


# Title: Graduate Medical Education - Professional Assistance Policy

	<b>Document Owner:</b> Crystal Arellano	<b>Last Approved Date:</b> 02/18/2025
	<b>Content Expert:</b> CHRISTI McCoy	Ref#17548

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## I. Policy Statement

- A. The purpose of this policy is to comply with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) requirements to facilitate access to residents of the services and resources that are available to them in the event they require professional assistance for any of the following conditions:
  - i. Mental Health
  - ii. Physical (Medical) Health
  - iii. Impaired Physicians (including drug and alcohol impairment)
  - iv. Financial Concerns
  - v. Personal issues, including learning disabilities and career decisions.
- B. This policy is important because graduate medical education can be a stressful time for residents. It is important that residents know what types of resources are available to them should the need arise. Compliance with this ACGME requirement is necessary for institutional and program accreditation.

## II. Definitions

- A. Resident – Resident means an intern, resident, or fellow who is formally accepted, enrolled, and participating in an approved MUHC medical training program. (based on CMS Guidelines for Teaching Physicians, Interns, and Residents and ACGME Glossary of Terms)
- B. Substance Abuse
  - i. Use of alcohol or drugs with resulting diminution of ability to carry out responsibilities in the workplace.
- C. Impaired Physician
  - i. Physician who is unable to perform required duties.

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## III. Process/Content

- A. The program directors are required by their Residency Review Committees (RRCs) to monitor stress, depression, mental and/or physical illness, or other impairment of their trainees, and to assist in obtaining treatment and/or identifying methods and sources of counseling.
- B. The institution is required by the ACGME to facilitate resident access to appropriate and confidential counseling, as well as medical care and psychological support services. This includes the stipulation of written policies describing how physician impairment, including substance abuse, will be handled.
- C. The GME office is the resource for program directors in resolving resident issues.
- D. The GME office must be contacted about emergency situations.
- E. General Information
  - i. All residents are eligible for the University of Missouri plans for life insurance, long term disability, and medical benefits. This coverage includes medical treatment as well as psychiatric counseling and improvement.
- F. Time Off for Medical/Physical Health Reasons
  - i. Time off for treatment of medical or physical conditions will be granted in accordance with the ACGME, Institution and Program's specified policies for medical leave of absence.
  - ii. The resident may contact the GME Office this information.
- G. Emotional/Psychological
  - i. Psychological illness such as short-term psychological problems or situational distress, anxiety, or stress may result in impairing the ability of the resident to perform assigned job responsibilities.
  - ii. Available onsite resources include the MUHC Office of Well-Being and the University of Missouri Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- H. Impaired Physician
  - i. As MUHC employees, Residents must follow the hospital policies concerning possible incidents of substance abuse, including drug or alcohol impairment.
  - ii. Assistance and counseling is available through the [MUHC Physician and Health Professional Wellness Program](#).

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- I. Financial Consultation
  - i. Residents in need of financial advice/counseling are encouraged to contact EAP.
- J. Procedures to follow for accessing resources and services:
  - i. Residents
    1. Residents may seek professional help on their own when they feel this is necessary and appropriate.
    2. Residents may seek assistance through the MUHC Office of Well-Being.
    3. Residents should inform their program director of medical, emotional, or psychological illness when any of these may interfere with professional performance.
      - a. The Chief Resident, Associate Program Director, or the GME office are also acceptable pathways of notification.
      - b. All parties will ensure confidentiality is maintained.
  - ii. Process
    1. If other pathways of notification were used, the program director should be informed of the situation.
    2. The program director should discuss sources of counseling and/or other care with the resident and assist in initiating the process.
    3. Program directors may, at their discretion, seek information from the GME office.
    4. If the determination has been made that the resident is not able to carry out assigned responsibilities due to substance abuse and if, after discussing the identified issues with the resident, the resident is not willing or able to correct the problem, the program director may remove the resident from their current rotation and/or change the resident's schedule.

## IV. Attachments

- A. [Graduate Medical Education - HR-420 Medical Resident Leaves](#)
- B. [Graduate Medical Education - Institutional Vacation and Leave Policy](#)

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## **V. References, Regulatory References, Related Documents, or Links**

A. Employee Assistance Program:

<http://www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/benefits/eap>

B. MUHC Physician and Health Professional Wellness Program:

<https://www.muhealth.org/conditions-treatments/wellness-programs/physician-health-professional-wellness-program>