

<b>Policy #:</b> 012.001
<b>Policy Title:</b> Trainee Fatigue Mitigation
<b>Sponsor:</b> David Brown, MD; DIO
<b>Approved by:</b> Graduate Medical Education Committee

**Purpose**

Florida International University (FIU) has adopted the following policy to address fatigue mitigation.

This policy addresses Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education’s (ACGME) Institutional Requirement *III.B.5.a).(2) and III.B.5.a).(3)*, which requires sponsoring institutions to oversee: systems of care and learning and working environments that facilitate fatigue mitigation for residents/fellows; and, an educational program for residents/fellows and faculty members in fatigue mitigation.

**Definitions**

**Clinical and educational work hours:** Are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the program i.e. patient care, administrative duties relative to patient care (both inpatient and outpatient), the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled activities such as conferences. Clinical work and educational hours do not include reading and preparation time spent away from the residency program.

**Fatigue management:** Recognition by either a trainee or supervisor of a level of trainee fatigue that may adversely affect the patient and/or trainees own safety and enactment of a solution to mitigate the fatigue.

**Background**

Residency training is a full-time educational experience. Symptoms of fatigue are normal and expected to occur periodically with trainee physicians, just as it would in other professional settings. Trainees may occasionally experience effects of inadequate sleep and/or stress. Fatigue may lead to errors in judgment and clinical decision-making.

Isolated incidents of excess fatigue or stress in trainees may occur in patient care settings or in non-patient care settings (such as lectures and conferences). In patient care settings, patient safety, as well as the personal safety and well-being of the trainee, mandates implementation of an immediate response. In non-patient care settings, responses may vary depending on the severity of and the perception of the trainee’s fatigue.

**Policy**

All trainees are expected to be present, appropriately rested and fit to provide the services required by their patients and prepared to carry out their obligations to their educational programs. Programs and sponsoring institutions must educate their trainees and faculty on fatigue.

1. Trainees and faculty must be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of fatigue.

2. Trainees who perceive that they are too fatigued to maintain professional responsibility for their patients have the professional responsibility to immediately notify a supervising attending, senior trainee, or Program Director without fear of reprisal
3. If a supervising attending or senior trainee recognizes that a trainee is demonstrating evidence of excess fatigue, then they are required to consider the immediate release of the trainee from any further patient care responsibilities at the time of recognition.
4. If a trainee feels they are unsafe to drive home, trainees can sleep in the on-call suite. They are also permitted to request transportation from the GME office to get safely home and back to work.
5. The perception or evidence of frequent fatigue or stress in a trainee will be investigated by the Program Director or supervising attending to determine contributing factors or possible impairment. For further details please refer to the Trainee Impairment Policy

### **Procedure**

The Graduate Medical Education office will provide all faculty and trainees information and instruction on recognizing the signs of fatigue, sleep deprivation, alertness management, fatigue mitigation process and how to adopt this process to avoid potential negative effects on patient care and learning.

### **Patient Care Setting**

1. In the interest of patient and trainee safety, the recognition that a trainee is demonstrating evidence of excessive fatigue requires the supervising faculty or senior trainee to consider immediate release of the trainee from any further patient care responsibilities at the time of recognition.
2. Trainees recognizing excessive fatigue in themselves or fellow trainees should report their observations and concerns immediately to a supervising attending, senior trainee, or the Program Director.
3. The senior trainee should discuss the situation with the trainee to help identify the reason and determine what may be required to alleviate the situation.
4. The senior trainee must attempt, in all circumstances without exception, to notify the supervising attending on-call or Program Director, depending on the ability to contact these individuals, prior to releasing the fatigued trainee from his/her immediate clinical duties.
5. Once approved by the supervising attending or Program Director the trainee will be released of his/her clinical or educational obligations for the day.

### **GME Office**

1. Sleeping quarters are provided by the participating sites for overnight call assignments.
2. When a trainee physician is post-call or at the end of the workday and does not feel safe to drive home, they may request a taxi or ride share voucher to get a ride home.

### **Related Policies**

Trainee Clinical and Educational Work Hours, Trainee Impairment Policy

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