

Postgraduate Medical Education Advisory Committee (PGMEAC)

SPECIAL MEETING

Thursday, January 13, 2022

12:00 – 1:00 pm

Via Zoom

MINUTES

Attendees:

M Giuliani (Chair), A. Zaretsky, S. Spencer, J. Bodley, S. Clancey, A. Cuperfain, P. Campisi, E. You-Ten, C. Schulz-Quach, M. Morris, A. Tan, L. Murgaski, N. Chin, A. Niazi, J. Goguen, C. Andreasen, M. Tsao, A. Atkinson, J. Fiorellino, C. Jaigobin, W. Gold, C. Guiang, M. Lowe, M Hynes, A. Kumagai, C. Abrahams, L. Probyn, H. Flett, A. Al-Awamer, G. Milo-Manson, J. James, L. Erlick, A. Bezjak, T. Kay, S. Sockalingam, V. Sochka, M. Farrugia, M. Binakaj, B. Bulmer, J. Tomac, M. Hodaie, P. Nixon, G. Sirianni, R. Bahar, P. Hubley, T. Kay, S. Murdoch, R. Freeman,

Recorder: Charlene Sturge

Welcome

1. Welcome

The special meeting of the PGMEAC was called to order at 12:05 pm.

2. Updates

This meeting has been extended to the VCEs and hospital leads who are assisting with the redeployment efforts. This group will meet weekly to review questions and provide updates on all pandemic activities (MRRP, redeployment, wellness supports, etc). Supporting documents will be distributed after the meetings.

A series of attachments for resources will be distributed to this group.

New Business

3. Sponsored Trainees (*see attachment*)

S. Spencer provided an update on sponsored trainees participation in MRRP. Key points were:

Are sponsored residents eligible to participate/volunteer for MRRP? PGME has reached out to the MOH to receive clarification. All questions relating to sponsored trainees can be directed to [Shannon Spencer](#).

If YES:

- Participation in MRRP **must be** supported by the sponsor, as contractual stipulations exist around remuneration of their trainees.
- Sponsored trainees are fully sponsored and receive their salary and scholarship **directly from** their sponsor, and as such, are tax exempt. Paying them from a Canadian source puts their scholarship and salary at risk for scrutiny by the CRA
- PGME has pre-emptively reached out to our sponsors and provided them with information on MRRP.
 - Positive responses from **Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman**

4. TAHSNe – MRRP Framework

A. Zaretsky provided an update on the MRRP Framework (full details can be found in this [document](#)), including:

- Clinical fellows (not sponsored or paid by MOH) can participate in redeployment calls. They currently are not covered under the MRRP. PGME is seeking clarification from the MOH about the inclusion of clinical fellows. Hospitals are able to pay clinical fellows outside of the MRRP.
- The determination for eligibility for clinical fellows is hospital-specific
- There is no remuneration limit for hospitals to pay clinical fellows (including sponsored trainees who have been approved to participate in MRRP), but it is up to hospitals how it is to be paid
- Consensus has been reached that the MRRP Framework should be applied to residents in all programs who are redeployed for COVID-related issues (caring for patients and HHR shortage issues, increase of patients in service due to COVID surge). Residents may be redeployed to work outside of their program where critical work is at risk (and has been determined by the Hospital Chief) MRRP will be applied.
- Residents will receive the MRRP only if they volunteer to participate.
- There is no maximum number of hours for MRRP (MRRP hours do not count towards individual call maximum, but PARO maximum call can be exceeded)
- Residents on remediation will not be eligible to volunteer for redeployment
- Hospitals will make their best effort to remunerate residents in a timely manner. Hospitals have been asked to work with residents to on-board them to their payroll systems.
- If a trainee is redeployed for a COVID-related call, it is acceptable to get MRRP
- MRRP-related work is separate from residency training requirements
- Residents will be redeployed at current hospital where possible
- Block-based redeployment is not covered by MRRP
- MRRP is applicable to all affiliated hospital sites

