I. Purpose
RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL and affiliated institutions have adopted emergency plans to guide the institutional response to specific disasters. This policy is intended to augment these plans and specifically addresses the clinical duties, education, and the working environment of House Officers during disasters or local extreme emergent situations. It provides guidance to program leadership, in the event that a disaster or local extreme emergent situations occur, to assure House Officer safety, continued administrative support for GME programs and residents, as well as other issues that may result from significant alternations to the residency experience in one or more training programs.

II. Scope:
This policy is intended to augment existing disaster plans that are applicable to the institutions affected, focusing specifically on House Officers in graduate medical education programs sponsored by RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL.

III. Definitions:
A disaster is an event or set of events (e.g., natural disaster, human generated, etc.) which impacts an entire community or region for an extended period of time causing significant alternation to the training experience at more than one institution involved in the education of RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL House Officers.

A local extreme emergent situation is an event, such as an epidemic, that impacts the clinical duties, education, and working environment of one sponsoring institution, participating institution, or other similar setting, and causes the institution to implement its disaster plan.

POLICY:

1) Within RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL a formal disaster declaration or local extreme emergent situation will be made only in accordance with existing RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL Disaster Plans.

2) If the disaster or local extreme emergent situation occurs in an affiliate site of training, the GME Office will work with that training site to determine whether a formal disaster declaration has been made based on the policies of that institution.

3) When warranted, and after consultation with the Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) if possible, the Designated Institutional Official (DIO) may ask the ACGME to make a formal declaration of a disaster or local extreme emergent situation for particular
programs or the entire institution according to ACGME policies and procedures. This information will be posted on the ACGME website. This formal declaration under ACGME policy creates significant flexibility for trainees to transfer to other institutions if that becomes necessary.

4) RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and affiliated institutions are guided by the following principles relative to GME:
   a) RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School is committed to ensuring a safe, organized and effective environment for training of its House Officers;
   b) RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School is committed to maintaining full administrative support for GME programs and residents during a disaster or local extreme emergent situation.
   c) RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School recognizes the importance of physicians at all levels of training in the provision of emergency care in the case of a disaster of any kind;
   d) House Officers must be expected to perform according to society's expectations of physicians as professionals and leaders in health care delivery, taking into account their degree of competence, their specialty training, and the context of the specific situation.
   e) House Officer Involvement in a disaster or local extreme emergent situation should not exceed expectations for their scope of competence as judged by program directors and other supervisors. House Officers should not be expected to perform beyond the limits of self-confidence in their own abilities.
   f) Expectations for performance under extreme circumstances must be qualified by the scope of licensure, as determined by the New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners and the House Officer's level of post-graduate education specifically regarding specialty preparedness.
   g) Decisions regarding initial and continuing deployment of House Officers in the provision of medical care during an emergency will be made taking into consideration the importance of providing emergency medical care; the continuing educational needs of House Officers; board certification eligibility during or after a prolonged disaster or local extreme emergent situation and the health and safety of the House Officers and their families.

5) Upon the occurrence of the emergency situation and immediately following up to 72 hours:
   a) House Officers will be deployed as directed by the leader of the disaster command center at the hospital to which they are assigned. Ongoing decision-making regarding utilization of House Officers to provide needed clinical care will be based on both the clinical needs of the institution and the safety of House Officers.
   b) Those involved in making decisions in this period are:
i) Leader of the disaster command center
ii) Department Directors, program directors
iii) Senior Associate Dean for Education
iv) Dean
v) Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education & DIO

6) By the end of the first week following the occurrence of the emergency situation, if the emergency is ongoing:
   a) An assessment will be made of:
      i) The continued need for provision of clinical care by House Officers; and
      ii) The likelihood that training can continue on site
   b) The assessment will be made by:
      i) DIO /Associate Dean for GME
      ii) Program Directors and Department Chairs
      iii) Senior Associate Dean for Education
      iv) Dean
      v) Leaders of disaster command center
      vi) Chair, Graduate Medical Education Committee

