



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

Faculty of Medicine



Accommodation for Undergraduate Medical Students with Disabilities

Preamble

The United Nations uses the term "disability" to summarize a great number of different functional limitations. It is identified that people may be disabled by physical, intellectual or sensory impairment, medical conditions or mental illness. Such impairments, conditions or illnesses may be permanent or transitory in nature. *The Manitoba Human Rights Code* identifies that all individuals be accorded equality of opportunity, and that reasonable accommodation be made for those with special needs. The University of Manitoba is committed to facilitating the integration of students with disabilities into the University community. The University of Manitoba is specifically committed to reasonable accommodation of the needs of persons with documented disabilities by making efforts to create a barrier-free campus and provide other supports and services within the limits of available resources. The University will endeavour to meet the identified needs of each student by adapting services, courses, and programs as feasible and as resources allow, while maintaining appropriate academic standards. The University expects that the responsibility for making reasonable accommodations will be shared by the students, instructors and support staff. Within the Faculty of Medicine, each student with a disability is entitled to reasonable accommodation that will assist her or him to meet the academic as well as technical standards; the technical standards are identified in a policy entitled *Essential Skills and Abilities (Technical Standards) for Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Program*.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Dissemination of this Policy

This policy and the document entitled *Essential Skills and Abilities (Technical Standards) for Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Program* are posted on the Faculty of Medicine Undergraduate Medical Education website:

<http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/education/undergraduate/index.html>. Both documents are consistent with the University of Manitoba policy entitled *Accessibility for Students with Disabilities*. Students are informed of the procedures to request accommodation for disabilities via orientation sessions organized just prior to classes for in-coming students and through an e-mail sent to all students at the beginning of each academic year.

Pre-application Information

The admissions information posted on the Faculty of Medicine website:

<http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/admissions/index.html> will contain the statement "Students concerned about the extent to which they meet the technical standards as

outlined in the policy entitled *Essential Skills and Abilities (Technical Standards) for Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Program*, with or without accommodation, are advised to contact the Assistant Dean, Student Affairs for the Faculty of Medicine." Pre-application advice that is given to students will be confidential and independent of the admissions process, any records generated in this regard shall be retained independently from a student's application file, and if applicable, the student's academic record of the Faculty of Medicine.

Accommodation Committee

An Accommodation Committee of the Faculty of Medicine will be established to oversee the process of facilitating the integration of students with disabilities who meet the technical standards as identified in the document entitled *Essential Skills and Abilities (Technical Standards) for Admission, Promotion and Graduation in the MD Program*. The Accommodation Committee will be chaired by the Assistant Dean, Student Affairs, or designate, and membership will include the Coordinator of the University of Manitoba Disability Services or designate, and two members of full-time faculty drawn from each of a basic science and a clinical department. None of the Accommodation Committee members will be in a position of directly evaluating a student at any point in that student's program of studies. The Accommodation Committee may elect to consult with other individuals who may include: other members of faculty who may be directly involved with specific components of the program and/or student; legal counsel; the Registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, or designate; and others as deemed appropriate by the Committee. The Accommodation Committee shall correspond with the Assistant Dean, Admissions and/or the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education as dictated by the circumstances of individual students. The Accommodation Committee shall submit an annual report of the Committee's work to Faculty Executive Council.

Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to self-identify to the Chair of the Accommodation Committee in a timely proactive fashion. Where possible students are requested to declare their needs to Disability Services at the time of application, or upon admission, or as soon as possible before registration. Accommodations cannot be made retroactive to an examination or clinical evaluation.

Use of An Intermediary

There are a few circumstances in which an intermediary may be appropriate. However, no disability can be accommodated if the intermediary has to provide cognitive support, substitute for cognitive skills, perform a physical examination and/or in any way supplement clinical and ethical judgment. The appropriateness of an intermediary will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Confidentiality

Confidential records of all information regarding accommodation will be placed in the student's file and kept secured in Disability Services Office. The nature of the disability, the nature of the accommodation, the dates of implementation, as well as any subsequent modification to the original accommodation will be kept on file. This information will not be placed in, nor form any part of the student's academic file.

Students will be informed that in order for a requested accommodation to be implemented it may be necessary to share relevant information on a *need to know*,

confidential basis with individuals involved in providing the accommodation (e.g., medical faculty, clinical supervisors, physical plant, etc.) The specific logistical requests for accommodation will be forwarded to those responsible for facilitating them; disclosure of the nature of the disability may be required. Students must consent in writing to this degree of communication in order to permit the Faculty of Medicine to meet their needs.

Procedures

Preadmission: No inquiries regarding an applicant student's disability shall be made by individuals involved in the admissions process. Students who meet the technical standards but may require accommodation for the admissions process or degree program can direct requests for information about reasonable accommodation to the Assistant Dean Student Affairs for the Faculty of Medicine, or Disability Services. Such requests are kept independent from a student's admission file.

Application process: An applicant with a disability may request accommodation for the application process. The request shall be directed to the Chair of the Accommodation Committee, or Disability Services.

Newly registered students: A student who gains acceptance to the Faculty of Medicine may direct a request for reasonable accommodation for disability to the Chair of the Accommodation Committee, or Disability Services. The student requesting the accommodation is responsible for providing Disability Services with medical documentation to establish that the student has a disability, such that recommendations for accommodation may be determined to be appropriate for the student's condition. If the disability is not documented or if the medical or other relevant documentation is not current or complete, the student may be directed to Disability Services of the University of Manitoba for a preliminary assessment. The student will then be directed by the Disability Services office to the appropriate professional for an assessment and for accommodation recommendations.

If there is a delay in acquiring a comprehensive assessment, the Accommodation Committee will meet to develop an interim plan.

The Accommodation Committee will meet with the student to discuss the accommodation plan.

The Accommodation Committee will contact the appropriate persons to facilitate the recommendations. The Committee will ensure that appropriate individualized accommodation is implemented proactively as the student moves through the MD program. The individual plan will be reviewed as frequently as required as the student progresses through the curriculum, and upon request by the student. Plans will be reviewed by the Committee to determine whether further accommodation is reasonable in the case of a student who does not progress as expected.

Students in their course of study: Should a student become aware of a disability, or acquire an impairment, condition, or illness during their undergraduate medical education program, the student may direct a request for accommodation for disability to the Chair of the Accommodation Committee, or Disability Services. Processes will be invoked as identified above. Accommodation for disability if required and approved shall be prospective, not retroactive. Should reasonable accommodation

for disability be unsuccessful in assisting the student in attaining the requisite skills and abilities, the student may be requested to withdraw from the MD program.

Students seeking readmission: Policies and processes regarding students seeking readmission shall be the same as identified above.

Appeals

A student who disagrees with the recommendations of the Accommodation Committee should in the first instance address his/her concerns with the Accommodation Committee. A student has the right to appeal through the standard appeal process within the Faculty of Medicine. The student may appeal a judgment to the relevant appeal committee of the University of Manitoba. Students are encouraged to consult with the Student Advocacy office for information and assistance about the appeal processes. For information about Respectful Work and Learning Environment policy, students are encouraged to contact Equity Services.

Document Review

The Accommodation Committee will review this policy annually for the first three years and biannually thereafter.

This policy document was submitted to Faculty Executive Council on April 24, 2009.

This policy document is adapted with permission from the policy document entitled *Implementation Policy: Students with Disabilities in the MD Program*, approved in 2007 by the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, and is influenced by the AAMC document entitled *Medical Students with Disabilities: A Generation of Practice*, published June, 2005.

Reference may be made to the University of Manitoba Policy entitled *Accessibility for Students with Disabilities*.