

Memo from (Dr. Rob Anderson, Associate Dean - Postgraduate Medical Education and Health Sciences)

To: Clinical Faculty, CEOs and Chiefs of Staff

Subject: Residents and Their Important Role in Public Health Emergencies

Date: March 31, 2020

Key Messages:

- Residents are skilled health care providers and a resource during the pandemic
- They can be reassigned to areas of need (guidelines <u>here</u>)
- Final year residents will join the work force in July
- Encourage all physicians to support, teach and give brief regular feedback (and complete
 evaluations) for residents. Exams are delayed so documentation of competency is critical so
 residents can graduate and join the work force

We want to begin by thanking you for educating students and residents from NOSM and other medical schools and also for the difficult and complex work you are doing during the pandemic.

We want to <u>clarify the work that residents can do as frontline healthcare providers</u> which we trust will help your hospital in caring for patients.

As physicians and members of the healthcare workforce, residents are a critical resource in addressing public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some residents have been turned away from certain clinical rotations. While we recognize that the amount of work and the flow is changing constantly, we want to ensure that preceptors and hospital leaders are aware that <u>residents are a very useful and skilled workforce that can be mobilized to address the added strains on the healthcare system during a pandemic.</u>

Regardless of specialty or level of training, residents possess medical knowledge and clinical skills, including procedural, that are valuable to our healthcare system in trying times.

Many of them have rotated through various services and departments recently, <u>and residents can be efficiently reassigned to areas of greater need.</u> This may require some complementary or additional training, in the moment, but their desire and eagerness to help coupled with their close proximity in time of a variety of training experiences places them in a position of adaptability and versatility. All contingency plans for public health emergencies should incorporate resident physicians.⁽¹⁾

Final year residents are under the added pressures and uncertainty surrounding examinations and provisional licensure processes and <u>will be in part of the work force in July.</u> Your support and leadership in keeping residents engaged in clinical training and participating in clinical care is of benefit to all.



Moreover, their continued engagement in training will ensure the attainment of competency in time for graduation.

We encourage all physicians to support resident participation in clinical experiences.

In order to provide more information and answer questions and concerns we invite you to a Q&A and discussion session at a time that works for you. We also invite you to visit our COVID-19 information site specifically for postgraduate medical trainees and faculty website at: https://www.nosm.ca/our-community/coronavirus-information-for-nosm-community/resident-fags/

For additional information, two key documents are:

- Residents and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Guidelines, Council of Ontario Universities: https://cou.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Residents-and-Public-Health-Emergency-Preparedness-Guidelines-Report-Mar.-2019.pdf
- General Principles for the Reassignment of NOSM Residents in Times of Health System Need: https://www.nosm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/2020-03-19-Updated-FINAL-NOSM-PGME-Reassignment-Principles-.pdf
- (1) Residents and Public Health Emergency Preparedness Guidelines Report. Council of Ontario Universities. March 2019.