7) By the end of the second week following the occurrence of the emergency situation, if the emergency is ongoing:
   a) The Associate Dean for GME will request an assessment by individual program directors and department chairs regarding their ability to continue to provide training; this may be facilitated by the RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL-GMEC
   b) The Associate Dean for GME, with assistance from the GMEC, will request suggestions for alternative training sites from program directors who feel they will be unable to continue to offer training at the involved sites.
   c) The Associate Dean for GME will contact the RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL-Vice President Academic Affairs to alert other RUTGERS ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON MEDICAL SCHOOL sponsoring institutions of the disaster or local extreme emergent situation.
   d) The Associate Dean for GME will contact the Executive Director, ACGME Institutional Review Committee (ED-IRC) to provide a status report if an extreme emergent situation causes serious, extended disruption to resident assignments, educational infrastructure or clinical operations that might affect the Sponsoring Institution’s or any of its programs’ ability to conduct resident education in substantial compliance with ACGME Institutional, Common, and specialty-specific Program Requirements.
   e) The Associate Dean for GME will receive electronic confirmation of this communication with the ED-IRC, which will include copies to all Executive Directors of RRC’s.
f) upon receipt of this confirmation by the Associate Dean for GME, program directors may contact their respective RRC Executive Directors, if necessary, to discuss any specialty-specific concerns regarding interruptions to resident education or effect on educational environment.

g) Those involved in decision making in this period are:
   i) Associate Dean for GME/ DIO
   ii) Individual Program Directors
   iii) Individual Department Chairs
   iv) Senior Associate Dean for Education
   v) Chair, GMEC

8. During the third and fourth weeks and beyond following the occurrence of the emergency situation, if the emergency is ongoing:

   a) The Associate Dean for GME will work with RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School to ensure that the Associate Deans for GME at other schools are informed, and when applicable, work for a common solution for RUTGERS residency training programs system-wide.

   b) The RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School GMEC’s and Program Directors will contact their counterparts at alternative training sites to determine feasibility of temporary transfers until the institution can provide an adequate educational experience for the House Officer; such transfers will also be coordinated with the ACGME;

   c) To the extent possible, the program will inform the House Officer being transferred the minimum duration of the transfer and the anticipated total duration of the transfer.

   d) RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Program Directors will have the lead responsibility for contacting other program directors and notifying the Associate Dean for GME and the GMEC of the transfers; and

   e) The Associate Dean for GME will be responsible for coordinating the transfers with the ACGME.

   f) Continuation of financial support in the event of a disaster will be dependent on the short-term and long-term impact on each program and the institution overall. Also, it will be dependent on current policies related to reimbursement.

      i. For House Officers temporarily relocated to an affiliated training site, RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School will work with the site to sustain resident salary and benefits.

      ii. For residents temporarily assigned to a program at another institution:

         (1) RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School will work with the University, CMS and the receiving institution to provide resident salary (according to the RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School stipend schedule) through the end of the current academic year.
(2) As soon as possible prior to the end of the PGY contract, the program will inform the House Officer of his/her status within the program for the next academic year.

iii. For residents permanently transferring to another institution, RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School will typically not cover salary and benefits.

iv. If the RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School training program closes permanently, some transitional funding may be provided by RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School to the accepting institution.

v. If the program is not permanently closed but a resident decides to permanently transfer to another institution, the costs of salary and benefits will be covered by the accepting institution as of the date of transfer.

9) When the emergency situation is ended:

a) Plans will be made with the participating institutions to which House Officers have been transferred for them to resume training at RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School;

b) Appropriate credit for training will be coordinated with ACGME and the applicable Residency Review Committees; and

c) Decisions as to other matters related to the impact of the emergency on training will be made through the RUTGERS Robert Wood Johnson Medical School - GMEC.

d) The Associate Dean for GME will notify the ED-IRC when the institutional disaster or local extreme emergent situation is resolved.

Approved by the GMEC on 10/12/10