

Guidelines for Protected Time for Academic Activities during Core Rotations General Psychiatry Residency Program

Background

Residency training involves several required training experiences including core clinical rotations, psychotherapy, on-call experiences, and protected time for academic activities such as academic half-day (AHD) or core teaching.

Core Teaching Requirement (i.e. Academic Half Day or AHD)

The requirement for core teaching is a part of the Standards for Accreditation for Residency Programs in Psychiatry, **Standard 3: Residents are prepared for independent practice.**

Specifically, regarding Standard 3:

- Element 3.2: The residency program provides educational experiences designed to facilitate residents' attainment of the outcomes-based competencies and/or objectives.
 - Requirement 3.2.4: Residents' clinical responsibilities are assigned in a way that supports the progressive acquisition of competencies and/or objectives, as outlined in the CanMEDS/CanMEDS-FM Roles.
 - **Indicator 3.2.4.4: Residents' clinical responsibilities do not interfere with their ability to participate in mandatory academic activities.**

Several sources of residency program feedback have indicated that residents in the Foundations of Discipline stage of training (typically PGY2 and 3) have found attendance at AHD challenging due to either negotiating a reduction in clinical workload on clinical rotations when returning from a morning AHD or getting away for AHD when it is in the afternoon.

Integration of other longitudinal experiences and Standards of Accreditation

Residency training also involves **integration of longitudinal experiences** such as the requirement for after-hours coverage for emergency psychiatry (from Foundations of Discipline to Transition to Practice) and Psychotherapy (delivery of psychotherapeutic treatments including cognitive behavioural therapy, family or group therapy, psychodynamic psychotherapy, and other evidence-based psychotherapy – please see Psychotherapy Requirements on the residency program website for details). Moreover, select residents in the program engage in additional training opportunities such as the Clinician Scientist or Scholar Program (CSP) which require integration into core residency program responsibilities, usually through a protected half-day in PGY3 and 4.

Regarding longitudinal experiences in residency training, please note the following from the Psychiatry Standards of Accreditation:

A resident must not spend fewer than 3 to 3½ days per week, exclusive of his/her academic half-day or day, if offered, on his/her primary rotation. This is to ensure that the residents'

experiences are not fragmented, limiting adequate exposure or limiting the integration of knowledge, skill, teaching, or mentorship.

Supporting Residents with AHD and other administrative and academic responsibilities

To support residents in attending AHD alongside integrating other administrative and academic responsibilities, residents in PGY2 and 3 will have protected **Administrative and Psychotherapy (A&P) time** either preceding or following AHD, depending on the timing of teaching.

A&P – Administrative and Psychotherapy Time

During A&P time residents are advised to consider (and are not limited to) the following administrative and psychotherapy activities:

- complete outstanding administrative tasks for their core rotation (e.g. discharge summaries, return phone calls for collateral etc.)
- engage in psychotherapy-related activities (e.g. book patient or psychotherapy supervision) with the understanding that some time will also be needed in the week to integrate psychotherapy patients and supervision
- see SPMI (serious and persistent mental illness) patient in PGY2 or engage in supervision for SPMI patient if scheduling works for supervisor and resident(s)
- participate in voluntary residency program supported wellness activities such as process groups
- complete administrative tasks related to residency training – e.g. [PGCorEd](#) modules, registration, or credentialing activities
- Chief Residents in PGY3 can use this time towards administrative duties
- schedule medical or other appointments as a part of maintaining wellbeing

PGY2

Inpatient rotation

Wednesday morning – A&P time – 0800-1200 (noon)

Wednesday afternoon – AHD – 1-5 pm

Outpatient rotation

Wednesday morning – A&P time or clinical time, with A&P time booked for another day of the week, in discussion with primary supervisor

Wednesday afternoon – AHD – 1-5 pm

PGY3

Wednesdays

Depending on timing of AHD – A&P time either preceding (if afternoon AHD) or following AHD (if morning AHD)

Guidance for CSP Residents (PGY3 and 4)

The residency program supports the need for residents in the CSP to have longitudinal protected time (i.e. a half-day) alongside A&P time in PGY3 and protected time for AHD and RC Exam studying in PGY4. Residents must, however, in general meet Standards of Accreditation and be **present on core rotations at least 3-3.5 days per week**, exclusive of AHD or any other academic activities. This usually means that residents in the CSP must be conservative in their psychotherapy experiences to meet residency program requirements and participate in CSP. In addition, residents need to be mindful of weeks when they are **post-call**, adjusting other responsibilities accordingly to ensure that they are present on rotations at least 3 days per week.

PGY4 residents writing their Royal College Exam and in the CSP are strongly encouraged to be conservative with psychotherapy experiences to protect time for the CSP whilst also engaging in protected time for AHD and Royal College Exam study time.

Should CSP residents be interested in additional psychotherapy experiences (outside of minimum residency program requirements), they are encouraged to seek such opportunities during PLEX (personalized learning experience) time either in PGY4 or 5 when scheduling is more flexible.

Accommodations

Please note that residents with accommodations will work with the Program Director or Associate Program Director, PG Site Directors, Rotation Coordinators, and Primary Supervisors on a case-by-case basis to ensure that accommodations are honoured whilst also meeting key objectives/competencies for a rotation. This may mean that certain rotations are extended, using PLEX (personalized learning experience) time.

References

National Standards for Training in Psychiatry

<https://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/ibd-search-e> > Drop down menu, select Psychiatry as Specialty

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