

**INSTITUTIONAL WELL-BEING**

**PURPOSE OF POLICY**

The University of Tennessee College of Medicine Chattanooga (UTCOMC) is committed to promote well-being and engagement of the physician, trainee, staff and the health care team. This is of high priority for us, and we have partnered with our primary clinical training site and major affiliated hospital, Erlanger Health System (EHS) in this endeavor.

**POLICY SCOPE**

This policy applies to Residents, Fellows, Medical Students, Faculty, Program Coordinators, and other Graduate Medical Education (GME) administrative staff at The University of Tennessee College of Medicine Chattanooga (UTCOMC).

This policy defines the ways in which Residents are supported in their efforts to become competent, caring, and resilient physicians while completing Graduate Medical Education (GME) training at UTCOMC. Our goal is to strive to help our team feel engaged, energized, and empowered to complete the noble work to which they have dedicated themselves.

**DEFINITIONS**

- Burnout is long term exhaustion and diminished interest in work. Dimensions of burnout include emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of lack of competence or success in one’s work. Burnout can lead to depression, anxiety, and substance abuse disorders.
- Well-Being refers to the state of being healthy, happy, and successful. Well-Being may be positively increased by interacting with patients and colleagues at work, being intellectually stimulated, and feeling that one is making a difference in the lives of patients and colleagues.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine Chattanooga (UTCOMC) is committed to restoring and maintaining “meaning and joy in medicine” for all Residents, Fellows, Medical Students, Faculty, Program Directors, Program Coordinators and Graduate Medical Education (GME) staff. By prioritizing this objective and in accordance with the revised 2021 ACGME Common Program Requirements and the Wellbeing Pathways of the ACGME Clinical Learning Environment Review (CLER) Pathways to Excellence Version 2.0, the GMEC aims to promote a culture supportive of well-being in all dimensions within our health system through the provision of a balanced, safe, meaningful and collaborative training and work experience.

- **Process: Developed a Well-Being Task Force (WBTF) and Resident Advisory Board (RAB) --** In partnership with our primary clinical training site and major affiliated hospital, Erlanger Health System (EHS), our campus has appointed a Well-Being Task Force. Continuous communication and monitoring by the Well-Being Task Force are achieved through Well-Being Task Force meetings; Resident Advisory Board sessions, town hall meetings, and reports to the GMEC. These activities also include leaders for Medical Student Education (MSE).
  - **The Well-Being Task Force (WBTF) is dedicated to:**
    - Understanding and promoting well-being for Residents, Fellows, Medical Students, Faculty, Program Coordinators, and other Graduate Medical Education (GME) administrative staff
    - Providing resources for Residents, Fellows, Medical Students, Faculty, Program Coordinators, and other GME administrative staff to help them promote their own wellness
    - Discovering personal and organizational approaches to prevent and address stress for Residents, Fellows, Medical Students, Faculty, Program Coordinators, and other GME administrative staff
    - Providing a safe, brave and trustworthy space that allows each person to speak authentically
  - **The Resident Advisory Board (RAB)** was established as part of the Well-Being initiatives for the Chattanooga Campus with peer and program leadership selected representation from each department. The RAB has worked in conjunction with the Assistant Dean for Medical Student Education and Well-Being to:

