



March 17, 2020 Update

Re: COVID 19

PGME OFFICE

As many of you are already aware, the majority of PGME staff are now working remotely from home. They will respond to your emails in a timely fashion and business will continue “as usual”. The PGME committee meeting this Friday is scheduled to move forward via Zoom videoconferencing.

RESIDENTS REASSIGNMENT

A number of services removed off-service residents in consideration of learner safety. This includes Emergency Medicine and Anesthesia. It is understood that these decisions are appropriate and in the best interest of both resident and patient safety. I would like to emphasize that residents must consult the home Program Director for reassignment when any of the following occurs:

- Removal of an off-service resident from a rotation by the hosting program
- Cancellation of an elective
- Cancellation of a rural rotation

The home Program Director will determine whether the resident(s) can be appropriately assigned to another rotation or educational experience. Please notify me by email when there is a change of assignment for a **resident cohort** (not for individual residents) Further guidance from PGME will be available in the next several days with regard to this issue.

IN-PERSON CLINIC ENCOUNTERS

I received a request for clarification of the role of learners in the ambulatory care clinics for non-urgent assessments.

Some faculty members are electing to conduct telephone consultations in the place of in-person meetings in the outpatient clinic. Residents should continue to function in this setting in disciplines where the telephone consult still offers a meaningful learning experience for the trainee. This will not be the case for all disciplines. In this instance the resident may discuss alternate assignments with the Program Director.

For clinics that continue to include in-person patient assessments, concern has been raised about additional patient exposures for non-urgent issues. In this instance the resident is encouraged to consult with the Program Director who will have discretion in determining whether an alternate activity (either clinical or independent study) is available and appropriate.

RESIDENTS WHO ARE PREGNANT OR HAVE CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS

The health and safety of trainees remains highest priority. Residents who are pregnant, immunocompromised, or have chronic cardiopulmonary conditions should be removed from clinical care of patients with presumed or confirmed cases of COVID 19. Any such resident who is currently scheduled for rotations in Intensive Care

Unit environments in the coming months should be re-assigned by the home Program Director in consultation with the receiving program.

ELECTIVES

An update on residents currently completing electives out-of-province at other Canadian university centers. After much deliberation it was decided that the least disruptive approach will be to allow current trainees to complete their rotations to end of this block (April 5 2020). At the conclusion of this block all residents on out-of-province electives will be required to return to their home programs at the University of Calgary.

There is no change in directions for all other electives as follows:

- All incoming and outgoing electives are cancelled
- All residents currently on elective within Alberta must return to their home program/university
- All residents pursuing an international elective must return to Calgary immediately where there will be a requirement for 14 days of self-isolation regardless of symptoms.

COMMUNICATION

I will make every effort to send updates as frequently as required to ensure you all have the information you need to direct your programs and provide guidance to residents. New issues arise on a daily (if not hourly) basis and every effort is made to respond to these in a timely fashion.

This is a stressful situation for all involved. Please take time whenever possible to look after your own health and wellness and do not hesitate to reach out for support or with questions/concerns. Most of the team is working from home but are available by email and phone. I am on-site at PGME.

Many thanks to all for your dedicated work during this very challenging time.

Lisa Welikovitch MD FRCP
Associate Dean, PGME