

Clerkship Duty Hours Policy

I. Policy Statement

A. Relevant excerpts from the policy on duty hours will be a part of the clinical clerkship handbooks. Students will be informed and reminded throughout the curriculum about the importance of abiding by prescribed duty hour limitations.

B. Duty hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the program; i.e., patient care (both inpatient and Ambulatory), administrative duties relative to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled activities, such as conferences. Duty hours do not include reading and preparation time spent away from the duty site. The COM follows the duty hours as set by the ACGME as follows:

1. Duty hours must be limited to 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house call activities.
2. In-house call must occur no more frequently than every third night.
3. Continuous on-site duty, including in-house call, must not exceed 24 consecutive hours.
4. Students may be on site for up to 6 additional hours to participate in didactic activities.
5. Students must be provided with one day (24 consecutive hours) in seven, free from all educational and clinical responsibilities averaged over a four-week period.
6. Students will have a minimum of 10 hours' break between shifts.

C. The number of hours will be tracked by rotation student schedules, student's personal electronic portfolio, written feedback from student evaluation of the rotation and preceptor, as well as observation of the student's clinical team.

II. Purpose

California Northstate University College of Medicine (CNUCOM) is committed to act in its students' best interest. Each student's physical and psychological wellness is a priority for the institution. This policy addresses clerkship duty hours that is an important component of student wellness.

III. Scope/Coverage

The following is intended to mandate acceptable duty hours for medical students participating in clinical clerkships.

IV. Procedure

A. Responsibility of the Supervising Faculty: Clinical Setting

1. If a student in a clinical setting has violated duty hours, the faculty supervising the student should immediately release the student from further clinical duties and responsibilities. If the

student exhibits signs of excessive fatigue, the supervising faculty should follow the policies outlined in the Policy on Stress and Fatigue Management.

2. The faculty and/or supervising resident should privately discuss with the student the possible causes of the duty hour violation to identify ways to mitigate such violations in the future.

3. The faculty and/or supervising resident must immediately notify the Clerkship Director of the decision to release the student from further clinical duties.

4. A student who is released from further clinical duties due to violation of duty hours cannot resume clinical duties without permission by the Clerkship Director.

B. Student Responsibility

1. Students who perceive they are experiencing violations of duty hours have the professional responsibility to immediately notify their attending faculty and Clerkship Director without fear of reprisal. If deemed necessary, students may make a confidential report via the online confidential grievance form.

2. Students who recognize a peer student violating duty hours should report their observations and concerns to the attending faculty and the Clerkship Director.

C. Clerkship Director Responsibility

1. Upon removal of a student from duties, the Clerkship Director must determine the need for immediate change in duty assignments for peer students in the clerkship and/or the clinical site.

2. The Clerkship Director will notify the departmental chair, as necessary, to discuss methods to manage clerkship duty hours.

3. The Clerkship Director will meet with the student in person, as necessary, to discuss methods to manage clerkship duty hours.

4. The Clerkship Director will follow up with the faculty supervising the clinical setting as necessary.

5. Clerkship Directors should provide students assigned schedules for on-site clinical and educational activities.

6. Clerkship Directors will monitor the academic and clinical workload of students within individual clerkships by the virtue of clerkship design and student scheduling.

7. Clerkship directors will include relevant excerpts from the policy on duty hours in the clinical clerkship handbooks and will discuss this policy with students at clerkship orientation.



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