

Student Duty Hours Policy

Purpose

Time spent by Pritzker School of Medicine students engaged in clinical activities on a weekly basis must not exceed specified weekly duty hour caps.

Overview

The Pritzker School of Medicine has a duty hour policy in place that protects the medical student from overwork and exhaustion, and allows the student time for rest, study and recreation.

Related LCME Standards:

- 8.8 Monitoring Student Time

Principles

1. Medical student's duty hours during clerkships or clinical electives should not violate the duty hour policy, which should allow students adequate time for study and rest in addition to their clinical duties.
2. Required clerkships and clinical electives should provide medical students with an engaging and supportive educational experience while also ensuring patient safety and student welfare.
3. Required clerkship and clinical elective course objectives and learning outcomes should be attainable within the dedicated time allotted for the course or rotation.
4. The clerkship or clinical elective must ensure medical students are supervised in the clinical setting by various providers including faculty, house-staff (residents and/or fellows) and other inter-professional providers who are acting within their scope of clinical practice.
5. Duty hour guidelines are flexible depending on site variation, but must adhere to the policy which states medical students should have adequate time for study and rest in addition to their clinical duties.

Policy

Medical student learning during the third year comes from many sources, which include, but are not limited to, clinical interactions with patients and the health care team, didactic sessions from lecturers and preceptors, and individual reading. Moreover, in addition to clinical activities and duties that medical students may perform, students have the responsibility of taking exams, creating presentations, and engaging in self-directed learning. Thus, students must have adequate time to integrate clinical knowledge through self-directed learning.

1. When third year students are engaged in clinical work that involves call, students should be dismissed by midnight. In order for students to meet this 12 a.m. deadline, residents should not assign new patients to students after 10 p.m.

These deadlines are intended to give students enough time to finish write ups, discuss patients with their resident, read about their patients, and leave remaining time for an adequate amount of sleep for the next day's learning activities. These recommendations do not apply to:

- a. Students on shift assignments.
 - b. Surgical rotations (including gynecologic surgery) in which overnight call and participation in urgent or emergent situations are of educational value. In these settings, students should be dismissed after morning duties are completed.
2. It is recommended that students have one day free of clinical responsibility per week, averaged over one month, in order to study. Clerkship directors should stipulate the rules for their individual clerkship in their orientation material.
 - a. These days off may include any weekend days that are free of clinical activity, e.g. students on ambulatory rotations with weekends off will not receive additional week days free of clinical duties.
 - b. Students are expected to attend all required rotation specific non-clinical activities (including but not limited to didactics, small group sessions and preceptor groups) even if that formal educational experience falls on a student's day free of clinical duties.
 3. Specific daily work schedules will vary by clerkship, and are most appropriately determined by the clerkship director.
 4. The guidelines above do not apply to fourth year medical students. For fourth year students on sub-internships, ACGME duty hour guidelines are appropriate.

Procedures

1. Medical student duty hour policies will be communicated both in writing and verbally to all students, clerkship and clinical elective directors by the Pritzker School of Medicine's Dean for Medical Education, Executive Director of Medical Education and/or responsible staff.
2. The Dean for Medical Education is responsible for communicating pertinent and critical policies to the faculty, graduate medical education trainees and inter-professional providers on a bi-annual basis to establish expectations for duty hours of medical students.
3. Students concerned about duty hour violations should immediately contact the clerkship or clinical elective director or can report the violation on the end of clerkship evaluation form via MedHub.

Accountable Dean or Director: Dean for Medical Education, Dean of Students

Related Policies:

Approval Date and Governing Body: December 13, 2019; Education Executive Committee