

Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME)

Title:	AFC Fellow Health and Safety	Number:	010a ii
Approved By:	PGMEC		
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Preamble

The purpose of this policy is to promote a safe and healthy environment by providing basic standards for AFC Fellow safety. This policy applies while AFC Fellows are undertaking activities related to the execution of training duties.

In addition to this policy, each AFC fellowship program must establish a written policy in accordance with the **General Standards for Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) Programs** taking into account specific risks associated with the nature of the discipline and the organization of training.

Background

In the General Standards of Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) Programs, standard 4.1.2 states:

4.1.2: AFC education occurs in a safety-conscious learning environment.

- 4.1.2.1: Safety is actively promoted throughout the learning environment for all those involved in the AFC program.
- 4.1.2.2: There is an (are) effective trainee safety policy(ies), aligned with central policy(ies) and modified, as appropriate, to reflect discipline-specific physical, psychological, and professional trainee safety concerns.
- 4.1.2.3: The policy regarding AFC Fellow safety effectively addresses both situations and perceptions of lack of AFC Fellow safety.
- 4.1.2.4: Concerns with the safety of the learning environment are appropriately identified and remediated.
- 4.1.2.5: Trainees and teachers are aware of the process to follow if they perceive safety issues.

Please note that there are two complementary policies:

- PGME Fatigue Risk Management Policy
- PGME Wellness Policy

Principles

AFC Fellow safety is a shared responsibility of Faculty of Medicine, clinical and academic departments and the AFC Fellows themselves. Occupational health and workplace safety is governed by Occupational Health & Safety Regulations (WorkSafe BC).

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Awareness of personal safety and assessment of risk is part of professional development inherent in postgraduate medical education. AFC Fellows should not suffer academic consequences for declining to participate in an activity they feel puts them at unacceptable risk of physical harm. However, AFC Fellows will be required to meet the educational objectives through alternate educational activities.

The scope of this policy encompasses Personal Safety, Workplace (environmental, occupational) Health and Safety, and Professional/Psychological Safety.

Policy

A) Personal Safety

Personal Safety Guidelines encompass:

- risk of violence or harm from patients or staff
- access to secure lockers and facilities including call rooms
- safe travel
- working in isolated or remote situations including visiting patients in their homes or after hours
- safeguarding of personal information

1. Responsibility of the Program

- a) As part of the educational training, AFC Fellows must be provided with general safety training including personal safety and protection of personal information, with an emphasis on risk identification and management.
- b) Special training must be provided to AFC fellows who are expected to encounter hazards such as exposure to violence from patients or others
- c) To protect the personal security and privacy of AFC Fellows, programs should not publish photographs and rotation schedules of named AFC fellows on publicly accessible websites.
- d) Specifically related to clinical activities on-call and after hours, AFC Fellows are not expected to:
 - (i) work alone after hours in health care or academic facilities without adequate support from Protection Services.
 - (ii) work alone in private offices, including after-hours clinics, without adequate support from Protection Services.
 - (iii) walk alone for any major or unsafe distances at night.
- e) Programs and sites must identify policies specifically related to patient transfers by ambulance including critical care and infant transport.
- f) For programs and sites that require home visits, policies must be identified specifically related to home visits.
- g) For travel related to clinical and academic assignments, there should be an unscheduled day between rotations to and from distributed training locations.

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2. Responsibility of the AFC Fellow

- a) AFC Fellows must participate in required safety sessions and abide by the safety codes of the assigned facility, unit or department.
- b) AFC Fellows should only telephone patients from a clinic or hospital telephone line. If calls must be made with a personal or mobile phone, this should be done using call blocking.
- c) AFC Fellows must use caution when offering personal information to patients, families or staff.
- d) AFC Fellows are expected to exercise caution. If a AFC Fellow feels that their personal safety is threatened, they must seek immediate assistance and remove themselves from the situation in a professional manner. The AFC Fellows should ensure that their immediate supervisor and/or the program director has been notified.
- e) When traveling by private vehicle, it is expected that AFC Fellows will exercise judgement especially when driving in inclement weather or when fatigued.
- f) For long distance travel, AFC Fellows should ensure that a colleague or the home program office is aware of their itinerary.
- g) There is an unscheduled day between rotations to or from distributed training locations. When long distance travel is required, the AFC fellow should not be on call on the last day of the preceding rotation.
- h) AFC Fellows should exercise caution when driving home after call if they have not had adequate rest.

Procedures for Breach of Personal Safety

AFC Fellows who feel their personal safety or security is threatened should remove themselves immediately from the situation in a professional manner and seek urgent assistance from their immediate supervisor or from the institution's security services.

AFC Fellows in hospital/institutional settings identifying a personal safety or security breach must report it to their immediate supervisor at the training site as well as to the program director.

AFC Fellows in community-based practices or other non-institutional settings should discuss issues or concerns with the staff physician or community-based coordinator, or bring any safety concerns to the attention of their Program Director.

The Program Director has the authority to remove AFC Fellows from clinical placements if a risk is seen to be unacceptable.

If a decision is taken to remove an AFC Fellow, this must be promptly communicated to the Department Head, the Training Program Committee, the site Clinical Head (or equivalent) and the PGME Dean.

