

Subject: UPDATE MESSAGE: COVID-19 for Program Directors - March 19, 2020

Date: Thursday, March 19, 2020 at 4:24:48 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: postmdedstaff-l: Post MD Education Staff List on behalf of Associate Dean PGME (Dr. Glen Bandiera)

To: POSTMDEDSTAFF-L@LISTSERV.UTORONTO.CA

To: Residency Program Directors

cc: Program Administrators, Fellowship Directors and Administrators, Family Medicine Site Directors, VP Education, Vice Chairs Education, HUEC, Clinical Department Chairs, Department Business Managers, Hospital Medical Education Staff, Post MD Staff, PARO, COU, TAHSN, Linda Quattrin, Lynn Wilson

Dear Residency Program Directors,

I am writing with five FYI updates related to COVID-19 and two requests (**in bold**). Thank you again for all of your indulgence in crafting an appropriate response to the pandemic.

1. We have circulated redeployment principles for residents and fellows. We have also developed a procedural companion document that is just being reviewed by our HUEC members. It will provide some guidance about how to match demand with available providers. One key item in the document is the request that **you please let us know, via an email to Lindsey.Fechtig@utoronto.ca, if you have individual or groups of residents who are underutilized** within a site or are available for redeployment due to suspended activities (e.g. ambulatory environments). These will be used to help sites in need to identify potential help. If you have already redeployed a resident(s) to other rotations, we want to capture this as well; please send this information to lindsey.fechtig@utoronto.ca
2. We have also been working with our hospitals to respond to changing messaging from Ministries and Officers of Health w.r.t. returning travelers. We continue to ask residents to respect the decisions of their workplaces, especially regarding isolation requirements. I have re-validated this approach with our hospital partners today and acknowledge that this may result in some degree of variability in practice across the system.
3. We are working on a principle document for determining who should be excused from care due to medical issues or pregnancy or specific family circumstances. At the moment, we are taking a case by case approach to this and require a providers note to allow consideration of accommodation. If there is a way to protect vulnerable individuals from providing care to high risk patients in the interim, I do encourage uptake of that.
4. We need to know if learners have been confirmed positive for COVID and/or placed in isolation. **Please email the name and rotation location of the involved resident and the intervention status** to maureenf.morris@utoronto.ca.
5. Finally, I have heard rumours that some programs have issued declarations that none of their

residents can participate in the care of COVID positive patients. I do not support this approach since it creates significant and important inequity in the system. I favour an approach that matches competencies and skills to the task at hand. I do expect that decisions around what residents can do and redeployment decisions are made in consultation with you as program director and that decisions be made based on level and competence. Sites and rotations ultimately have the discretion to make the decisions around restricting activities to certain groups.

As a parting note for today, we continue to advocate on a number of issues including a definitive decision regarding examination deferral, travel exemption for select learners, cross-hospital credentialing for residents, and licensing options for graduates who will not have examinations. We are seeing lots of positive action in all of these areas. More to come...

All the best everybody, take care; I look forward to speaking with you individually and in various meetings as we continue to respond to the pandemic.

Sincerely,

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