

Creighton University School of Medicine

Medical Education Program Policies

POLICY: Medical Student Work Hours During Clerkship and Clinical Electives

GOVERNING BODY: Educational Program Committee

APPROVAL DATE: 7/9/2019

REVISED DATE: 12/14/2021

LCME ACCREDITATION STANDARD REFERENCE: Element 8.8 Monitoring Student Time

PURPOSE

This policy details the administration and review of medical students' work hours within the clinical courses.

POLICY

1. Principles

- The School of Medicine must be committed to and be responsible for promoting patient safety and student well-being and to providing a supportive educational environment.
- The learning objectives of the clerkship and rotation must not be compromised by excessive reliance on medical students to fulfill service obligations.
- Didactic and clinical education must have priority in the allotment of a student's time and energy.
- Work hour assignments must recognize that faculty and residents have the primary responsibility for the safety and welfare of patients.

2. Fatigue

Medical Students must recognize the signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation and learn strategies to counteract their potential negative effects on patient care and learning.

3. Work Hours

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

- a. Work periods of M3 and M4 students may be scheduled to a maximum of 24 hours of continuous work in the hospital or outpatient setting. It is essential for patient safety and medical student education that effective transitions in care occur. Students may be allowed to remain on-site in order to accomplish these tasks; however, this period of time must be no longer than an additional four hours.
- b. Medical students must have 14 uninterrupted hours free of work after 24 hours of call.
- c. Medical students must not exceed 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period.
- d. Medical students must have a 24-hour period free of work in seven days, averaged over a four-week period.

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4. M3 Student Work Hour Submission Requirement

The Medical Education work week runs from Sunday to Saturday. M3 students are required to submit work hours within the Medical Education curriculum management system by the end of the business day Friday for the preceding week.

5. Non-Compliance of Policy Sections 3 and 4

- a. Exceeding of Work Hour Limits (reference Policy Section 3.a, 3.b, 3.c, 3.d)
 - i. If a student exceeds work hours per sections 3.a, 3.b, 3.c, and/or 3.d of this policy, he/she is to report the reason for the excess in work hours within the comments section of the curriculum management system when submitting his/her work hours.
 - ii. If a student observes another student exceeding work hours per sections 3.a, 3.b, 3.c, and/or 3.d of this policy, he/she is to report the information to the Associate Dean of Medical Education as soon as possible.
- b. Failure to Report Work Hours (reference Section 4):

Students who fail to report work hours per section 4 of this policy must submit work hours immediately.

PROCEDURE

1. Exceeding of Work Hour Limits

The Associate Dean of Medical Education and the appropriate clerkship director will be notified if a student has exceeded work hour limits per policy section 3 of this document. The Associate Dean for Medical Education and the clerkship director will review why the work hour limits was exceeded.

- a. If the work hour limits were exceeded due to an oversight by the student, the student will be reminded of policy section 3 of this document and reminded to adhere to the policy.
- b. If the work hour limits were exceeded due to a faculty member or resident pressuring the student to exceed limits per policy section 3 of this document, the Associate Dean for Medical Education will meet with the M3 Component Director, Clerkship and Site Director, and Academic Chair of the responsible department to discuss the excess work hours without naming the student. The Associate Dean of Medical Education will present an action plan in writing to prevent further excess work hours. The action plan will be based on counsel received from the M3 Component Director, Clerkship and Site Director, and Chair. Random students on

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that rotation will then be contacted regularly for a period of three months to ensure that there are no further excess work hours reported.

If there is a pattern of excess work hours by a particular clerkship, the Dean, Associate Dean for Medical Education, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and Chair will meet to discuss the pattern and take corrective action against any faculty or resident who is pressuring a student to adhere to this policy.

2. Failure to Report Work Hours

a. Review of Work Hours

Clerkship Coordinators will review student work hour submissions weekly. To assist students, Clerkship Coordinators complete the following procedures:

- i. Send a weekly reminder to students that work hours are due.
- ii. Send an email notice to students who fail to meet this requirement.

b. Failure to Report Work Hours - First Report

Clerkship Coordinators will report this information to the appropriate campus M3 Curriculum Coordinator, Clerkship Director, and current preceptor.

- i. The Clerkship Director and/or preceptor will require the student to submit work hours immediately in order to continue on the clerkship.
- ii. The M3 Curriculum Coordinator will log the instance of failing to report work hours.

c. Failure to Report Work Hours - Second Report

In addition to steps taken after the first report:

- i. The Clerkship Director will complete an Early Concern Form for the student and discuss with the student the importance of compliance of the Medical Student Work Hours During Clerkship and Clinical Electives Policy.
- ii. The M3 Curriculum Coordinator will notify the Office of Student Affairs.

d. Failure to Report Work Hours - Third Report

In addition to steps take after the second report:

- i. The Office of Student Affairs will refer the student to the Advancement Committee for review.

e. Additional Failure to Report Work Hours Reports

In addition to the steps taken after the third report:

- i. The student will be asked to appear before the Advancement Committee to discuss the continuing non-compliance of the policy.

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SCOPE

All faculty, residents and staff who assist in administering and teaching within the clerkship curriculum. (M3 and M4 component years).

All students enrolled in the clerkship curriculum (M3 and M4 component years).

ADMINISTRATION AND INTERPRETATION

The Office of Medical Education and Office of Students Affairs are responsible for the administration of this policy. Please forward questions to the Associate Dean for Medical Education or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

AMENDMENT

This policy may be amended by majority vote of the School of Medicine Medical Education Program Educational Program Committee.