

15. DUTY HOURS, ON-CALL ACTIVITIES, PATIENT LOADS AND SERVICE OBLIGATIONS

Residencies and fellowships must comply with the current ACGME policies on Duty Hours and On-Call Activities. The relevant policies are excerpted in Appendix IV.

Residents and fellows must be apprised of these policies at least annually.

All residency and fellowship programs must monitor compliance to these policies at least quarterly. A report on compliance and actions taken to remedy recurring episodes of non-compliance must be submitted to the Graduate Medical Education Committee semi-annually.

The Graduate Medical Education Committee will review the above reports semi-annually and take appropriate actions to assure compliance.

Residencies and fellowships must maintain a policy specifying the maximum number of admissions, inpatients and outpatients for rotations and clinics in which an excessive number of patients may reasonably compromise the educational process or working environment.

[Adopted by the GMEC on September 11, 2003 as a replacement for the policy "DUTY HOURS, PATIENT LOADS AND SERVICE OBLIGATIONS" that had been approved on October 25, 1996.]

ACGME REQUIREMENTS FOR DUTY HOURS AND ON-CALL ACTIVITIES

Effective July 1, 2003

DUTY HOURS

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

Duty hours must be limited to 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house call activities.

Residents must be provided with 1 day in 7 free from all educational and clinical responsibilities, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of call. One day is defined as one continuous 24-hour period free from all clinical, educational, and administrative activities.

A 10-hour time period for rest and personal activities must be provided between all daily duty periods, and after in-house call.

ON CALL ACTIVITIES

The objective of on-call activities is to provide residents with continuity of patient care experiences throughout a 24-hour period. In-house call is defined as those duty hours beyond the normal workday when residents are required to be immediately available in the assigned institution.

In-house call must occur no more frequently than every third night, averaged over a four-week period.

Continuous on-site duty, including in-house call, must not exceed 24 consecutive hours. Residents may remain on duty for up to 6 additional hours to participate in didactic activities, maintain continuity of

medical and surgical care, transfer care of patients, or conduct outpatient continuity clinics.

No new patients may be accepted after 24 hours of continuous duty, except in outpatient continuity clinics. A new patient is defined as any patient for whom the resident has not previously provided care.

At-home call (pager call) is defined as call taken from outside the assigned institution.

The frequency of at-home call is not subject to the every third night limitation. However, at-home call must not be so frequent as to preclude rest and reasonable personal time for each resident. Residents taking at-home call must be provided with 1 day in 7 completely free from all educational and clinical responsibilities, averaged over a 4-week period.

When residents are called into the hospital from home, the hours residents spend in-house are counted toward the 80-hour limit.

The program director and the faculty must monitor the demands of at-home call in their programs and make scheduling adjustments as necessary to mitigate excessive service demands and/or fatigue.

DUTY HOUR EXCEPTIONS

An RRC may grant exceptions for up to 10% of the 80-hour limit, to individual programs based on a sound educational rationale. However, prior permission of the institution's GMEC is required.