



MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Heads, Program Directors, Program Administrative Assistants, Residents, RDoS & PGME Staff

SUBJECT: 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE
ISSUES AFFECTING AND TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR IN RESIDENCY PROGRAMS AT USASK

FROM: Dr. Anurag Saxena, Associate Dean, PGME

DATE: March 16, 2020

Situation: As the uncertainty regarding COVID-19 continues and decisions and recommendations from various public bodies (Governments and PHAs) and Health Authorities and national educational organizations keep evolving, the decisions and guidelines regarding various aspects of residency training are given below. These were also discussed at this morning's teleconference with the Program Directors and Program Administrative Assistants.

Please see the following:

- I. **Service provision and service-learning:**
 - a. **Regular clinical duties**
 - i. Residents are expected to continue to work unless there is a reason not to be present:
 1. Related to COVID-19: (return from international travel; are symptomatic, seeking medical advice for possible exposure).
 2. Non COVID-19 related: usual PGME policies apply.
 - ii. Follow SHA and PHA guidelines and Department Head / PD decisions.
 - iii. Self-protection- use of PPE etc... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CChf0-enyp0>
 - b. **On-call**
 - i. Backup schedules may be required using other residents able to work (in accordance with Collective Agreement).
 - ii. Certain situations may require faculty members doing call on their own.
- II. **Learning experiences**
 - a. **Service-learning**
 - i. All on-site rotations/learning experiences to continue.
 - ii. All with-in province rotations/electives to continue.
 - iii. All out of province (within Canada and international) electives and mandatory out of province rotations cancelled until June 30, 2020.
 - b. **Academic teaching (DO NOT CANCEL- see exception below)**
 - i. Academic Half Days and other academic teaching sessions: Transition to remote means (examples: streaming, archived sessions, virtual pathology/radiology, remotely facilitated small group session).
 - ii. **Simulation:**
 1. **Continue COVID-related training (Contact CLRC: 306-966-7430)**
 2. **All other simulation sessions: Cancelled until April 15, 2020. To be reassessed and situation communicated.**
 - c. **In person events** (conferences, assessments, research days etc.)
 - i. Cancelled till June 30, 2020.
 - d. **Working from home:** Some learning experiences are conducive to this; e.g. Research – consider changing schedules if this is possible instead of a general paid leave of absence. Programs are being asked to exercise discretion in providing learning experiences.
- III. **CaRMS**
 - a. Must use remote interviews for 2nd iteration.

**IV. Examinations**

- a. National certification and licensure examinations: cancelled until further notice (RCPSC, CFPC, and MCC working collaboratively with FMRAC for provisional licensure post-residency training completion)
 - i. National bodies working actively to reschedule these examinations.
- b. Other local program-specific examinations: Continue remotely.

V. Travel

- a. International – cancelled until June 30, 2020.
 - i. Self-isolation for 14 days upon return from international travel (effective March 16, 2020).
- b. National – all electives and mandatory out of province rotations - cancelled until June 30, 2020.
 - i. Residents currently on electives or mandatory out of province rotations – return upon completion and follow guidelines in place upon return.
- c. Personal – follow Government of Canada regulations.

VI. Residents concerned about exposure

- a. Residents with symptoms: Flu-like symptoms: Not to come to work; follow advice from PHA (811) or primary care provider.
 - i. Expedited testing available at test centres.
- b. Residents concerned about safety: Concerns about community exposure are understandable – but with no symptoms or no history of international travel or those not seeking direction from a medical professional are expected to be at work.
- c. **Residents who need to self-isolate must inform their program in writing; the program will then inform the PGME office (Kailey – kailey.friesen@usask.ca / Maureen maureen.lumbis@usask.ca).**
- d. Self-assessment: <http://click.cmpgmr.com/click/gb48-vs8-66gv-mawgu3/>
- e. Self-monitoring: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus>
- f. Hand washing: From MD Anderson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN7bL2likPI>
from PHAC: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bys8KJ-S6Ac>

VII. LEAVES

- a. Usual PGME policies apply.
- b. In unanticipated circumstances, programs are asked to work collaboratively with the residents and seek guidance from PGME office.
- c. **Anticipated school closure:** Residents (& many of our faculty & educational administrators) with children in schools will experience an added work of childcare during usual working hours. Programs will need to exercise discretion in ensuring safety and acquisition of competencies in a reasonable time frame.

Our residents are both students and employees of the University of Saskatchewan working in the Saskatchewan Health Authority environment as both care providers and learners. Our course of action is bound by decisions made at various levels. During these uncertain times, it is an expectation from the College leadership that programs will not make decisions contrary to those outlined above and that we will work collaboratively to ensure safety for all and limit the spread while remaining engaged in professional duties. **It is strongly suggested that outside of work settings, that all our residents and educational administrators exercise prudence and robust social distancing with co-workers and in other public interactions.** The [PGME office](#) will continue to work with all programs and staff and residents during this time and are available to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anurag Saxena
Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education