

Subject: GME Update: COVID, Recovery, Orientation, Accreditation, Well-being, and Recruitment Updates

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From: UCSF-GME

CC: UCSF-GME

Attachments: COVID Mental Health Resources for Residents and Fellows 200501.docx, image004.png

Dear Program Directors and Program Administrators,

Thank you all for your continued efforts to care for our patients and our residents and fellows amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. As you know, UCSF and our clinical health systems are transitioning from the initial acute COVID response phase to recovery planning. At the same time, we are preparing to welcome and orient our new residents and fellows in mid-June and July. We are writing to provide GME updates on several aspects of this work.

Orientation for new residents and fellows

Intern, resident, and fellow orientations are planned for June 19, July 1, and July 7. Orientation will take all day on each of those days as in past years. Orientation will include a required, two-hour live Zoom meeting (from home or other off-campus location) with leadership and campus experts in the morning. Each resident and fellow will also be pre-scheduled for a specific time at Parnassus for FIT-testing and safety training. These on-campus two-hour sessions will be spread out through the day to allow for physical distancing. Additional required material will be taught on-line prior to orientation.

We have worked closely with campus and state experts to define the best approach to testing and screening our new colleagues. Our plan is to test each incoming trainee for COVID-19 (PCR) and require a detailed occupational health questionnaire. We will use the UCSF Occupational Continue to Work/Return to Work guidelines to determine the appropriate next steps after testing and the questionnaire. A specific time will also be required for a testing appointment.

https://infectioncontrol.ucsfmedicalcenter.org/sites/g/files/tkssra4681/f/UCSF_Stay_at_Home_Return_to_Work_Guidelines.pdf

Patient care during recovery

UCSF residents and fellows may care for all patients, including COVID-19 patients and suspected patients, in the context of their clinical specialty. All residents and fellows who provide care to patients with COVID-19 or suspected of COVID-19 must have access to appropriate PPE, be fully trained in its use, and be appropriately supervised. In order to preserve PPE and minimize potential exposures, UCSF continues to recommend minimizing the number of providers who examine or otherwise directly interact with patients with COVID-19.

Safety processes at UCSF and local data make the risk of infection to health care workers low. Residents and fellows who are immunocompromised, pregnant, or have chronic medical conditions may request from Program Directors alternative assignments that meet program requirements. If these requests cannot be feasibly achieved by Program Directors, residents and fellows are encouraged to consult with the UCSF Disability Management Services (415) 476-2621.

As clinical volumes increase, Program Directors should reassess resident and fellow assignments to best meet patient care needs and program requirements. This should include adequate back-up plans for potential absences. As always, please continue to collaborate with your clinical services and department leadership to reassess assignments. Please also continue to work with unit-based leadership to identify any additional workspaces to maximize physical distancing. Please continue to monitor the use of shared workrooms to maximize best infection control practices.

Telehealth/working from home

Many of us, including residents and fellows, are working at home some or most of the time. Some residents and fellows are having difficulty with home internet, lap tops, and related issues. Please consult with your ambulatory medical directors/clinic managers to see if residents and fellows can use any (currently) empty ambulatory clinic space for telehealth visits. This has been approved by UCSF Health ambulatory leadership. An excellent new UCSF resource on telehealth is available at [Clinician Communication Tips for Telehealth Appointments](#).

Mental health and other support for residents and fellows

UCSF continues to prioritize the well-being of our trainees, faculty and staff. Several additional mental health resources have begun in the past few months. These are listed at <https://meded.ucsf.edu/residents-clinical-fellows/residents-clinical-fellows-resources/well-being-and-mental-health-resources-residents-and-clinical-fellows> and are attached above for posting and further circulation.

Accreditation Updates

Please keep track of any changes that you made in assignments and any impacts on learning due to COVID. ACGME will require description of any program changes in your ADS update this summer (under “Major Changes”). Specific things to note include: 1) changes in rotations and other reassessments; 2) changes in numbers of procedures or patient encounters; 3) instances in which fellows served as attendings in their core specialty; and 4) how you assured adequate supervision, PPE, and work hours during reassessments.

Additional Planning for 2020-2021

As we begin the new academic year, there are many aspects of our work that remain in flux. Nonetheless, based on conversations with UCSF leadership, University of California leadership, and key national organizations we can begin to define several important changes to the local and national GME environment that will impact us all:

- ERAS will be delayed, opening on October 21, 2020 for access to applications and MSPEs
- Resident and fellow recruitment will occur virtually with online interviews and virtual visits
- Away and visiting rotations for medical students, residents, fellows will be severely restricted
- Educational activities will require the continued limitation of group size to maintain physical distancing

These and other important changes to our learning environment will create substantial challenges for us all. We are committed to transparency and fairness as we work on these together. We look forward to utilizing our collective expertise to share best practices and develop innovations in each of these domains. Our colleagues around the world are looking to us for our continued leadership.

Best,

Bobby Baron and the entire GME team

Medical Education and
Graduate Medical
Education COVID-
19 Website