



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Management of Impaired GME Residents

gme-adm-0002

About This Policy

Effective Dates:

09-07-2016

Last Updated:

04-28-2020

Responsible University Administrator:

Senior Associate Dean for GME

Policy Contact:

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Scope

This policy applies to all Graduate Medical Education (GME) residents in Indiana University School of Medicine (IUSM)-sponsored training programs.

Policy Statement

IUSM expects and requires all residents to report to work on time and in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their work. It is recommended that all residents practice preventative health management and recognize significant changes in their physical or mental health. If there is a concern that it may be affecting their performance in the training program, the resident should review concerns with program leadership.

Drug dependence or addiction can also contribute to an impaired work performance. It is the school's intent and obligation to provide a drug-free, healthful, and secure work environment that promotes safe and quality patient care. The university, the school, and the affiliated hospitals recognize drug dependency as an illness and a major health problem as well as a safety and security issue. They also recognize drug usage as a potential health, safety, and security problem. IUSM also absolutely prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance on university premises or while conducting university business off university premises. Violations of this policy may result in removal from clinical duty and potential termination of employment.

It is the belief of IUSM that an impaired resident physician is an ill colleague in need of treatment. The approach to impairment should be through medical intervention, care, and compassion, as opposed to punitive or threatening methods. It is expected that the impaired resident physician will enter and complete treatment in order to return to training as soon as possible.

Mental health or substance abuse evaluations may be requested by a Program Director or the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education when there is concern that a resident's performance may be impaired by psychiatric illness or substance abuse. Refusal to cooperate with a mental health or substance abuse evaluation may be considered grounds for termination from the training program.

IUSM has contracted with the Indiana State Medical Association (ISMA) Physician Assistance Program (PAP), to coordinate efforts in identifying and assisting IUSM physicians with illnesses impairing their ability to practice medicine. These illnesses may include chemical dependency, psychiatric illnesses or physical illnesses. The

Program Director should contact the Senior Associate Dean or the Director of GME if a referral to ISMA is being considered by the program. Pending this discussion, the Director of GME or the Program Director will contact ISMA to initiate the referral. (Attachment 1)

As part of this contract, the physician allows regular communication with all necessary and appropriate school and hospital personnel. Additionally, regular progress compliance letters can be sent on behalf of the recovering physician, when consent is given.

Reason For Policy

The purpose of this policy is to address the identification and management of a suspected or confirmed impaired GME resident providing clinical care in any area of the IUSM Clinical Learning Environment, including affiliate hospitals, clinics, or associated clinical practice areas. It is the intent of this policy to provide a means to recognize impaired resident physicians with the goal of assisting the resident in finding appropriate medical care or rehabilitating the physician and ensuring patient safety. Impairment may be due either to suspected substance abuse, physical health or mental health disorder.

Procedure

Pre-employment

All residents who are new to IUSM undergo a background check as part of the appointment process. If a background check reveals that a resident has a history of DUI, then the following actions will be taken:

1. The IUSM Senior Associate Dean will schedule a phone call with the resident to discuss what corrective actions he/she has taken since the incident(s). This information may be shared with the resident's program director.
2. Any resident with a DUI within the last five years will need to be evaluated by the ISMA and take any corrective action or additional counseling they recommend.

Currently Active

Any faculty, resident, or nursing staff that suspects a resident is impaired should report to the resident's program director or supervisor at the time of the concern (**Attachment 1**). The program director or supervisor will assess the resident. The Senior Associate Dean or Director of GME should be notified if the resident is deemed to be impaired.

A resident must report any arrest to his/her program director.

Acute Impairment v. Disruptive Behavior

If the resident is suspected to be acutely impaired, the resident ought to be removed from clinical activity at that moment in the interest of patient safety and well-being of all involved. If a program director has reasonable suspicion that a resident is impaired, a summary suspension should be considered and report to the Senior Associate Dean or Director of GME prior to reporting the resident to the ISMA impaired physician program.

Fitness for Duty

Fitness for Duty will be assessed on a case-by-case basis using the algorithm (Attachment 3).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of the GME resident seeking referral or who has had a formal or mandatory referral for assistance will be maintained, except as limited by law, ethical obligation, or when the safety of a patient is threatened. In all instances, every effort to protect the confidentiality of the individual referred for assistance will be made. The ISMA does not automatically refer a physician to the licensing board for a minor infraction of the contract. It is only after all attempts to work with a physician have failed that a referral is made to the appropriate board.

Definitions

ACGME is the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

A resident is an IUSM resident or fellow, or a non-IUSM resident or fellow electively rotating through IUSM who provides clinical care as part of a GME program.

Clinical Learning Environment is any area in the IUSM learning environment where residents participate in clinical activities.

Impairment is “the inability to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of physical or mental illnesses or alcoholism or drug dependency.” (American Medical Association, 1972)

The Indiana State Medical Association Physician Assistant Program (ISMA PAP) is a program of the Indiana State Medical Association that addresses the needs of physicians impaired by chemical dependence, psychiatric disorders, and physical disability, as well as the needs of disruptive physicians.

Implementation

The Designated Institutional Official (DIO) for GME is responsible for implementation of this policy.

Oversight

Policy authority for this document resides with the Graduate Medical Education Committee. The DIO and the Graduate Medical Education Committee are responsible for oversight. This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often if deemed necessary.

History

1. Policy IUSM-GME-PO-0002 approved by GMEC and published on 13 February 2013.
2. Policy approved by the GMEC on 07 September 2016.
3. Policy updated for formatting 27 February 2018.
4. Policy updated for formatting 27 June 2018.
5. Policy migrated to the policy portal xx May 2022.