



Policies and Procedures

Policy MFMR14	Sleep Deprivation and Fatigue Policy
Effective Date:	10/26/2022
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References:	

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the quality of Graduate Medical Education program at Methodist Medical Center (MMC) meets the training requirements of the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Resident education and patient care management can be greatly inhibited by resident sleepiness and fatigue.

Scope

This policy is in direct response to requirements of the ACGME pertaining to fatigue mitigation and is designed to ensure the safety of patients as well as to protect the residents' learning environment. This policy is in addition to any policy established by MMC and its affiliate institutions regarding sleep deprivation and fatigue.

Definition of Fatigue

1. Fatigue is a feeling of weariness, tiredness, or lack of energy. Fatigue can impair a physician's judgment, attention, and reaction time which can lead to medical errors, thus compromising patient safety.
2. There are many signs and symptoms that would provide insight to one's impairment based on sleep deprivation. Clinical signs include:
 - a. Moodiness
 - b. Depression
 - c. Irritability
 - d. Apathy
 - e. Impoverished speech
 - f. Flattened affect
 - g. Impaired memory
 - h. Confusion
 - i. Difficulty focusing on tasks
 - j. Sedentary nodding off during conferences or while driving
 - k. Repeatedly checking work and medical errors

Policy

1. Programs must educate all faculty and residents to recognize the signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation and in alertness management and fatigue mitigation processes.
2. Programs must encourage residents to use fatigue mitigation processes to manage the potential negative effects of fatigue on patient care and learning.
3. Each program must ensure continuity of patient care consistent with program resident wellness policies and procedures, if a resident may be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities due to excessive fatigue.
4. The program's education and processes must be designed to:
 - a. Raise faculty and residents' awareness of the negative effects of sleep deprivation and fatigue on their ability to provide safe and effective patient care.
 - b. Provide faculty and residents with tools for recognizing when they are at risk.
 - c. Identify strategies for faculty and residents to use that will minimize the effects of fatigue (in addition to getting more sleep).
 - d. Help identify and manage impaired residents.

Individual Responsibility

1. Resident's Responsibilities in Identifying and Counteracting Fatigue
 - i. The resident will be educated on the hazards of sleep deprivation and fatigue in the workplace and in their personal lives (e.g., motor vehicle accidents).
 - b. The resident is expected to adopt habits that will provide him or her with adequate sleep to perform the daily activities required by the program.
 - c. If the resident is too fatigued to drive home at the end of a work period, he or she should be encouraged to use another form of transportation (e.g., taxicab) or take a nap prior to leaving the training site.
2. Faculty Responsibilities in Identifying and Counteracting Fatigue
 - a. Faculty will be educated on the hazards of sleep deprivation and fatigue in the workplace and in the provision of care to patients.
 - b. Faculty members will be able to determine if residents are sleep deprived and will make the appropriate recommendations to the resident that will correct this problem.