Hey gang! As promised in the last Zoom session, I’ll try to get back to more regular updates.

**Clerkship Schedules**

The basic outline of the clerkship schedule has been completed. As you can imagine, the clerkship team in UME are burning the midnight oil to refine it in order to try meet students’ preferences and balance out the number of clerks on each rotation at any one time. We hope to have that done by late Monday; the Clerkship Committee Meets on Tuesday afternoon and we’ll review it, hopefully finalize it and then get it out next week. It is possible that we will require some further modifications which could delay things a bit.

**UCLIC**

I know that I usually don’t include much about UCLIC in my updates – my apologies for this. I have a meeting with the entire UCLIC team next week in order to make sure that we have everything in place for the UCLICers. An update will come from either me or the UCLIC team after we have had that discussion. I’m not anticipating any significant changes, mainly a discussion about smaller details.

**PPE Training**

We’ve all had to learn about proper PPE use in the clinical environment. I’ve had discussions with several clerkship groups and the reasonable expectation is that we give you some training in proper donning/doffing and infection prevention measures prior to starting back to clerkship. While there is some content pertaining to this in the online sessions for Course 8, we need to give you some hands on training. We’ve been given permission by the Dean’s office to have you back in person at the med school to do this training with appropriate safety precautions. We’re going to offer a couple of dates, looking like two of June 8/9/11/12. We’re still working on the details of that timing and obtaining supplies. Once we confirm dates/times we’ll get out info on signing up. I know there will be a few students who can’t make these dates/times because of travel (e.g. students who have already gone to their UCLIC site or are away from Calgary right now). We’re looking at options for a later make-up session, perhaps in conjunction with PGME, as they have to do similar training for residents. We can also liaise with UCLIC sites to help get students some practice there.

**Travel**

For those of you who aren’t in Calgary, please make sure you are thinking ahead about travel arrangements. If you have to fly here, you’ll want to make sure you plan to return a couple of days early in case there are cancellations or delays. Also remember if you are returning from an international destination to plan your return to allow for mandatory quarantining.

**Clerkship Activity**
Your day-to-day experience when you return will be different than in years past. There will be less opportunity for outpatient work; more of your time will be spent on inpatient areas on some rotations. Not entirely, but a different balance than before. This is because it is more difficult, in some clinics, to have appropriate space to allow for clinical work to proceed without overcrowding. Clinics are also largely still running with limited patients and a much smaller number of in-person assessments. You may participate in more telephone or video conference patients than would have happened in the past. This is a great opportunity: one of the outcomes of the pandemic will be a greater use of remote care and you’ll be learning about that in a real clinical environment.

You will also be subjected to all of the changes that all of us in clinical environments are experiencing. For example, either through an app or in person, you have to be screened for COVID symptoms before work. You will have to wear a medical mask in patient care areas. Things are really different than they were before you started clerkship.

There is also going to be no possibility of coming to work if you are unwell. This is something that we will be reinforcing over and over again. I know that is going to be a big deal, since, as we have discussed several times, we will have very limited make up time at the end of the clerkship year (and I know you’re all probably really excited to get back into clinical work!). Nevertheless, the health of your patients and your colleagues is of primary importance.

Potential Changes

While things are looking good right now in terms of capacity and scheduling, of course that could change. We’re going to have to roll with the punches. If we have partial shut downs (e.g. a hospital closure to learners because of an outbreak or a clerkship that has to close to learners for some reason) we’ll try to find alternate placements and alter schedules for students. That would be tough at the best of times, but will be even harder this year. We will do whatever we can to keep the ship sailing.

Students Unable to Return June 15

I’ve mentioned this before but will bring it up again: any students who have a situation that may preclude their return to full time clinical activity (e.g. family care responsibilities) or a personal health issue (underlying medical conditions, medical treatments that cause immunosuppression) should be getting in touch with me now to discuss options. For medical issues, I would strongly advise you to consult with your health care providers about the safety of being in hospitals and other clinical areas.

I hope you have a great weekend. I’m told that Sunday is supposed to be a beautiful day: hope you can get out and enjoy it.

KB
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