

Guidelines to Manage UTRGV GME Resident/Fellow Wellbeing Concerns

Developed By: Graduate Medical Education Committee – Wellbeing Subcommittee

Effective Date: May 21, 2020

The guidelines proposed herein pertain to the mental and emotional health of learners within the Graduate Medical Education (GME) system here at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) School of Medicine (SOM).

Issues of acute and chronic illness, academic remediation, and misconduct are not addressed here; these matters are handled separately by programs in cooperation with the UTRGV SOM GME office.

Issues of wellbeing among residents and fellows (heretofore referred to as resident(s)) are unique and merit treatment that is different from the approaches that may be used in the setting of similar issues faced by a different classification of university employee (such as staff and faculty members).

A lack of wellbeing may lead to performance issues, such as lapses in professionalism. Problems with wellbeing may take various forms, such as acute or chronic wellness concerns and burnout.

When a resident wellbeing matter is identified, the first person to whom this concern is typically addressed is the program director (PD). This report may come directly from an observer, but in some instances, it may come from someone in whom a staff/faculty/community member or resident peer has confided.

Wellbeing concerns should be reported to the GME Office (directly to the Designated Institutional Official (DIO) and GME Program Manager). Timing of this report depends on the urgency of the issue and is at the discretion of the PD.

If there is a true emergency (such as active suicidal ideation with intent) and the resident has not yet been referred to emergency services (via 911, emergency department presentation, etc.), then this should be arranged.

The DIO will update the GME committee's (GMEC) Wellbeing subcommittee chair and co-chair. In urgent situations, other than emergent ones referred to above, these individuals can formulate an appropriate urgent referral plan for the resident. In less urgent scenarios, an ad hoc wellbeing subcommittee meeting may be arranged to discuss initial referral plans (subcommittee meetings otherwise occur on a monthly basis). Following initiation of initial referrals/treatment, the committee will monitor resident progress, determine need for Fitness-

for-Duty evaluations (which may be included in the initial management), as well as establish return-to-work plans (including timeline and guidelines).

The [Office of Human Resources](#) at UTRGV will determine details with respect to leave of absence management. On occasion, certain university policies may mandate additional HR involvement, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Other offices that may be involved as needed on a case-by-case basis include the [Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity](#); the [Institutional Compliance Office](#); the [Department of Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management](#); and the [Office of Legal Affairs](#).

Concerns or questions pertaining to these guidelines should be directed to the UTRGV SOM [Office of Graduate Medical Education](#).