

Policies and Procedures

<i>Section:</i> School of Medicine (Phoenix)		<i>NO.</i>				
<i>Chapter:</i> Gastroenterology	<i>Issued:</i> <i>12/2016</i>	<i>REV. A</i> <i>7/1/19</i>	<i>REV. B</i> <i>12/2019</i>	<i>REV. C</i> <i>10/2020</i>		
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PURPOSE

In compliance with the ACGME Institutional and Common Program Requirements, it is the goal of Creighton University to outline the departmental policies regarding the clinical and educational work hours for fellows of Creighton University's School of Medicine (Phoenix) Gastroenterology Fellowship Program.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Gastroenterology Fellows of the Creighton University School of Medicine Medical Center (Phoenix) Program.

POLICY:

The Creighton University School of Medicine (Phoenix) Gastroenterology Fellowship complies with the ACGME work hour requirements. The program is structured to provide fellows with educational and clinical experience opportunities, as well as reasonable opportunities for rest and personal activities.

DEFINITIONS

Clinical and Educational Work Hours - clinical and educational work hours are inclusive of all in house clinical and educational activities, clinical work done from home, and all moonlighting. It does not include educational activities, reading and preparation for conferences, research or studying done at home.

Work from Home - types of work from home that must be counted include using an electronic health record for patient care activities and taking calls from home. Reading done in preparation for the following day's cases, studying, and research done from home do not count toward the 80 hours. Fellows decisions to leave the hospital before their clinical work has been completed and to finish that work later from home should be made in consultation with the fellow's supervisor. In such circumstances, residents should be mindful of their professional responsibility to complete work in a timely manner and to maintain patient confidentiality.

Moonlighting/Volunteer Work - moonlighting is defined as any voluntary activity, not related with training requirements, in which an individual performs duties as a fully-licensed physician and receives direct financial remuneration. The hours spent moonlighting are counted towards the total hours worked for the week. No other work hour requirements apply; however, these outside activities must not interfere with the ability of the fellow to achieve the goals/objectives of the educational program. Additionally, it must not interfere with the fellow's fitness for work nor compromise patient safety.

In the event of any discrepancies between program policies and the GME policy, the GME policy shall govern.

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At home call - an assigned period of time when the fellow is on-call. At home call must satisfy the one-day-in-seven free of duty, averaged over four weeks. Fellows are permitted to return to the hospital while on at-home call to care for new or established patients. Each episode of this type of care must be included in the 80 weekly maximum and does not initiate a new “off-duty period”

Day off - one continuous 24-hour period completely free from all administrative, clinical and required educational activities. Home call cannot occur on a day off.

Work hour flexibility - Fellows who have appropriately handed off patients following the conclusion of scheduled work periods have the flexibility to voluntarily remain at work in unusual circumstances, such as:

- to continue to provide care to a single severely ill or unstable patient;
- humanistic attention to the needs of a patient or family; or,
- to attend unique educational events.

These additional hours must be counted toward the 80-hour limit. The fellow must not stay if fatigued.

It is important to note that a fellow may remain or return only if the decision is made voluntarily. Fellows must not be scheduled beyond work period restrictions or required to stay by an attending or more senior fellow.

PROCEDURE

Clinical and educational assignments must be assigned while recognizing that faculty and fellows collectively have responsibility for the safety and welfare of patients. The ACGME common program requirements recognize that fellows may choose to work beyond their scheduled time or return to the clinical site during a time off period to care for a patient. The requirements preserve the flexibility for fellows to make those choices as long as they recognize the responsibility to work rested and fit for duty.

Fellow Logging:

1. Fellows must document their and track work hours on a weekly basis in New Innovations.
2. Workhours must be limited to 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period; this is inclusive of all “at home call” activities and moonlighting.
3. In the case of a work hour violation, the fellow must document on why there was a violation. The PD will then review and document on that violation. A violation may be justifiable, but the PD must approve. Please see the section on flexibility to see examples of what is justifiable.
4. If work hour logging is not completely documented by the 7th day of each month for the hours in the previous month, the following consequences will occur:

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- 1st offense - meal money on your badge will be taken away for 1 week.
- 2nd offense - meal money on your badge will be taken away for 1 month.
- 3rd offense - under review status will be implemented by the Clinical Competency Committee (CCC).

These offenses can be applied sequentially every 7 days of work hours logging continues to not be completed;

Time off between scheduled clinical work and education periods:

- Fellows should have eight hours off between scheduled clinical work and education periods.
- Work periods for fellows must not exceed 24 hours of continuous scheduled clinical assignments. A fellow may have an additional 4 hours for care of established patients. These additional 4 hours cannot include ambulatory work or new patients to care for.

Days off:

- Fellows must be scheduled for a minimum of one 24-hour day in seven free of clinical work and required education. This can be averaged over four weeks to allow flexibility in scheduling time off. Home call cannot be assigned on a free day.

In House Call:

- Gastroenterology fellows do not take in-house call but are required to take “home call”.

Home Call:

- Does not require a rest period after an assignment of home call overnight
- At home call is not subject to the “every third night” limitation but must not be so frequent or taxing to preclude rest or reasonable personal time for each fellow.
- Time spent in the hospital by fellows on at-home call must count towards the 80-hour maximum weekly hour limit.

Flexibility at fellow’s discretion:

- There may be circumstances when fellows choose to stay to care for their patients beyond a work period or return to the hospital with fewer than eight hours free of clinical experience and education. This must occur within the context of the 80-hour work week and the one day off in seven requirements.

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The program has adopted the following mitigation of fatigue policy:

If a fellow is too fatigued to complete assigned duties due to the on-call work load, he/she must communicate with the PD or the assigned supervising physician about leaving early and having another trainee assigned to the clinical duties. The supervising physician or PD will be responsible for assuming or reassigning the clinical work.

1. The supervising physician is readily available to assume patient care responsibility whenever a fellow identifies they cannot perform their patient care duties.
2. The Division gives utmost importance to patient care and safety. We do not have a cap of how many patients a fellow can see in a day. However, since fellows are under constant supervision of a supervising physician, the supervising physician will assume patient care duties immediately from the fellow if it is perceived that patient safety is being threatened by actions of the fellow.

Institutional Oversight/Dealing with non-compliance:

- Work hours are reported monthly to the local GEC and quarterly to the Executive GMEC. If there is an 80- hour violation, the PD must report to the GEC the reasons leading up to the violation and how he/she intends to remedy the situation. The GEC then votes on whether to accept the report and the remediation plan.
- If the program has less than 100% compliance for fellows logging work hours for more than 3 months in a row, the PD must report to the GEC as to how they are going to remedy the situation. The GEC can offer suggestions to the PD as to how to improve the logging. Further violations could result in the program being placed under special review.

REFERENCES

Creighton University GME Policy link:

https://medschool.creighton.edu/sites/medschool.creighton.edu/files/clinical_and_education_work_hours_policy_9.15.2020.pdf

AMENDMENTS OR TERMINATION OF THIS POLICY

Creighton University reserves the right to modify, amend or terminate this policy at any time.

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