

**ATRIUM HEALTH CABARRUS
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION**

RESIDENT/FELLOW IMPAIRMENT POLICY

Effective: 6/1996

Revised: 6/1997, 9/05, 4/14,8/18

Reviewed: 4/14, 4/17, 4/22

Purpose

To prevent impairment whenever possible, to identify and assist any impaired resident while also assuring patient safety. This policy shall comply with the institutional requirements of the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and that of North Carolina statutes.

Definition:

Impairment is defined as personal difficulties that prevent satisfactory educational progress or the inability of a physician to care for his or her patients with reasonable skill and safety due to illness, use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals or any other type of material or because of any mental or physical condition that impairs the physician's ability to carry out his or her duties.

Policy:

- A. Atrium Health is considered a drug-free workplace and residents and fellows are subject to the provisions of Atrium Health Policies (HR-4.08). Specifically, they must undergo pre-employment drug screening. The Program Director may also request random drug or alcohol screening testing whenever reasonable suspicion of impairment exists.
- B. According to the State of North Carolina, licensed physicians must meet certain responsibilities or face potential disciplinary actions. This includes being unable to practice medicine with reasonable skill and safety due to illness, use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals or any other type of materials that may result in impairment.
- C. The resident/fellow shall notify the Program Director immediately if he or she is evaluated or enrolled in the NC Physician Health Program or has any mandated evaluation or disciplinary action taken by the NC Medical Board.
- D. Time away from the Residency/Fellowship Program will conform to Atrium Health Policy HR 4.09.
- E. Evaluation and enrollment in the North Carolina Physician Health Program or mandated evaluation or disciplinary action taken by the Medical Board do not preempt disciplinary action by the Residency/Fellowship Program.
- F. Sometimes residents/fellows who are not impaired may benefit from counseling. In this case, they are encouraged to exercise existing options. The Residency and Fellowship Program faculty may serve as a referral resource to community mental health professionals. In addition, the resident/fellow may obtain assistance through Atrium Health's employee assistance program. The resident/fellow is not obligated to inform the Program Director or faculty of counseling if no impairment exists and no special scheduling needs are required.

Procedures:

A. Resident/Fellow Self Reporting

If a resident/fellow believes that he or she has a problem with impairment, they must contact the Program Director so that appropriate changes may occur in their work schedule. Depending upon the situation, this does not remove the responsibility of the Program Director to report to the Medical Board.

B. Reason of Suspicion

Faculty, residents, fellow, and staff are encouraged to promptly notify the Program Director of any suspicious behavior that suggests impairment. Depending upon the situation, the Director may gather additional data, require drug or alcohol testing or refer the resident/fellow to the North Carolina Physicians Health Program or Medical Board. The Program Director may remove the resident/fellow from patient care activities to protect patient well-being or impose disciplinary action if necessary.

Erika Steinbacher, MD

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Designated Institutional Official
Atrium Health Cabarrus

5/29/2022 | 07:13:17 EDT

Date

Asha Rodriguez

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Facility Executive
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5/26/2022 | 10:13:03 EDT

Date