

**RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL  
NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY**

**GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION MANUAL**

**POLICY #:** XI. 15  
**SECTION:** INSTITUTIONAL/ MEDICAL SCHOOL POLICIES RELEVANT TO GME  
**SUBJECT:** PLANS TO ADDRESS A DISASTER THAT SIGNIFICANTLY ALTERS RESIDENCY EXPERIENCE AT ONE OR MORE RESIDENCY PROGRAMS, AS MANDATED BY THE ACGME

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**I. PURPOSE**

- a. To comply with ACGME mandate that the institution have a plan to address a disaster that significantly alters the residency experience at one or more residency programs.

**II. SCOPE**

- a. All GME programs sponsored by the institution

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. A disaster is an event or set of events causing significant alteration to the residency experience at one or more residency programs. Hurricane Katrina is an example of a disaster.
  
- B. The ACGME, when warranted, will make a declaration of a disaster. This decision will be made by the ACGME Chief Executive Officer, with consultation of the ACGME Executive Committee and the Chair of the Institutional Review Committee, and will be posted on the ACGME website.

**IV. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

RWJMS will comply with the “ACGME Plan to address a disaster that significantly alters the residency experience at one or more residency programs” as noted in the ACGME Policies and Procedures, Section II H, effective February 9, 2009 (below)

**II. ACCREDITATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**H. ACGME Plan to Address a Disaster that Significantly Alters the Residency Experience at One or More Residency Programs**

**1. Overview**

ACGME is committed to assisting in reconstituting and restructuring residents’ educational experiences as quickly as possible after a disaster.

**2. Definition of Disaster**

An event or set of events causing significant alteration to the residency experience at one or more residency programs. Hurricane Katrina is an example of a disaster.

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3. ACGME Declaration of a Disaster when warranted, the ACGME Chief Executive Officer, with consultation of the ACGME Executive Committee and the Chair of the Institutional Review Committee, will make a

declaration of a disaster. A notice of such will be posted on the ACGME website with information relating to ACGME response to the disaster.

4. Resident Transfers and Program Reconfiguration Insofar as a program/institution cannot provide at least an adequate educational experience for each of its residents/fellows because of a disaster, it must:

- a) arrange temporary transfers to other programs/institutions until such time as the residency/fellowship program can provide an adequate educational experience for each of its residents/fellows, or
- b) assist the residents in permanent transfers to other programs/institutions i.e., enrolling in other ACGME accredited programs in which they can continue their education.

If more than one program/institution is available for temporary or permanent transfer of a particular resident, the preferences of each resident must be considered by the transferring program/institution.

Programs must make the keep/transfer decision expeditiously so as to maximize the likelihood that each resident/fellow will complete the year in a timely fashion. Within 10 days after the declaration of a disaster (see above), the designated institutional official of each sponsoring institution with one or more disaster-affected programs (or another institutionally designated person if the institution determines that the designated institutional official is unavailable) will contact the ACGME to discuss due dates that the ACGME will establish for the programs:

- (1) to submit program reconfigurations to ACGME, and
- (2) to inform each program's residents of resident transfer decisions. The due dates for submission shall be no later than 30 days after the disaster unless other due dates are approved by ACGME.

If within the 10 days, the ACGME has not received communication from the designated institutional official(s), ACGME will attempt to establish contact with the designated institutional official(s) to determine the severity of the disaster, its impact on residency training, and next steps.

#### 5. ACGME Website

On its website, ACGME will provide, and periodically update, information relating to the disaster.

#### 6. Communication with ACGME from Disaster Affected Institutions/Programs

On its website, the ACGME will provide phone numbers and email addresses for emergency and other communication with the ACGME from disaster affected institutions and programs. In general, *Designated Institutional Officials* should call or email the Institutional Review Committee Executive Director with information and/or requests for information.

*Program Directors* should call email the appropriate Review Committee Executive Director with information and/or requests for information.

*Residents* should call or email the appropriate Review Committee Executive Director with information and/or requests for information. On its website, the ACGME will provide instructions for changing resident email information on the ACGME Web Accreditation Data System.

#### 7. Institutions Offering to Accept Transfers

Institutions offering to accept temporary or permanent transfers from programs affected by a disaster must complete a form found on the ACGME website. Upon request, the ACGME will give information from the form to affected programs and residents.

Subject to authorization by an offering institution, the ACGME will post information from the form on its website. The ACGME will expedite the processing of requests for increases in resident complement from non-disaster affected programs to accommodate resident transfers from disaster affected programs.

The Residency Review Committees will expeditiously review applications, and make and communicate decisions.

#### 8. Changes in Participating Sites and Resident Complement

The ACGME will establish a fast track process for reviewing (and approving or not approving) submissions by programs relating to program changes to address disaster effects, including, without limitation:

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- a) the addition or deletion of a participating site;
- b) change in the format of the educational program; and,
- c) change in the approved resident complement.

#### 9. Temporary Resident Transfer

At the outset of a temporary resident/fellow transfer, a program must inform each transferred resident of the minimum duration and the estimated actual duration of his/her temporary transfer, and continue to keep each resident informed of such durations. If and when a program decides that a temporary transfer will continue to and/or through the end of a residency fellowship year, it must so inform each such transferred resident/fellow.

#### 10. Site Visits

Once information concerning a disaster-affected program's condition is received, ACGME may determine that one or more site visits is required. Prior to the visits, the designated institutional official(s) will receive notification of the information that will be required. This information, as well as information received by ACGME during these site visits, may be used for accreditation purposes. Site visits that were scheduled prior to a disaster may be postponed.

Approved by the GMEC on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009