

Protected Time for Academic Activities during Core Rotations Guidelines 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. The purpose of this guideline is to outline principles and processes for the integration of core rotations, required longitudinal training experiences, and protected time for academic half-day while also considering resident well-being.

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.**

Previous residency program feedback has 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:

Indicator 3.2.1.7: The longitudinal educational experiences, whether required, recommended, or optional, are carefully scheduled, apportioned, and approved, so as to ensure residents are not removed from their distinct rotational experience for more than one day per week.

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 Time is “on rotation” but off core rotation patient-facing clinical duties – as such, residents are expected to attend to professional activities and responsibilities during this time. Moreover, as A&P Time has been provided, in part, to support attendance at academic half-day, residents must maintain at least 70% attendance at AHD (see *Professional Responsibilities in Residency Training Guidelines* for details) to take part in A&P Time. PGY1-3 residents who do not maintain the minimum required attendance at AHD may not be provided with A&P Time in PGY2 and 3 and instead be asked to participate in an enhanced support plan as per the Resident Assessment and Support Subcommittee and/or participate in core rotation clinical duties during A&P Time.

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 module, registration, or credentialing activities
- prepare for PGY2 critical appraisal requirement (see Scholarly Presentation/Grand Rounds Guidelines)
- work on PGY3 grand rounds presentation or other academic presentation
- Chief Residents in PGY3 can use this time towards administrative duties

To minimize fragmentation of core rotations and to support resident well-being, residents may also consider scheduling medical or other appointments on occasion during A&P Time. However, should a resident require a protected half-day on a regular basis to attend to their well-being, they should consult with the Office of Learner Affairs for consideration of accommodations.

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

Wednesday morning – AHD 0800-1200 (noon)

Wednesday afternoon – A&P Time - 1-5 pm

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 rotations are extended, using PLEX (Personalized Learning Experience) time.

References

National Standards for Training in Psychiatry

<https://www.royalcollege.ca/en/standards-and-accreditation/information-by-discipline.html> >

Specialty > Select Psychiatry

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