research project outlining the background, objective and methodology of the project approved and signed by the research elective supervisor.
- The resident research project must be substantial enough (in terms of workload and time requirement) as judged by the supervisor for the residency research project as well as the Site Director to warrant elective time to aid in its completion and development. A clinical component to the research elective may be required.
- Weekly progress meetings must occur with the resident undertaking the elective and the research elective supervisor.
- The following must be submitted electronically to the Site Director upon completion of the elective:
 - A report on the achievements related to the research project during the period of the elective and be signed by the research elective supervisor.

An evaluation for resident performance by the research elective supervisor and an evaluation of the research elective by the resident will be completed at the end of the elective clinical learning experience. Like other clinical learning experiences if resident performance on this elective was not satisfactory, remediation may be required.

Horizontal Electives (for non-integrated sites):

- PGY2 family medicine residents, who are in good standing in their program and who have the approval of their family medicine preceptor, may arrange a horizontal elective during Core Family Medicine time, amounting to one half day per week for a maximum of ten weeks.
- One week will be added to the beginning or to the end of the Core Family Medicine clinical learning experience to compensate for the elective time.
- These electives will be approved by the Site Director only if it is administratively possible to extend the Family Medicine Core clinical learning experience by one week.
- The resident is responsible for contacting a supervisor for the horizontal elective, and for ensuring that the timing of the half-day is acceptable to both the Core Family Medicine preceptor and to the horizontal elective supervisor.
- The choice of horizontal elective must be discussed with the family medicine supervisor and the Site Director, and be approved as being suitable for family medicine additional skills training.
- The family medicine resident will receive an evaluation at the conclusion of their elective time or daily evaluations if that is satisfactory with the Site Director. This evaluation must be placed on the resident's file.

Examples of such electives experiences might include: fracture clinic, breastfeeding clinic, family planning clinic, HIV clinic, homeless program, nursing home rounds, etc.