

**CENTRAL IOWA HEALTH SYSTEM
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

POLICY ON RESIDENT DUTY HOURS IN THE LEARNING / WORKING ENVIRONMENT

I. **Purpose**

This policy is established to ensure that the residency programs provide an appropriate work environment for all residents and a duty hour schedule that is consistent with proper patient safety and resident well-being in a supportive educational environment.

II. **Fatigue Education and Mitigation.**

- A. The residency programs will provide residents and faculty members with education concerning the professional responsibilities of physicians to appear for duty appropriately rested and fit to provide the services required by their patients.
- B. The residency programs will educate all faculty members and residents to recognize the signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation.
- C. The residency programs will educate all faculty members and residents in alertness management and fatigue mitigation processes.
- D. The residency programs will adopt fatigue mitigation processes to manage the potential negative effects of fatigue on patient care and learning, such as naps or back-up call schedules.

III. **Duty Hours.**

- A. Maximum Hours of Work per Week. Duty hours are limited to 80 hours per week, averaged over a four week period, inclusive of all in-house call activities and all moonlighting.
- B. Mandatory Time Free of Duty. Residents will be scheduled for a minimum of one day free of duty every week when averaged over four weeks. At-home call will not be assigned on these free days.
- C. Maximum Duty Period Length.
 - 1. Duty periods for first year residents will not exceed 16 hours in duration.
 - 2. Duty periods of second year residents will be limited to a maximum of 24 hours of continuous duty in the hospital. Residents may be allowed to remain on-site no longer than an additional four hours in order to accomplish an effective transition in care.
- D. Minimum Time Off between Scheduled Duty Periods.
 - 1. First year residents will have 8 (eight) hours free of duty between scheduled duty periods.
 - 2. Intermediate-level residents [as defined by the individual residency review committees] will have 8 (eight) hours free of duty, between scheduled duty periods and at least 14 hours free of duty after 24 hours of in-house duty.
 - 3. Residents in the final years of education [as defined by the individual residency review committees] must be prepared to enter the unsupervised practice of medicine and care for patients over irregular or extended periods.

This preparation will occur within the context of the 80-hour, maximum duty period length, and one-day-off-in seven standards. While it is desirable that residents in their final years of education have eight hours free of duty between scheduled duty periods, there may be circumstances [as defined by the individual residency review committees] when these residents must stay on duty to care for their patients or return to the hospital with fewer than eight hours free of duty. Circumstances of return-to-hospital activities with fewer than eight hours away from the hospital by residents in their final years of education will be monitored by the program director.

- E. Maximum Frequency of In-House Night Float.
Residents will not be scheduled for more than six consecutive nights of night float.

- F. Maximum In-House On-Call Frequency.
Second year residents and above will not be scheduled for in-house call more frequently than every-third-night when averaged over a four-week period.

- G. At-Home Call.
Time spent in the hospital by residents on at-home call will count towards the 80-hour maximum weekly hour limit and will meet the requirement of one-day-in-seven free of duty, when averaged over four weeks.

Approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee on February 8, 2011.