



# Sam Houston State University

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

## College of Osteopathic Medicine

### Graduate Medical Education

### Sam Houston Regional Education Consortium (SHREC)

#### WELL-BEING, FATIGUE MITIGATION, AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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#### SCOPE:

This policy applies to all SHREC Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited Programs at Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (SHSU-COM).

#### PURPOSE:

To promote the physical, emotional, and psychological health and safety of our workforce, specifically our residents/fellows and faculty and to support a learning and working environment that emphasizes a culture of respect and accountability for physician well-being.

#### POLICY:

##### Well-Being

- Self-care is an important component of professionalism for the resident/fellows and faculty. It is also a skill that must be learned and nurtured in the context of other aspects of residency training. SHSU-COM programs have the same responsibility to address well-being as they do to evaluate other aspects of resident/fellow competence. This responsibility must include:
  - Efforts to enhance the meaning that each resident/fellow finds in the experience of being a physician, including protecting time with patients, minimizing non-physician obligations, providing administrative support, promoting progressive autonomy and flexibility, and enhancing professional relationships.
  - Attention to scheduling, work intensity, and work compression that impacts resident/fellow well-being.
  - Evaluating workplace safety data and addressing the safety of resident/fellow and faculty members.



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- Policies and programs that encourage optimal resident/fellow and faculty member well-being
  - Residents/Fellows must be given the opportunity to attend medical, mental health, and dental care appointments, including those scheduled during their working hours.
- Attention to resident/fellow and faculty member burnout, depression, and substance abuse. SHREC residency/fellowship programs must educate faculty members and residents/fellows in identification of the symptoms of burnout, depression, and substance abuse, including means to assist those who experience these conditions. Residents/Fellows and faculty members must also be educated to recognize those symptoms in themselves and how to seek appropriate care. SHSU-SOM programs must:
  - Encourage residents/fellows and faculty members to alert the program director, chief residents, attending or faculty member when they are concerned that another resident, fellow, or faculty member may be displaying signs of burnout, depression, substance abuse, suicidal ideation, or potential for violence.
  - Provide access to appropriate tools for self-screening (resident/fellow and faculty may access the ACGME Tools and Resources for Resident/Fellow and Faculty Member Well-Being).
  - Provide access to confidential, affordable mental health assessment, counseling, and treatment, including access to urgent and emergent care 24 hours a day, seven days a week (See Behavioral Health Section below).
- There are circumstances in which residents/fellows may be unable to attend work, including but not limited to fatigue, illness, and family emergencies.
  - All SHREC programs must have a policy and procedure in place that ensure coverage of patient care in the event that a resident or fellow may be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities.
  - These policies must be implemented without fear of negative consequences for the resident or fellow who is unable to provide the clinical work.

#### Program Responsibilities

Each program must:

- Educate all faculty members, residents, and fellows (hereinafter referred to as "residents") to recognize signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation. This must be done annually as part of the residents' curriculum and faculty development.
- Educate all faculty members and residents about alertness management and fatigue mitigation processes.
- Encourage residents to use fatigue mitigation processes such as strategic napping or turnover of care via back-up schedules, to manage the potential negative consequences on patient care and learning.





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- Ensure continuity of patient care in the event that a resident may be unable to perform their patient care responsibilities due to fatigue.
- Educate residents and faculty members about their professional responsibilities as physicians, including their obligation to be appropriately rested and fit to provide the care required by their patients.
- Ensure that residents and faculty members demonstrate an understanding of their roles in the management of their time before, during, and after assignments; recognize impairment, including illness, fatigue, and substance abuse, in themselves, their peers; and other members of the health care team; and submit accurate clinical and educational work hour reports.
- Monitor the demands of at-home call and adjust schedules to mitigate fatigue when applicable.

#### Institutional Responsibilities

- Each program, in partnership with its sponsoring institution must ensure adequate sleep facilities and safe transportation options for residents who may be too fatigued to safely return home.
- The GME Office offers a fatigue mitigation transportation option to help ensure residents arrive home safely when fatigued after work.
  - Reimbursement is available to any resident that elects to use a transportation service (app-based or taxi) to arrive home instead of driving their own vehicle while fatigued, as well as to pick up their car or return to work the next day.
  - In order to monitor the quality of the GME learning and working environment, use of the service will be monitored.

#### Behavioral Health

A SHREC Resident or Fellow who wishes to seek confidential counseling services for themselves have access to the SHSU-COM physical and mental health services page along with access information. It may be accessed at: <https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/about/mental-and-physical-health-resources>

The SHSU Wellness Program information may be accessed at:  
<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/hr/benefits/programs.html>

In emergencies, the resident or fellow is encouraged to use the Emergency Department at their nearest hospital. At the resident or fellow orientation, the process and policy for support services are reviewed. Program Directors are advised to emphasize the same at their program's individual orientation.



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Residents and fellows may self-refer to the Texas Physician Health Program (TXPHP) by calling 512-305-7462 or by visiting their website at [txphp.state.tx.us](http://txphp.state.tx.us). The TXPHP can confidentially direct the resident or fellow to resources to assist those affected by substance use disorders, physical illnesses and impairment, and/or psychiatric conditions.

During orientation and at least annually thereafter, the GME administration will review options for confidential counseling services for all residents/fellows.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)