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PGME Safety Policy

Office of Accountability:	Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry (FoMD)
Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME)
Approver:	Postgraduate Medical Education Committee (PGEC)
Classification:	Safety and Wellness
Scope:	Residency and Area of Focused Competence (AFC) Programs

Overview

The Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (FoMD) at the University of Alberta, and its residency programs and AFC programs, hereby referred to as Training Programs, strives to maintain a safe learning environment for all residents and AFC fellows, hereby referred to as PGME trainees. This is also enshrined in the General Standards of Accreditation for Institutions with Residency Programs set by the Canadian Residency Accreditation Consortium (CanRAC). The following institutional accreditation standards apply:

4.1.3: Residency education occurs in a safe learning environment.

Postgraduate medical education trainees are registered with the University of Alberta as postgraduate medical education students, but they also provide services to the health authorities where they may work with non-university employees on non-university premises. It is therefore important that issues of health and safety are effectively coordinated between the University of Alberta and these health authorities. Postgraduate medical education trainees must adhere to the relevant health and safety policies and procedures of the site where they are undergoing the learning experience.

Purpose

1. To outline the components of physical, psychological, professional, and cultural safety that comprise a safe learning environment.
2. To outline the options for postgraduate medical education trainees and others, including residency and AFC program directors (hereby referred to as Program Directors) to report unsafe conditions or events so that corrective action can be taken and support can be provided.

POLICY

1. PHYSICAL SAFETY

Physical safety encompasses the following:

- a. Hazardous materials

All of our postgraduate medical education trainees must follow the protocols of the health authority or learning site for handling hazardous material in the laboratory or workplace.

b. Infectious agents

All of our postgraduate medical education trainees must

- i. follow the protocols of the health authority or learning site regarding immunization requirements and infection prevention control for infectious agents.
- ii. follow the health authority or learning site's proper donning and doffing techniques with personal protective equipment.

c. Ionizing radiation

All of our postgraduate medical education trainees must follow the protocols of the health authority or learning site regarding radiation health and safety.

d. Patient encounters (including home calls and after hours consultations)

- i. Postgraduate medical education trainees must ensure they are aware of, and have access to, exits from clinical areas and emergency panic alarms where they may encounter violent patients.
- ii. Postgraduate medical education trainees are not expected to make unaccompanied home visits.
- iii. If postgraduate medical education trainees need to call patients, they should telephone patients from a clinic or hospital telephone line. If the resident must use a personal or mobile phone, this should be done using call blocking.

e. Travel and Patient transfers

- i. Postgraduate medical education trainees must ensure they are not too fatigued to drive.
- ii. Postgraduate medical education trainees going on hospital transports must follow the applicable safety policies and rules of the health authority or learning site.

f. Violence

- i. Workplace violence can take many forms including physical attack or aggression, threatening or intimidating behavior, verbal or written threats, and sexual or gender-based violence.
- ii. Instances of violence must be reported using the protocols of the health authority or learning site.

g. Alberta Health Services Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) offers many services, including Communicable Disease Assessment (CDA), Immunization, Serological testing, Tuberculosis (TB)/Mantoux screening, Fit testing for protective respirators/masks, and Workplace Incident Reporting for Communicable Disease Exposure (CDE) and Blood and Body Fluid Exposure (BBFE), including Needle stick Injury. See Appendix A for contact information for AHS WHS.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Psychological safety encompasses the following:

a. **Fatigue Risk Management**

While fatigue in the workplace cannot typically be fully eliminated, Training Programs must take steps to manage the risks that are associated with fatigue.

b. **Discrimination and Harassment**

Refer to the University of Alberta's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Procedure for definitions of these terms.

3. PROFESSIONAL SAFETY

Professional safety includes complaints and allegations of malpractice against postgraduate medical education trainees. All of our postgraduate medical trainees are required to have medical liability coverage from the Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA). Postgraduate medical trainees involved in medical malpractice litigation should contact the CMPA.

For the safe disclosure of patient safety incidents, all of our Postgraduate medical trainees can use the health authority's online Reporting and Learning System (RLS) for Patient Safety portal to anonymously report incidents involving adverse events and patient safety.

4. CULTURAL SAFETY

Cultural safety includes safety from discrimination. All Postgraduate medical trainees should report instances of discrimination and must follow the applicable policies concerning discrimination, intimidation, and harassment of the University of Alberta, AHS, and health authority or learning site as applicable.

