Memorandum

Date: April 9, 2020

To: Incoming NOSM Residents
    NOSM Program Directors and Staff

From: Dr. Rob Anderson,
      Associate Dean PGME and Health Sciences

Re: Update on PGME Office Orientation and support for incoming residents

**Purpose:** This update to ensure incoming residents are aware of updated plans for Orientation, how the PGME Office is preparing to support residents around potential issues of self-isolation, scheduling and housing. The purpose is also to ensure our incoming cohort knows where to source regular planning updates from the PGME Office and their programs.

**Words of support:** Further to my welcome letter, I am taking this opportunity to reiterate how excited we all are that you chose NOSM for your residency. Our team is thrilled to be preparing to welcome you in a few months and couldn’t have ever predicted we would be doing so in a time of pandemic. I am sure you have a lot of questions and feelings of uncertainty right now and we want hear from you. Myself, our PGME leadership team, and our PGME staff and faculty are all here to support your transition to residency during this extraordinary time.

The following are a few early updates to our plans and we will be hosting an opportunity for a virtual open meeting with incoming residents in May once we have our full class confirmed. Stay tuned for that invite. Remember check your NOSM emails! For those coming from away, you have a NOSM email set up now and we will communicate with you only through this address.

**PGE Office Resident Orientation**

PGME Office Resident Orientation will take place in the morning of Monday June 29th. We have decided this year to host the entire PGME Office Orientation virtually. As such, residents will be asked to connect to orientation from their residency site home-bases, or first block location, and will join a variety of sessions that will provide training and information on processes and supports that will assist you throughout your residency. Further details and updates will be provided via your NOSM email account and will be posted on our [Information for Incoming Residents](#) website on orientation and the rest of the categories in this memo.
**Program Orientation**

In addition to PGME Office Orientation, you will be contacted over the coming weeks (if not already!) directly by your Program Coordinator, who will provide you with the necessary details as they pertain to your program’s orientation and/or activities which follow the PGME Office Orientation.

**Self-Isolation and training start dates**

The PGME Office and NOSM residency programs are carefully monitoring Northern Ontario hospital directives, Health Canada guidelines, and national medical school discussion about the potential for residents to be required to self-isolate for 14 days prior to beginning work if arriving from another location outside of your residency home-base site. We are working on developing contingency planning for training dates and schedules as well as housing support options for those who may be required to self-isolate upon arrival. We do not yet know if a 14 day self-isolation period will be in place, however, we are planning as such in the event this is required.

**Housing**

We understand that the current practice of social distancing has created a sense of uncertainty with respect to the ability to secure housing in your residency home-base site for the residents who are joining us from away. The PGME Office is working closely with NOSM Housing to ensure we are prepared to support residents in the event that they encounter initial challenges in obtaining housing at their home-base. Soon you will receive a survey about housing and questions will be adapted to so that we can connect with and support those who may be encountering housing challenges that are related specifically to COVID-19 social distancing measures/closures of certain services etc.

**Your safety and wellness**

We continue to monitor and support the health and wellbeing of our current residents and the same will be true for you as well. In this regard, we encourage you to review our current NOSM COVID 19 information page for residents. You will see we work closely with PARO, the PGME Resident Wellness Office and the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Royal College of Physician and Surgeons of Canada to ensure resident interests are protected. We care about you.
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Part of your orientation this year will include information about safety when working in this pandemic. It is the commitment of NOSM and all our clinical care partners that you will have the appropriate personal protective equipment for your work and that you know how to use it. The safety of all our health care workers is paramount.

While there is so much going on around you during this time, please don’t forget to take care of yourself! Reach out to friends and family to maintain the important relationships to you. Exercise and eat well. Take time to do the things that bring you joy and fulfillment.

Registration

If you have questions about your registration process, please continue to work with pgregistration@nosm.ca. Our staff are working at home but are still working hard to ensure you are credentialled and ready to start residency, and your continued attention to submission of documents and fees etc helps us to help you.

In closing – always ask your questions

The beginning of residency is both exciting time and one that can come with unknowns and as a result of COVID-19 we have more unknowns than usual. Don’t be shy to ask us questions in the PGME Office and your program. As noted earlier, we are looking to set up a virtual voluntary meeting of all incoming residents in May so that you have a chance to dialogue with us and we hope to have more answers for you by then about any potential impacts related to self-isolation, orientation formats and clinical schedules. This will be a first! We’ve never met with our incoming residents as a group before orientation and we think it is important this year that we do.

Stay well and we look forward to seeing you soon,

Rob

Dr. Robert Anderson, MD, FRCP
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