
Subject: FYI - PGME Update on Vaccinations and Redeployment - January 29, 2021

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From: pgmestafflist-l: PGME Staff List on behalf of Charlene Sturge

To: PGMESTAFFLIST-L@LISTSERV.UTORONTO.CA

To: Residency Program Directors, Fellowship Program Directors, FM Site Directors

Cc: Program Administrators, PGMEAC, PG Exec, PGME Staff

Dear Residents and Fellows,

I am writing to provide an update on vaccinations and redeployment. While no new directives or decisions have been made centrally at PGME, I do wish to provide some details on current activities and reiterate some items that we continue to get questions about.

Redeployment

We continue to rely on our pre-populated list of resident availability for redeployment as a starting point. However, all anticipatory planning is done in an environment of uncertainty about when, where and to what degree needs will arise. Since some clinical services have not been reduced in the face of increased COVID burden in CTUs and ICUs (and we are getting reports that some services continue to function above normal capacity to address backlogs from the first wave), we have had to expand our call for resident availability. Thanks to all who have stepped up: we had approximately 45 redeployments in block 8 (after only a handful required in the previous 7 blocks) and the redeployed residents came from 10 different programs. This is above and beyond internal program redeployments and reassignments that address needs arising from quarantine, etc. We will continue to work with programs to ensure that we meet as many clinical care needs as we can while adhering to our key principle of preserving educational continuity. This means that we will strive to ensure that despite disrupted clinical service, residents still get credit (through demonstration of competencies while redeployed), academic commitments are still honoured, and we set aside reliance on length of training to determine competency so the risk of extended training dates is minimized.

As the second wave progresses, we have experienced, and expect to continue to experience, **increased COVID burden in our CTUs and ICUs**. The Ministry has asked hospitals to prepare plans to expand ICU capacity just in case it is needed. I have been meeting with ICU leads, hospital partners and program leads to try as best as we can to quantify the expected

needs with and without the need to expand physical ICU capacity and are advocating for balanced reductions in service elsewhere in the sector to allow the necessary flexibility to redeploy if necessary.

Finally, myself and our entire education leadership team are strong advocates of **preserving vacations** and other wellness necessities to the extent possible. Ironically, to do this equitably may require **more rather than less** redeployment to help spell off colleagues in clinically overburdened services. Program leads, site coordinators, and PARO representatives are being very flexible and creative in providing advice and support in these delicate discussions. As with everything, achieving proper balance is the goal but also the challenge.

Vaccinations

We understand that hospitals are facing challenges with vaccinations and we are continuing to advocate for appropriate resident inclusion. It is a rapidly shifting process. The following bullet points summarize our current directions to residents:

- Please register for the vaccine at the site you are **currently at**
- The same site must provide the second dose when the time comes
- Programs and sites are expected to provide relief time to get a second dose, including travel time when off site
- Please provide your confirmation of vaccination to PGME per our directive last week so we can track and advocate effectively on your behalf here: [Proof of Vaccination to PGME](#)
- I have reached out to programs to identify residents who may be missed due to the nature and location of their assignments over the next blocks and we will strive to implement solutions to rectify these gaps

Again, I wish to thank you for all you do; your work is greatly admired and we will emerge a stronger and more versatile profession as a result of these challenges we are working our way through.

Sincerely,

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