5. DISCLOSURE VS COMPLAINT

The University of Alberta recognizes the difference between a disclosure and a complaint, and the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Procedure (found on the University's UAPPOL policy website) describes this difference. Typically, an individual may use disclosure to access support, whereas a formal complaint is used to initiate an investigation or resolution process. A disclosure, by itself, does not initiate a formal investigation or resolution process. A summary of contacts to whom a disclosure or complaint can be made is found in Appendix B.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions are listed in the sequence they occur in the document (i.e. not alphabetical).

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use.	
PARA	Provincial Association of Resident Physicians of Alberta
Physical Safety	Includes protection against biological risks such as immunization, radiation protection, respiratory protection, exposure to body fluids. It also includes protection against risks associated with physical spaces, with care provided during home visits, travel and meetings with violent patients.
Psychological Safety	Includes prevention, protection and access to resources to counter the risks of psychological distress, alcohol or drug dependence, intimidation and harassment.
Professional Safety	Includes protection from allegations of malpractice, insurance against medical malpractice suits, disclosure assistance, academic and professional record confidentiality, as well as reporting procedures where confidentiality is assured and there are no reprisals.
Cultural Safety	Includes an environment where Postgraduate medical trainees can be their authentic selves without experiencing discrimination.
Health authorities	Health authorities administer and deliver health care to the population they serve. This includes organizations such as Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, and any other agency or organization that Alberta Health designates to deliver health services.
Canadian Residency Accreditation Consortium or CanRAC	The Canadian Residency Accreditation Consortium is composed of the three residency education accrediting colleges in Canada: Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) and Collège des médecins du Québec (CMQ).
General Standards of Accreditation for Institutions with Residency Programs	The General Standards of Accreditation for Institutions with Residency Programs are national standards that apply to the accreditation of institutions with residency programs. These standards are maintained by the Canadian Residency Accreditation Consortium which includes the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), and Collège des médecins du Québec (CMQ). The standards apply to faculties of medicine, postgraduate offices, and learning sites, written to provide a framework which aims to provide clarity of expectations, while maintaining flexibility for innovation.

APPENDIX A: Services provided by AHS Workplace Health and Safety

a. Communicable Disease Assessment (CDA)

WHS requires all Postgraduate medical trainees to complete a CDA prior to commencement with AHS. This is intended for personal and patient safety and is important when determining the response to communicable disease exposures and risks. It is important that Postgraduate medical trainees submit the appropriate records within 90 days of their start date. Failure to submit will impact the Postgraduate medical trainee's ability to continue placement.

NOTE: There is a requirement for Postgraduate medical trainees to provide a history of their immunizations at the time of commencement and must follow the health authorities' requirements for immunization.

To arrange an appointment prior to orientation, contact WHS through email at OHSWNurseOnCall@ahs.ca. This email can also be used to gain AHS immunization records.

b. N95 fit testing

N95 fit testing is the process of fitting an N95 respirator. Postgraduate medical trainees must be fit tested every two years and even more frequently if there are changes to facial features due to weight loss or gain.

c. Workplace Incident Reporting

AHS WHS also requires Postgraduate medical trainees to follow Communicable Disease Exposure (CDE) and Blood and Body Fluid Exposure (BBFE) including Needle stick Injury reporting processes by calling 1-855-450-3619.

Covenant WHS requires Postgraduate medical trainees to follow Communicable Disease Exposure (CDE) and Blood and Body Fluid Exposure (BBFE) including Needle stick Injury reporting processes by calling 780-342-8070 (in Edmonton) and 1-855-342-8070 (outside of Edmonton).

APPENDIX B: Summary of Potential Contacts to Report Personal Safety or Security Breaches

1. Program Director or other leader in the Training Program or Department
2. PGME Office (pgemail@ualberta.ca)
3. UAlberta FoMD Professionalism Office (fomdprof@ualberta.ca)
 - a. Disclosing a Professionalism Concern
 - b. Reporting a Racism Concern
4. UAlberta FoMD Office of Advocacy & Wellbeing (oawadmin@ualberta.ca)
5. UAlberta FoMD Resident Wellbeing Committee (oawadmin@ualberta.ca)
6. UAlberta Office of Safe Disclosure & Human Rights (osdhr@ualberta.ca)
7. PARA (para@para-ab.ca)
8. UAlberta Sexual Assault Centre (uasac@ualberta.ca)