

Policy on Fatigue and Resident Coverage

The Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requires that institutions and residency programs provide education on fatigue in residency training. In addition, programs must implement measures to identify and mitigate fatigue in residency training, as well as mechanisms to provide coverage for residents that are fatigued to a degree that they must be relieved of clinical duties and means to provide transportation to the fatigued resident when indicated. This policy addresses that requirement.

The Internal Medicine Residency Program policy consists of the following:

Residents will receive formal training on sleep and fatigue in residency training on an annual basis. The lecture will be recorded and available for review at the resident's convenience on our website. Residents and faculty will receive formal training that includes the recognition of excessive sleepiness and fatigue in residency training, the potential consequences, and the measures instituted to identify and mitigate the consequences of excessive fatigue.

Residents who report that they are fatigued to a degree that may result in harm to a patient through errors of omission or commission, or to themselves, are excused from clinical duties. Residents who are excused from clinical duties for this reason may elect to go home or may remain in the hospital to sleep. The institution will provide facilities for residents to sleep when the resident requests the opportunity to sleep before going home. If a resident reports excessive fatigue that significantly impairs one's ability to safely drive, the program will provide transportation home. This may be accomplished in either of the following two ways:

The Program will provide transportation home for the resident. Department personnel may drive the resident home, and will make arrangements to have the resident brought from home to the hospital the following day.

Vouchers for cab fare may be provided by the Program for residents who request transportation home when excessively fatigued and for return to the hospital the following day. If a resident is unable to complete his or her clinical duties on a given rotation for any reason, including but not limited to excessive fatigue, illness, injury, pregnancy, military deployment, or administrative absence, and the presence of a resident on that service is essential to the care of patients on that service, coverage will be provided according to the program's "jeopardy" policy.

The Program Director will monitor compliance with the policy, and further monitor and document any requests for resident coverage to ensure equity and a balanced educational experience for each resident to the extent possible. Any concerns or questions should be directed to the Program Director.

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