- Identify Well-Being needs across all stakeholders
  - Work with University and Erlanger leadership to secure solutions
  - Conduct quarterly meetings to encourage more interaction at the program level
  - Establish Town Hall sessions for open honest communication as part of our monthly Institutional Healthcare Principles in Practice (HPP) Series
- **Institutional Faculty and Staff Development Support**
  - Provide resources and services that motivate, encourage, and promote healthy lifestyles and foster resilience in all dimensions of well-being, *e.g.*:
    - Emotional – Coping effectively with life and creating satisfying relationships
    - Financial – Satisfaction with current and future financial situations
    - Social – Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and well-developed support system
    - Spiritual – Expanding our sense of purpose and meaning in life
    - Occupational – Personal satisfaction and enrichment derived from one’s work
    - Physical – Recognizing the need for physical activity, diet, sleep and good healthy nutrition
    - Intellectual – Recognizing creative abilities and finding ways to expand knowledge and skills
    - Environmental – Ensuring safety and good health by occupying pleasant, stimulating environments that support well-being
  - Tennessee Medical Foundation Physician Health Program- Link- <https://e-tmf.org>
  - Health Improvement and Employee Wellness Screening Tool for Health Risk and Wellness Assessment (Mayo Clinic Well-Being Index at [www.mededwebs.com/well-being-index](http://www.mededwebs.com/well-being-index))
  - Provide access to fitness rooms within Erlanger
  - Evaluate workplace physical and psychological safety data and address the safety of all stakeholders
  - Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) -- confidential and free counseling services which include several in-person visits/year and 24/7 telephone counseling:
    - UT Paid Faculty and Staff: <https://www.uthsc.edu/hr/benefits/eap.php> (administered by Optuum)
    - Erlanger Paid faculty: <https://www.uthsc.edu/comc/well-being/documents/eap-erlanger-facult-aetna-anytime-support.pdf>
    - UT Residents/Fellows: <https://www.uthsc.edu/comc/well-being/documents/utgme-eap-guide-for-residents-fellows.pdf> (administered by CIGNA)
  - UTCOM Chattanooga Well-Being Information and Link: <https://www.uthsc.edu/comc/well-being>
- **Graduate Medical Education Support**
  - Assist Program leadership in their initiatives to protect trainee time with patients, minimize non-physician obligations, provide administrative support to trainees, promote progressive autonomy and enhance professional relationships
  - Provide program leadership with resources to educate faculty, support staff and trainees about symptoms of burnout, depression and substance use and their avoidance
  - Monitor program responsibility for residents and fellows:
    - Paying attention to resident/fellow schedules to review for work intensity and compression factors
    - Allowing residents/fellows to attend medical, dental, and mental health care appointments, including those scheduled during regular work hours
    - Educating residents, fellows, faculty, and administrative staff about burnout, depression and substance use, and their avoidance
    - Teaching and nurturing self-care practices, an important component of professionalism and high-quality patient care
    - Providing a respectful, professional and civil environment that is free from mistreatment, abuse, or coercion, including education about professional behavior and a confidential process for reporting concerns
    - Identify resources for self-evaluation of burnout, depression and substance use (Well-Being Index)
    - Encourage trainees, support staff and faculty members to alert designated personnel when they are concerned about someone who is displaying signs of burnout, depression, substance use, suicidal ideation or potential violence, or who is not proactively engaging in self-care
    - Provide access to confidential, affordable, mental health assessment including access to urgent and emergent care 24 hours a day, seven days a week

- Ensure that programs have sufficient back-up plans to provide patient care in the event that a resident/fellow is unable to perform their patient care responsibilities
- Provide a way for residents/fellows to report unprofessional behavior and a respectful process for reporting, investigating and addressing these concerns

• **GMEC and Program Responsibility to Residents and Fellows**

- Pay attention to resident/fellows schedules to look at work intensity and compression factors
- Allow residents/fellows to attend medical, dental and mental health care appointments, including those scheduled during work hours
- Educate residents, fellows, support staff, and faculty about burnout, depression and substance use, and their avoidance
- Teach and nurture self-care practices, an important component of professionalism and high-quality patient care
- Provide a respectful, professional and civil environment that is free from mistreatment, abuse or coercion. There should be education in place about professional behavior and a confidential process for reporting concerns
- Each program should develop an overall well-being curriculum and annual activities to provide resiliency skills (*e.g.*, support self-care, healthy lifestyles and behaviors, time management, understanding and recognition of impairment, fatigue mitigation, and appropriate balance of clinical and personal experience).
- Each program should identify a plan of activities to support your well-being curriculum, based on your last year's outcomes, current needs within your program/department, and feedback received from those individuals who participated in events last year.

• **Resident and Fellow Responsibility**

Learning self-care is an important component of professionalism and patient care, and residents/fellows have a responsibility to themselves and to their parents and programs to ensure that they are fit for work through behaviors as:

- Proactive self-care, and modeling of healthy lifestyle and behaviors for patients, students and colleagues
- Time management surrounding clinical assignments
- Impairment recognition and notification, either from illness, fatigue and substance use in themselves, their peers and other members of the health care team
- Lifelong learning
- Performance indicator monitoring
- Reporting clinical and educational work hours, patient outcomes and clinical experience

**REFERENCES**

ACGME website: [ACGME Website](#)  
 American Medical Association - [AMA Website](#)  
 UT GME Institutional Policy #223 Well-Being Resources and Funding  
 UT GME Institutional Policy # 225 Resident Support Services  
 UT GME Institutional Policy #320 Aid to Impaired Residents (AIRS)  
 UT GME Well-Being Activity Proposal Form

Approved by the GMEC 1/21/2020. Administrative Edits 7/10/2021