

Resident Wellness Policy Update – November 2024

This policy establishes a health and wellness policy for postgraduate trainees in the Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery and is based on the active PGME policy from SSMD.

1. Environmental

Health

1.1 Accidents, incidents and environmental illnesses occurring during a resident’s training will be reported and administered according to the reporting policies and procedures of the University, hospital or clinical teaching location.

Occupational Health

1.2 Residents will receive instruction on body substance precautions, infection control, and occupational health procedures in the hospitals and teaching sites. This instruction is a joint responsibility of the hospital or teaching site and the residency program.

1.3 Resident Immunization Data is collected by the London Health Sciences Centre and St. Joseph’s Health Care, London. Other hospitals and training sites may request this data from residents prior to completing a rotation at their site. Residents not meeting hospital immunization and other occupational health requirements are not permitted to complete their registration with the PGME Office and will not be credentialed by the hospital. Information on current immunization and other occupational health requirements may be obtained from the hospitals.

1.4 Residents are professionally and ethically obligated to inform the Associate Dean PGME of any blood borne infection. Accommodation or modification of their program will be determined on a case by case basis.

Personal Safety

1.5 All teaching sites, hospitals, and long-term care institutions are responsible for ensuring the safety and security of residents training in their facilities in compliance with their existing employee safety and security policies/procedures as well as the requirements outlined in the PAIRO-CAHO agreement. Locations without a formal health and safety policy or joint committee will be guided by the standards outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

1.6 The following policies apply only during residents’ activities that are related to the execution of residency duties:

a) Travel

- Residents are responsible for making appropriate arrangements for travel to clinical or other academic assignments. If circumstances give rise to travel safety concerns (e.g. weather conditions, rotation scheduling or on call scheduling), it is the Residents' responsibility to notify their Program Director promptly.

b) After Hours and On-Call Work

- Residents working after hours in health care or academic facilities are expected to inform themselves of site-specific security resources.
- Residents are not expected to work alone at after-hours clinics, and if they are seeing a patient in a clinical environment outside of the ER or patient care floor, they are encouraged to do this with a team mate as opposed to being alone with a patient in clinic.
- Residents should only telephone patients from a clinic or hospital telephone line. If calls must be made with a personal or mobile phone, this should be done using call blocking. Residents are not to share their personal emails or phone numbers with patients.
- Residents are expected to take reasonable precautions when walking alone at night on campus or at the hospital (e.g. request security escort).

c) Violent or Threatening Patients

- If a resident feels that his or her personal safety is threatened, he or she should remove him or herself from the situation in a professional manner and seek immediate assistance.
- In the event of a safety emergency at any time, the resident should call security and/or the police.
- Residents should not assess violent or psychotic patients without the backup of security and an awareness of accessible exits.
- The physical space requirements for management of violent patients must be provided where appropriate.
- Programs should provide special training to residents who are expected to encounter aggressive patients.

d) Occupational Health and Safety

- Residents should familiarize themselves with the location and services offered by the relevant Occupational Health and Safety Office. This includes familiarity with policies and procedures for infection control and protocols following exposure to contaminated fluids, needle stick injuries, and reportable infectious diseases.
- Residents must observe universal precautions and isolation procedures when indicated.
- Residents should keep their immunizations up to date. Overseas travel immunizations and advice should be sought well in advance when travelling abroad for electives or meetings.
- Residents working in areas of high and long term exposure to radiation must follow radiation safety policies and minimize their exposure according to current guidelines.
- Pregnant residents should be aware of specific risks to themselves and their fetus in the training environment and request accommodations were indicated. Residents should consult the

appropriate Occupational Health and Safety Office for information.

e) General

- Call rooms and lounges provided for residents must be clean, smoke free, located in safe locations, and have adequate lighting, a phone, fire alarms, and smoke detectors. Any appliances supplied are to be in good working order. There must be adequate locks on doors.
- Site orientations should include a review of local safety procedures.

Psychological Safety

1.7 Learning environments must be free from intimidation, harassment, and discrimination. Both the hospitals and the University have policies and procedures in place to address such issues. Residents should familiarize themselves with Schulich's policy on *Faculty/Student/Staff Code of Conduct for Teacher-Learner and Trainee-Clinician Relationships* <http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/equity/codeofconduct> and the applicable hospital policies.

Other

1.8 Residents are encouraged to report and discuss adverse events, critical incidents, 'near misses', and patient safety concerns, and in doing so will be free of any recrimination.

2. REPORTING/FOLLOW UP

2.1 Residents identifying a safety or security concern or breach must report it to their immediate supervisor at the training site and comply with the site reporting requirements. When appropriate, the safety or security concern should also be brought to the attention of the Program Director or PGME Office.

2.2 If the safety or security issue is not resolved at the local level, it must be reported to the Associate Dean, PGME who will investigate and may re-direct the issue to the relevant hospital or University office for resolution. The resident/faculty member bringing the incident forward will receive a response within 10 days outlining how the complaint was handled or if it will require further review.

2.3 Pending an investigation and the resolution of an identified personal safety or security concern, the Program Director and/or Associate Dean, PGME has the authority to remove residents from clinical placements if the risk is seen to be unacceptable.

2.4 The Associate Dean, PGME may bring resident safety/security issues to the hospital office responsible for safety and security, the University's Occupational Health and Safety Office, Campus Community Police Service, the Associate Dean, Windsor Program, the Associate Dean, SWOMEN, or the Associate Dean, Equity and Professionalism for resolution or further consultation.

2.5 The Associate Dean, PGME will report as appropriate to the Postgraduate Medical Education Committee on resident safety/security issues.

2.6 Health and safety systems issues may also be brought to the attention of the Associate Dean, PGME at any time by various methods, including internal reviews, resident/faculty/staff reporting, or police/security intervention.

Urgent Situations:

2.7 Urgent resident safety issues must be brought to the attention of the Program Director and Associate Dean, PGME immediately.

3. University Personal Safety Resources

Residents are responsible for obtaining and familiarizing themselves with hospital policies and resources relating to health, safety and security. Questions about those policies should be directed to relevant hospital personnel.

Residents should also be aware of the following Faculty and University policies and resources:

- Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry's Policy, *Faculty/Student/Staff Code of Conduct for Teacher-Learner and Trainee-Clinician Relationships*
<http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/equity/codeofconduct>
- The University's *Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy*
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/mapp/section1/mapp135.pdf>
- Personal safety information, advice, and resources listed on Campus Community Police's website, including the following:
Work Safe Program: <http://www.uwo.ca/police/worksafe.htm>
Western's Safe Campus Community initiatives: <http://www.uwo.ca/police/safecampus.htm>
Western Foot Patrol: <http://www.uwo.ca/footpatrol/>