ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

Academic Performance Improvement actions are designed to define and correct areas of marginal and/or unsatisfactory performance by a resident/fellow in order to close an identified learning gap. These actions include structured feedback, developing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), repeating rotation(s) and repeating an academic year. Each of these actions is designed to correct a deficiency. If an academic performance improvement action results in non-promotion of a resident/fellow to the next level of training, non-renewal of contract, dismissal or other adverse academic action, then it is subject to the University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education Academic Appeal process. All disciplinary actions including probation, suspension and dismissal will become a permanent part of the resident/fellow training record.

Structured Feedback
Structured Feedback regarding resident/fellow performance in the six core competencies can occur in multiple ways including routine verbal discussions during training, written evaluations, semi-annual evaluation meetings, etc. Some poor performance may require program directors to provide some corrective action but not a formal intervention e.g. PIP. In this case, program directors may choose to utilize the “single incident” form to document the poor performance and discussion with the resident/fellow.

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
PPIP is an individualized academic improvement strategy that may be used by program directors in situations where a resident/fellow fails to comply with the academic requirements established by the residency training program, University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education, and/or participating institutions. Placement on a PIP may serve as an official notice to the resident/fellow of unsatisfactory performance and expectations for academic improvement. Typically, the deficiencies are associated with a significant lapse in one or more of the six ACGME competencies.

Each residency program should establish written criteria and thresholds for placing resident/fellows on a PIP. Although program-level criteria are not required for every specialty, examples include but are not limited to the following: poor academic performance as documented by unsatisfactory faculty evaluations; poor performance on program examinations and/or written in-service examinations; failure to attend scheduled monthly departmental activities; clinical performance or surgical skills which are below those expected for the level of training as documented by written evaluations by the faculty; unprofessional or inappropriate actions; disruptive behavior; failure to complete medical records in a timely manner; and failure to maintain procedure or surgical logs in a timely manner. Residency programs requiring their resident/fellows to achieve minimum standards, i.e. in-training scores, conference attendance, etc. must publish these requirements.

If the program director implements a PIP, he or she is required to provide the resident/fellow with the GME PIP letter advising him or her of PIP status and the area(s) of unsatisfactory performance, measures to improve performance, time frame for completion, and consequences of not addressing the issues outlined in the PIP. A copy of the notification letter, signed by the program director and resident/fellow, must be sent to the DIO within 3 days of signature. The PIP checklist can assist the program director in documenting the elements necessary for successful performance improvement.
but is not a substitute for the GME PIP letter. If a resident/fellow fails to satisfactorily meet the
expectations documented in the PIP, additional improvement plans, repeating the academic year,
disciplinary, or adverse actions may be implemented (see GME Policy #620 – Disciplinary/Adverse
Actions). All disciplinary actions including probation, suspension and dismissal will become a
permanent part of the resident/fellow training record.

Program Director Quick Guide for a PIP
1. Identifies a trend in poor performance or an egregious behavior
2. Reads Academic Performance Improvement Actions Policy and PIP Checklist
3. Completes GME PIP Letter; consults PIP Checklist
4. Contact DIO to review draft of the GME PIP letter
5. Meets with Resident/Fellow to discuss GME PIP letter
6. Monitor Resident/Fellow Progress throughout Improvement Time Period
7. Completes PIP Outcome Letter at the end of Improvement Time Period

If a Performance Improvement Plan includes an adverse academic action such as an extension of or
repeating an academic year, the resident/fellow has the right to appeal the action based on the GME
Academic Appeals process (see GME Policy #630). If a resident/fellow chooses to appeal the
adverse academic action, the Performance Improvement Plan will be placed on hold until the appeal
process is complete.

Repeat Academic Year
Repeating an academic year is an improvement action that may be used in limited situations such as:
overall unsatisfactory performance during the academic year, or failure to pass an annual written in-
service examination. Each residency program is responsible for establishing specific written criteria
for repeating an academic year. At least four (4) months prior to the end of the academic year, the
resident/fellow will receive written notice of his/her requirement to repeat the academic year. If the
primary reason(s) for non-promotion occurs within the last four (4) months of the contract year, the
program will provide the resident/fellow with as much written notice of non-promotion as
circumstances reasonably allow. A copy of the notification, signed by the program director and
resident/fellow, will be sent to the DIO. Resident/fellows receiving notice of non-promotion to the
next level of training may implement the GME Academic Appeal process.
UTGME Academic Performance Assessment Process

**STRUCTURED FEEDBACK**
Routine feedback consistent with educational programs:
- Verbal feedback
- Rotational and Semi-annual Evaluations
- Single Incident needing some corrective action but not a formal Intervention: use “single incident” form

**Identify a Trend in Poor Performance**

**PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)**
Issued when there is an identified trend in poor performance or egregious behavior
- Triggers PD consultation with DIO
- Provides resident with **formal notice and opportunity to cure**
  - Must be signed by resident and Program Director
  - Copy sent to DIO

- **Fails to meet the PIP**
- **Successfully completes the PIP**

**Complete the PIP Outcome Letter and determine next action which may include DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**
- (appealable actions)
  - Extend or Repeat academic year
  - Non-renewal
  - Non-promotion
  - Suspension
  - Probation
  - Termination

- Triggers a second consultation with DIO

**ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCESS**
Review meeting to ensure the process leading up to the action was fair and reasonable
- Requested by resident
- Levels: Departmental (waiver is available), GME, Executive Dean College of Medicine

**Complete the PIP Outcome Letter**