Program Policy

Subject: Physician-Resident Impairment
Category: 
Scope: All Teaching Services

Effective Date: 3/24/2006
Revised: 03/01/2006
Approved by REC: 3/24/2006, 8/28/2015

PURPOSE: Ensure resident health and patient safety.

POLICY:

The abuse or inappropriate use of alcohol and other psychoactive or mood-altering drugs is not permitted. Since patient health and safety are the paramount concern, all suspected cases of physician impairment must be reported to the program director, to a designated hospital official, or the appropriate hospital or medical staff committee.

PROCEDURES:

A formal organized process within the counseling program of the Internal Medicine Residency Program is available to address the problems of substance abuse and the broad range of physical, mental, and emotional problems that may be confronted during residency training.

Residents are provided information about the problems of alcohol and chemical dependency in the program's core curriculum conference series. Residents suspected of impairment, due to alcohol or other chemicals are referred for counseling evaluation through the residency program's counseling process. Recommendations from the professional counselors is utilized by the residency program to determine if a resident may continue in patient activities or be suspended pending medical treatment, and/or terminated. The program's intent is to assist the resident physician to successfully complete the residency training program and safely practice.

Residents or staff physicians may confidentially contact the program director regarding a resident suspected of substance abuse. A resident may contact his/her advisor for a referral for assistance. Following referral, intervention will occur with treatment and monitoring. A determination is made of ability to participate in limited or full practice. All processes for intervention and management of the impaired resident physician are confidential to the degree possible.