



<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Resolution of Resident/Fellow Disagreement with Attending Physician /Supervisor</b>
<b>Application/ Scope:</b>	<b>All PGME Residency/Fellowship Programs</b>
<b>Approved (Date):</b>	FPGME Executive July 30, 2013 WRHA / UofM Educational Advisory Committee Oct. 1, 2013,
<b>Review Date:</b>	
<b>Revised (Date):</b>	Amended PGME Exec approved Jan 15, 2015
<b>Approved By:</b>	Faculty Executive Council, Sept. 10, 2013, Amended April 28, 2015

## BACKGROUND

It is recognized that it may be very appropriate for two professional individuals to disagree on various medical issues. Most disagreements do not require the initiation of a formal conflict resolution process. However, in some situations, the universities or institutions may recommend conflict resolution measures or processes

When there is a complaint or disagreement between a resident/fellow and the attending physician or his/her clinical supervisor, it is anticipated that the issue will be dealt with as close to the source as possible thereby limiting the number of people involved in the resolution process.

Examples of complaints or disagreements include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Perceived inappropriate professional behaviour
2. Perceived inadequate or poor teaching
3. Perceived inadequate or poor patient care
4. Perceived inadequate supervision

## DEFINITIONS

**Attending Physician** - is the most responsible physician/physician of record for the patient

**Clinical Supervisor** – is the physician to whom the resident/fellow reports during a given interval of time, such as an on-call shift. The Clinical Supervisor may be another resident/fellow.

**CFPC** – College of Family Physicians of Canada

**FPGME** – Faculty of Medicine Postgraduate Medical Education

**Fellow** – A fellow is a learner enrolled in a Fellowship Program, which consists of training which does not lead to additional credentials for practice as it is not recognized as leading to certification by CFPC/RCPSC. Furthermore fellowship training does not lead to examination for certification in

the respective Colleges. The term fellow also applies to those learners enrolled in residency programs certified by CFPC/RCPSC but for various reasons, their training does not lead to examinations for certification by the respective Colleges.

**PGME – Postgraduate Medical Education**

**RCPSC-** Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

**Site Coordinator –** is a physician appointed by the Postgraduate Program Director to act as his/her designate at each site participating in the program other than the site where the Postgraduate Program Director is located. The site coordinators are members of the Postgraduate Program Committee.

## **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 Provide specific guidelines to resolve situations where a resident/fellow experiences conflict with the attending physician or his/her clinical supervisor.

## **2. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- 2.1 In recognition of the fact that disagreements/conflicts between learners and teaching faculty may occur, there is an expectation that a collegial, “no-fault” environment is in place. Regardless of the outcome of the immediate intervention and/or resolution, there shall be no repercussions to the resident/fellow for lodging a complaint made in good faith.

## **3. PROCEDURE**

- 3.1. Ideally the resident/fellow and the attending physician or clinical supervisor should have a face-to-face discussion about the concern.
- 3.2 Each resident/fellow must be provided with the contact information for each Site Coordinator involved in their Postgraduate Program. The resident/fellow consults with the Site Coordinator about the issue.
- 3.3 The Site Coordinator will speak with the attending physician or clinical supervisor to inform him/her of the concern.
- 3.4 The Site Coordinator will arrange a joint meeting with the resident/fellow and attending physician or clinical supervisor to reach a resolution.
- 3.5 If the resident/fellow does not believe that the issue has been resolved, she/he should approach the Postgraduate Program Director to help resolve the conflict.
- 3.6 In cases where immediate resolution is required, the resident/fellow will immediately contact the Site Coordinator for direction.
- 3.7 The Site Coordinator will provide a follow-up written report of the incident to the Home Program Director and/or the Service Chief (hospital/site), when appropriate.
- 3.8 In some instances it may be advisable to seek input from the Associate Dean, Student Affairs, PGME.

- 3.9 In some instance it may be advisable to seek input from Associate Dean, Professionalism.
- 3.10 If the issue still remains unresolved, the resident/fellow should contact the Associate Dean, PGME.
- 3.11 Final authority for resolution of the conflict is in the hands of the Associate Dean, PGME.
- 3.12 The resident may decide to appeal the decision (see Resident Appeals Policy; Faculty of Medicine, Student Appeals Policy; University of Manitoba, Senate).

**POLICY CONTACT:** Associate Dean, PGME

## **REFERENCE**

McMaster, Postgraduate Education Committee of the COFM, Resolution of Resident Disagreement with Attending Physician or Supervisor on an Issue of Patient Care, <http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/postgrad/documents/ResolutionofResidentConflictwithAttending.pdf>