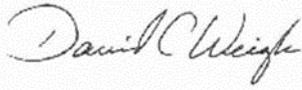


Policy Title: Resident Wellbeing



Original Date: November 2009
GMEC Endorsed: October 2020
Next Revision Date: October 2024

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PURPOSE:

UT Southwestern Medical Center is committed to providing residents with a high quality academic and clinical education, which must be carefully planned and balanced with concerns for patient safety and resident well-being. Each program must ensure that the learning objectives of the program are not compromised by excessive reliance on residents to fulfill service obligations. Didactic and clinical education must have priority in the allotment of residents' time and energies. Duty hour assignments must recognize that faculty and residents collectively have responsibility for the safety and welfare of patients. Appropriate institutional resources for resident wellness will also be readily available for residents' use.

PROCEDURE:

As the Sponsoring Institution, UT Southwestern will work collaboratively with our hospital affiliates and university departments to ensure a healthy and safe work environment for residents. These include: access to food 24 hours a day; call rooms that are safe, quiet, and private; security and safety measures including parking facilities, on-call quarters, hospital and institutional grounds. We will provide services that help to assure that residents do not perform work extraneous to achieving educational goals and objectives. These include but are not limited to patient support services, such as peripheral IV access placement, phlebotomy, laboratory/pathology/radiology services outside of the resident's relevant training, patient discharge logistical services, and transport services.

Programs, in collaboration with the Sponsoring Institution, will address well-being via efforts to enhance the meaning that each resident finds in the experience of being a physician, including protecting time with patients, minimizing non-physician obligations, providing administrative support, promoting progressive autonomy and flexibility, and enhancing professional relationships.

As the Sponsoring Institution, UT Southwestern has created the UT Southwestern Student and Resident Wellness Center. The professional staff of this center will work with residents and their Program Directors to facilitate appropriate access for UT Southwestern residents, to needed mental and medical health resources. This includes access to confidential, affordable mental health assessment, counseling and treatment, including access to urgent and emergent care and attention to burn out, depression and substance abuse. Programs must also educate residents and faculty about fatigue recognition and mitigation and encourage use of fatigue mitigation processes.

Key principles of this process will be protection of resident confidentiality, the maintenance of appropriate interactions with Program Directors, and ensuring reasonable appointment availability. Residents must be given the opportunity to attend medical, mental health and dental care appointments, including those scheduled during work hours.

Program Directors will remain responsible for seeking reasonable access to resources needed to meet residents' needs. Program Directors will also be entrusted to apply their responsibility for judgement and discretion regarding how residents' wellness needs are integrated into the details of residents' patient care duties and residents' ongoing education and professional development.

The needs of – and UT GME and Program Directors’ responses to – residents’ wellbeing include those related to mental health, medical conditions, and family demands. They also include conditions that may contribute to physician impairment.