

## Graduate Medical Education Committee

### EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY

Updated June 2020

This policy applies to residents and fellows in all accredited (ACGME) and non-accredited training programs.

**Purpose:** This policy will address specific actions and timelines for response, given the occurrence of an extraordinary circumstance, as outlined in the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Policy and Procedures Manual (approved April 16, 2020).

**Definitions:** Per the ACGME, an extraordinary circumstance is defined as a situation that significantly alters the ability of the sponsor and its programs to support resident/fellow education. Examples include, but are not limited to, abrupt hospital closures, natural disasters or a catastrophic loss of funding.

**Policy:** To establish expectations that the Spokane Teaching Health Center will abide by the ACGME Policy and Procedures Manual for extraordinary circumstances. The extraordinary circumstances policy may be invoked by the Chief Executive Officer of the ACGME, in consultation with the Chair of the ACGME Board, the Spokane Teaching Health Center (STHC) Designated Institutional Official (DIO), and the Executive Director of the STHC as directed by the STHC Board of Directors if it is determined that the STHC ability to support resident/fellow education has been significantly altered.

**Requirements:** If an extraordinary circumstance is identified by a Spokane Teaching Health Center' sponsored residency/fellowship program, that residency/fellowship program and the STHC will follow the process(es) defined in the ACGME Policy and Procedures Manual. Priority will be given to resident/fellow placement within training programs sponsored by the STHC or Providence/St Joseph Health System. These opportunities will be provided to the

residents/fellows prior to the ACGME deadlines to allow residents/fellows to select among available options.

**Disaster Response Policy:** As quickly as possible, and in order to maximize the likelihood that residents/fellows will be able to complete program requirements within the standard time required for certification in that specialty, the DIO and STHC GMEC will make the determination as to whether or not transfer of some or all residents to another training program is necessary.

If the DIO and the Spokane Teaching Health Center GMEC determine that STHC can no longer provide an adequate educational experience for its residents/fellows on a temporary basis, the DIO and Program Directors will, to the best of their ability, arrange for the temporary transfer of the residents/fellows to programs at other sponsoring institutions until such time STHC is able to resume providing the experience. Residents/fellows who transfer to other programs as a result of a disaster will be provided by their Program Directors with an estimated time that relocation to another program will be necessary. Should that initial time estimate need to be extended, residents/fellows will be notified by their Program Directors using written or electronic means identifying the estimated time of the extension.

If the disaster prevents the Spokane Teaching Health Center from ever re-establishing an adequate educational experience within a reasonable amount of time following the disaster, permanent transfers will be arranged. An electronic back up of resident/fellow's credentials and training documents and verification of all credentials will be maintained on a secure, outside server. Continued data entry will be maintained in this secure server of resident training experiences during disaster recovery efforts.

**ACGME Requirements:** Reporting Timeline

When an Extraordinary Circumstance is identified, the DIO will be the primary contact with the ACGME to provide information to be posted on the ACGME website. Upon invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances policy, the ACGME may determine that one or more site visits are required.

Spokane Teaching Health Center, as the sponsoring institution, will:

1. Revise its educational programs within thirty (30) days to comply with the applicable common and specialty specific Program Requirements, as well as the Institutional Requirements.
2. Arrange temporary transfers for each of its residents/fellows to other programs or institutions until such time as the program(s) can provide an adequate educational experience; or
3. Assist the residents/fellows in permanent transfers to other ACGME-accredited programs in which they can continue their education. If more than one program or institution is available for temporary or permanent transfer of a particular resident/fellow, the preferences of the resident/fellow will be considered by the

transferring program. Programs will expeditiously make the decision to reconstitute the program and/or arrange for temporary or permanent transfers of the residents/fellows so as to maximize the likelihood that each resident/fellow will complete the academic year with the least disruption to her or his education.

Within 10 days of the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances policy, the DIO or designee will contact the ACGME's Institutional Review Committee and Program Directors will contact by phone, electronic means, or written documentation the respective Review Committee Executive Director. Residents/fellows will be provided the contact information for the Review Committee Executive Director or the Office of Resident Services. If within the 10 days of the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances policy the ACGME has not received communication from the DIO, the ACGME will attempt to establish contact with the Spokane Teaching Health Center to communicate its expectations.

Spokane Teaching Health Center, as the sponsoring institution, will:

1. Submit program reconfigurations to the ACGME and inform the program's residents/fellows of the decision to reconstitute the program and/or transfer the residents either temporarily or permanently.
2. If the program is transferring residents/fellows, each transferred resident/fellow will be informed of the estimated duration of his or her temporary transfer. When a program determines that a temporary transfer will continue through the end of the academic year, each transferred resident/fellow will be notified.

Plans will be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after the invocation of the Extraordinary Circumstances policy unless other due dates are approved by the ACGME. The DIO will coordinate temporary or permanent transfers through the ACGME.

The DIO will work with the receiving programs in submitting the request for processing through the Accreditation Data System (ADS).