5. PARO Report (*see attachment*)

- Residents are frequently being activated for call in various other services and are encouraging that the MRRP be promoted to be used in situations for back-up call, cases of illness, etc to limit the need for resident redeployment
- MRRP is overall better for resident wellness
- Resources for all programs is the PARO-approved COVID-19 [scheduling model](#) and [MRRP](#). These models minimize resident exposure, prevent burnout, and ensure service provision during times of heightened need
- Programs who would like assistance creating a scheduling model, can contact PARO at coivd19@paroteam.ca
- Toronto Site meeting will be held on January 17th. Topics include the update to the Office of Learner Affairs and services they provide, redeployment, use of MRRP, access to healthy food while on call.
- **Resident Appreciation Week** is February 7 – 11 – important for programs to show ways of appreciation to residents during this difficult time
- PARO will continue to work with PGME to answer any questions and close any gaps with the ongoing changes

6. Office of Learner Affairs (OLA) Update *(see attachment)*

C. Guiang provided an update of resources and availability provided by OLA including:

- Support is available from Learner Life Specialists to all PG trainees relating to wellness, resources, short-term counselling or navigating any other issues
- New email address ola.reception@utoronto.ca
- Learner Life Specialist is available to assist trainees with navigating emergency childcare services – details can be found in the attachment

What's Working

i. Weekly Redeployment Data and Program Planning

PGME will be working with the hospitals to collect information on who has been redeployed and where. A summary report will be issued to PDs to have a record of their trainees' redeployment once this wave has settled down.

ii. UHN Redeployment Call and MRRP Tracking etc.

UHN has created a rapid response coverage plan to meet urgent and short-term redeployment requests. The current model interchanges between staff and trainees. The main focus is on reaching out to volunteers who can participate in the MRRP. Trainees are required to get approval from their PD to be added to the redeployment pool and then must confirm with UHN lead. This is also confirmed by a UHN lead via email to the PD. The PD, clinical site lead and the department head are sent the trainee volunteer's information for final confirmation before assignment. A document has been created identifying what areas a trainee can cover (ICU, CCU, etc). A WhatsApp group chat blast is sent to all trainees currently working at UHN and the assignment is applied accordingly.

ii. Other Programs Round Table

Sites that need volunteers donated can reach out to their respective hospital point person. A list is being collated and will be distributed shortly. In the meantime, please contact the hospital medical education office for direction.

Psychiatry has created and approved redeployment guidelines where PGY1 – 3s are eligible for redeployment to internal medicine and PGY4 – 5s are eligible for internal redeployment. Residents on elective blocks have been identified for blocks 8 – 10 for redeployment and the lists have been shared with the various hospitals. Residents on core rotations at specific sites are allowed to volunteer for MRRP on evenings and weekends (and if it doesn't interfere with call duties or back up), with the understanding that they will continue with their assigned duties including longitudinal clinics.

Sunnybrook needs a local list of specialty trainees at the TASHN sites who are redeployable so that if on-call shifts are needed to be filled, this list can be used for meeting the need.

Sinai Health System puts the call out for volunteers to the PDs first to confirm if a trainee is able to participate in MRRP. If the trainee is independently licensed, they will go through the physician payment (COVID funding payment rate); whereas a trainee with an educational license will be paid at the MRRP rate. The hospitals leads' do their best to assign trainees who are currently based at Sinai Health first.

Other Business

Housing Support for Self-Isolation Due to Exposure at Work

Given the current state of the pandemic, PGME has reactivated the COVID-19 Housing Subsidy Program from the Dean's COVID-19 Priority Fund to support postgraduate trainees who require self-isolation and who meet the following criteria:

- test positive due to exposure at work
- who are unable to quarantine at home due to vulnerable family members (comorbidities, immunocompromised, newborn baby, etc.)
- are not eligible to stay in the [City of Toronto voluntary isolation centre](#) or need to access it outside of their working hours (9:30 am to 4:30 pm seven days per week).

Please forward housing requests to pgme.redeployment@utoronto.ca for assistance and determination of eligibility.

Future Items for Discussion

Back up call schedules are noted in the attachments. MRRP and Back Up principles will be discussed at the next meeting to ensure that fairness is aligned across programs via input from members of this group.

Next Special Meeting | Wednesday, January 19 at 12:00 pm *via Zoom*