Policies and Procedures

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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 the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellowship Program at Creighton University School of Medicine/St. Joseph’s Medical Center (Phoenix) Program.

SCOPE
This policy applies to the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Fellows of the Creighton University School of Medicine/St. Joseph’s Medical Center (Phoenix) Program.

POLICY: The Hospice and Palliative (H&P) Medicine Fellowship at Creighton University School of Medicine/St. Joseph’s Hospital and Medical Center (Phoenix) complies with the ACGME work hour requirement. H&P fellows take weekend call, one weekend out of the month. The fellow must be aware of the requirements for call and at home call.

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. Resident 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 resident’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 resident to achieve the goals and objectives of the educational program.

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

Weekend call - H&P fellows will take weekend call, one weekend out of the month, with the Program Director and/or the SJHMC Palliative MD. Weekend call begins Friday @ 4p.m. and ends on Monday at 8:00 am. The fellow will be contacted by the supervising faculty during with weekend if there is a new consult which would require them to come into the hospital. Each episode of this type of care must be included in the 80-hour weekly maximum as well as time spent answering on-call pager calls.

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:

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