

Policy: Clinical Experience and Educational Work Hours

Programs at UCSF Fresno must design an effective program structure that is configured to provide residents and fellows (referred to as house staff hereafter) with educational and clinical opportunities, as well as reasonable opportunities for rest and personal activities.

UCSF Fresno GME Office monitors programs for compliance related to timely and accurate reporting of duty hours. 100 % compliance for reporting of work hours is expected.

UCSF Fresno GME Office monitors work hours monthly through MedHub violation reports. Violations are confirmed with each program and then provided to the GMEC for review and approval on the bimonthly meeting consent agenda. If program violations are found to be excessive, the Ad Hoc Subcommittee of the GMEC will be called upon to review and make recommendations to programs to address systems issues related to work hour violations. Programs are encouraged to develop proactive plans to prevent duty hour violations whenever possible.

Reported work hours violations are meant to help inform systemic changes in program and rotation structures. They must not be used in the evaluation or remediation of housestaff.

Maximum Hours of Clinical and Educational Work per Week

Clinical and educational work hours must be limited to no more than 80 hours per week, averaged over a four week period, inclusive of all in-house clinical and educational activities, clinical work done from home, and all moonlighting.

Mandatory Time Free of Clinical Work and Education

Programs must design an effective program structure that is configured to provide house staff with educational opportunities, as well as reasonable opportunities for rest and personal well-being.

House staff should have eight hours off between scheduled clinical work and education periods. There may be circumstances when house staff choose to stay to care for their patients or return to the hospital with fewer than eight hours free of clinical experience and education. This must occur within the context of the 80-hour and the one-day-off-in seven clinical experience and educational work hours requirements.

House staff must have at least 14 hours free of clinical work and education after 24 hours of in-house call.

House staff must be scheduled for a minimum of one day in seven free of clinical work and required education (when averaged over four weeks). At-home call cannot be assigned on these free days.

Maximum Clinical work and Education Period Length

Clinical and educational work periods for house staff must not exceed 24 hours of continuous scheduled clinical assignments. Up to four hours of additional time may be used for activities related to patient safety, such as providing effective transitions of care, and/or house staff education. Additional patient care responsibilities must not be assigned to house staff during this time.

Clinical and Educational Work Hour Exceptions

In rare circumstances, after handing off all other responsibilities, house staff, on their own initiative, may elect to remain or return to the clinical site in the following circumstances:

- to continue to provide care to a single severely ill or unstable patient;

- humanistic attention to the needs of a patient or family; or
- to attend unique educational events

These additional hours of care or education will be counted toward the 80-hour weekly limit.

Moonlighting

Moonlighting must not interfere with the ability of house staff to achieve the goals and objectives of the educational program, and must not interfere with the house staff's fitness for work nor compromise patient safety. Please see the UCSF Fresno Moonlighting Policy for more information about moonlighting, forms, and general information.

Time spent by house staff in internal and external Moonlighting (as defined in the ACGME) must be counted towards the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.

PGY-1 residents are not permitted to moonlight.

UCSF Fresno residency and fellowship training programs will track moonlighting through the on-line MedHub system and report as needed to the GMEC Subcommittee for Clinical and Educational Work Hours. The Clinical and Educational Work Hours Subcommittee is an Ad Hoc committee and will review continued violations if needed. They will also report to the GMEC on an as needed basis.

In-House Night Float

Night float must occur within the context of the 80-hour, and one-day-off-in-seven requirements. The maximum number of consecutive weeks of night float, and maximum number of months of night float per year may be further specified by ACGME Specialty Review Committees.

Maximum In-House On-Call Frequency

House staff must be scheduled for in-house call no more frequently than every third night (when averaged over a four-week period).

At-Home Call

Time spent on patient care activities by house staff on at-home call must count toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit. The frequency of at-home call is not subject to the every-third-night limitation but must satisfy the requirement for one day in seven free of clinical work and education, when averaged over four weeks. At-home call must not be so frequent or taxing to preclude rest or reasonable personal time for each resident/fellow. House staff are permitted to return to the hospital while on at-home call to provide direct care for new or established patients. These hours of inpatient care must be included in the 80-hour maximum weekly limit.

(Original signed Policy is available in the UCSF Fresno Graduate Medical Education Office)

Michael Peterson, M.D., Associate Dean, Co-Chair GMEC