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B) Workplace Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety

This encompasses:

- Hazardous materials, radiation safety, chemical spills, indoor air quality
- Exposure to blood and body fluids
- Immunization
- Respiratory protection

1. Responsibility of the Program/Employer

- a) AFC Fellows must be made aware of site specific safety risks. Programs and training sites must ensure AFC Fellows are appropriately oriented to current workplace safety guidelines.
- b) Programs must have guidelines to address exposures specific to training sites, communicate these to trainees and ensure appropriate understanding by the AFC Fellows prior to involvement in these activities.

2. Responsibility of the AFC Fellow

- a) AFC Fellows are expected to participate in required safety sessions and abide by the safety codes of the assigned facility, unit or department including WHMIS, fire safety or dress codes as they pertain to safety.
- b) AFC Fellows must use all necessary personal protective equipment, precautions and safeguards, including back up from supervisors, when engaging in clinical and/or educational experiences.
- c) AFC Fellows should familiarize themselves the location and services offered by the occupational health and safety office of the assigned facility.
- d) AFC Fellows are expected to exercise caution. If a AFC Fellow feels that their personal safety is threatened, they should seek immediate assistance and remove themselves from the situation in a professional manner. The AFC Fellows should ensure that their immediate supervisor and/or the program director has been notified.
- e) AFC Fellows are responsible for keeping immunizations up to date and seeking overseas travel immunizations and advice well in advance of international experiences.
- f) Pregnant AFC fellows should be aware of specific risks to themselves and their fetus(es) in the training environment and request accommodations where indicated.

Protocol for Workplace Accident/Injury or Incident:

It is acknowledged that AFC Fellows at UBC are assigned to many different types of learning environments across the province. Irrespective of this, if there is a workplace accident, exposure or incident (for example, needlestick injury), the AFC Fellow must:

1. Report the incident to their immediate supervisor who may engage the Occupational Health Office Protocol of the institution
2. Go immediately to the nearest emergency room, identify themselves as a AFC Fellow and covered by WorkSafeBC, and request to be seen on an urgent basis.

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3. WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE INCIDENT, go to <https://www.cairs.ubc.ca/> and follow the instructions to report the incident.
 - a. The AFC fellow is to debrief the incident with their supervisor/preceptor before ensuring supervisor/preceptor goes to <https://www.cairs.ubc.ca/> and follows the instructions to complete the supervisor/preceptor report.
4. Start WorkSafe BC Claim by calling the WorkSafeBC Teleclaim Contact Centre at 1-888- WORKERS (1-888-967-5377). This is to ensure any treatment received is covered.

C) Professional and Psychological Safety

This encompasses:

- Confidentiality of Resident Information
 - Liability Coverage
 - Learning Environment
- a) Programs should support an environment in which AFC Fellows are able to report and discuss adverse events, critical incidents, 'near misses', and patient safety concerns without fear of punishment.
 - b) AFC Fellow files are confidential. AFC Program Committee members cannot divulge information regarding residents.
 - c) AFC Fellow feedback and complaints must be handled in a manner that ensures AFC Fellow confidentiality, unless the AFC fellow explicitly consents otherwise.
 - d) In cases where Intimidation and Harassment threaten the learning environment:
The Faculty of Medicine strictly prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment including abuses of power. Please refer to the following Faculty wide policies:
 - Professional Standards for Faculty Members and Learners' in the Faculties of Medicine and Dentistry
 - Policy and Processes to address unprofessional behaviour (including harassment, intimidation) in the Faculty of Medicine
 - UBC Policy # 3 – Discrimination and Harassment
 - UBC Policy #131 – Sexual Assault and Other Sexual Misconduct
 - UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff
 - e) AFC Fellows are required to have active liability coverage.

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Guidelines

RESOURCES

- PGME Wellness Policy - [009-Wellness-Policy-PGMEC-approved-Jun.-7-2022.pdf \(ubc.ca\)](#)
- PGME Fatigue Risk Management Policy - [010d-UBC-PGME-Fatigue-Risk-Policy-PGMEC-approved-Jun.-07-2022-1.pdf](#)
- PGME Blood Borne Virus Policy - [010c-Blood-Borne-Virus-Policy-PGME-Policies-and-Procedures.pdf \(ubc.ca\)](#)
- [Professional Standards for Faculty Members and Learners' in the Faculties of Medicine and Dentistry](#)
- [Policy and Processes to address unprofessional behaviour \(including harassment, intimidation\) in the Faculty of Medicine -](#)
- [UBC Policy # 3 – Discrimination and Harassment](#)
- [UBC Policy SC17 Sexual Misconduct and Sexualized Violence Policy](#)
- [UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff](#)
- Resident Education Abroad Policy & Agreement - [003-Resident-Education-Abroad-Policy-PGME-Policies-and-Procedures.pdf \(ubc.ca\)](#)

Action	Committee	Date	Status
Approved	PGMEC	Sept 24, 2019	approved
Approved	PGMEC	Sept. 7, 2021	approved
Approved	PGME Executive	March 8, 2022	approved
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