

## Student Clinical and Educational Hours Policy

### Definition:

Clinical and educational hours are defined as all educational contact time (e.g., didactics, clinical learning groups, scheduled self-directed learning activities, team-based learning events, problem-based learning events, interprofessional activities, examinations, standardized-patient assessments) and clinical learning events (e.g., supervised patient care, in-house call, short call, night float and day float, conferences) that occur across the four-year curriculum.

Student clinical and educational hours should be aligned with the educational contact hours used to determine the amount of credit that is assigned to each course, clerkship or rotation in the MD curriculum. Clinical and educational hours do not include non-scheduled contact with educators and patients, such as reading, studying, academic enrichment opportunities (e.g., service learning events, participating in extra-curricular research opportunities) and preparation for assessments; however, the Curriculum Committee must continually monitor the protection of time students use to conduct independent and self-directed learning (see MD Degree Curriculum Committee Guideline for the Protection of Independent and Self-Directed Study). As existing learning activities are modified or new learning activities are created, the curriculum committee must monitor whether students have sufficient time to engage in self-directed learning activities and whether changes in course/clerkship credit hour assignment are required.

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) clinical and educational work hour rules provides a model for formulating this medical student policy. The aim of the student clinical and educational hours policy is to prevent the effects of sleep deprivation on students' personal safety, mental well-being and ability to study and learn.

### Student Clinical and Educational Hour Rules:

- Medical students will learn and work no more than eighty contact hours a week, averaged over the course or clerkship block period.
- Clinical services that have a low volume of nocturnal and weekend activity are encouraged to allow students to take call from home. These hours spent at home do not count towards the 80-hour limit rule. Should a student be required to return to the hospital during an 'at home' call situation, then the hours physically present in the hospital do count towards the 80-hour weekly average.
- Students may not exceed more than six consecutive nights of in-house night float or night shift.
- Students may not have in-house call more frequent than every 3<sup>rd</sup> night averaged over the course, clerkship or rotation block

- Students should not be scheduled for more than 24 continuous in-hospital shifts.
- Students who have been on a 24-hour shift may participate in patient care or educational activities (e.g., grand rounds) for an additional 4 hours. However, during this additional 4 hours, students may not be assigned new patients. Students must have a 14-hour break after a 24-hour shift.
- Students should have at least one in seven days off when averaged over the length of the course, clerkship or rotation block.
- If students believe that they are being asked to participate in clinical or educational activities that violate these rules, then students should immediately consult with the course/clerkship director and the appropriate campus Dean of Student Services. It is preferred that anticipated violations be brought to the attention of the course or clerkship director to prevent rule violations. Course, clerkship and rotation evaluations will contain questions pertaining to the compliance of the clinical and educational hour rules. The course, clerkship, and rotation directors and the appropriate campus Dean of Student Services will review any reported rule violations to assess compliance with the policy and take action on a case-by-case basis.
- Faculty should be cognizant of the cumulative hours the students are learning, assess signs of student fatigue and adjust schedules accordingly.
- Student Clinical and Educational Hours Policy will be reviewed and adjusted periodically to reflect the best practices in assuring a safe and productive learning environment that centers on student wellbeing. Policy compliance will be regularly reviewed during course, clerkship, and rotation evaluations by the Assessment Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee for the MD Degree.

**LCME Standard 8: Curricular Management, Evaluation, and Enhancement**

*The faculty of a medical school engage in curricular revision and program evaluation activities to ensure that that medical education program quality is maintained and enhanced and that medical students achieve all medical education program objectives and participate in required clinical experiences and settings.*

**Applicable Element 8.8: Monitoring Student Workload**

*The medical school faculty committee responsible for the medical curriculum and the program's administration and leadership ensure the development and implementation of effective policies and procedures regarding the amount of time medical students spend in required activities, including the total number of hours medical students are required to spend in clinical and educational activities during clerkships.*

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