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Frequently Asked Questions: Residency Program Work Hours

General Work Hour Requirements

What is the maximum number of hours residents can work per week?

Residents are limited to a maximum of 80 hours of clinical and educational work per week, averaging over a four-week period. Work hours include:

- In-house clinical activities
- Educational activities
- Clinical work done from home
- Time spent using electronic health records
- Time spent in patient care activities from home, including answering calls/pages
- Moonlighting

What activities don't count toward the 80-hour limit?

The following activities don't count:

- Reading in preparation for the next day's cases at home
- Studying at home
- Research done from home
- Being on-call when not at the hospital
- Time commuting between home and the hospital (commuting between medical facilities does count toward the 80-hour limit)

Work from Home

How should work hours be tracked when residents work from home?

Residents are required to track the time spent on clinical work from home and report that time to their program. It is the responsibility of the residents to ensure that their total work hours, including those from home, do not exceed the 80-hour weekly limit.

How does at-home call affect work hours?

Clinical work done from home while on at-home call must count toward the 80-hour maximum weekly limit. This includes responding to phone calls, documentation, and other clinical activities, but not simply being on call.

Continuous Work Periods

What are the guidelines for in-house work periods?

Clinical and educational work periods for residents must not exceed 24 hours of continuous in-house activity. After such a period, residents must have at least eight hours free of clinical work and education between scheduled work periods. In certain circumstances, the 24-hour work period may be extended by up to four additional hours for patient safety, transition of care, and/or education.

Call Schedules

How often can residents be scheduled for in-house call?

Residents must not be scheduled for in-house call more frequently than every third night, when averaged over a four-week period.

Are there restrictions on at-home call?

Yes, at-home call:

- Must not be so frequent or taxing as to preclude rest or reasonable personal time
- Must be counted toward the 80-hour weekly limit when responding to calls or doing documentation

Outside Activities

What is the policy regarding residents participating in outside activities?

Residents are prohibited from participating in any outside activities that could adversely affect their ability to function effectively in their training program.

How does moonlighting impact work hour limits?

If the Institution allows moonlighting, including any paid position outside of residency training, all hours spent on these activities must be included in the 80-hour weekly limit to ensure they do not compromise the resident's clinical or educational performance.

Program Responsibilities

What are the program's responsibilities regarding work hours?

Programs must:

- Maintain records and monitor compliance with work hour requirements
- Ensure the 80-hour maximum weekly limit is not exceeded
- Factor in time residents spend on clinical work at home when developing schedules
- Ensure residents report time worked outside of the hospital, including moonlighting

Other Logging Guidance Memos can be found on cpme.org: <https://www.cpme.org/logging-guidance/>