



MEMORANDUM

TO: Program Directors, Program Administrative Assistants, Residents, PGME Staff, RDoS

SUBJECT: TIME OFF DUE TO COVID ILLNESS FOR RESIDENTS WHO NEED TO SELF-ISOLATE, BE QUARANTINED OR ARE EXPERIENCING POST-COVID SYMPTOMS

FROM: Dr. Anurag Saxena, Associate Dean, PGME

DATE: December 22, 2022

This memo is in response to concerns regarding the continued covid infections in the resident population; how to report, the impact on learning/employment and post-COVID symptoms.

Some residents may experience what's known as 'post-COVID'. The [Government of Canada](#) describes post-COVID as: "Some people still experience physical or psychological symptoms more than 12 weeks after getting COVID-19. This is called post COVID-19 condition (also known as long COVID). Post-COVID-19 condition may occur in some people weeks or months after their initial infection. People who have been hospitalized or who needed intensive care during recovery appear to be at greater risk of experiencing longer-term effects. Post-COVID-19 condition is also observed in people who didn't have symptoms or had only mild to moderate symptoms during initial infection. People may experience post-COVID-19 condition symptoms even if they weren't formally tested and diagnosed with COVID-19. This may have been due to limited testing capacity during the pandemic. Post-COVID-19 condition is not COVID-19. Symptoms can be quite different from those experienced during the initial infection. It refers to the longer-term effects some people experience after their COVID-19 infection."

Process:

- Resident is to notify Program Director (via Program Administrative Assistant if necessary) that self-isolation or quarantine is necessary, or if they are experiencing post-COVID symptoms.
- Program will contact PGME office to let them know name of resident.
- PGME and the College of Medicine will determine if any further notification is required for public safety reasons.

Educational Impact:

- All efforts will be made to ensure that residents who must self-isolate or be quarantined do not suffer unnecessary extension of training. Residents experiencing post-COVID symptoms which affect their ability to fully return to training may require an extension of training.
- Programs and PGME will work together to determine how residents can adjust their learning to attain required competencies within existing timeframes. It is possible in rare cases that given the time away from the program may require an extension, but all efforts will be made to ensure acquisition of competencies within the original timeframe.

- Many departments and programs are making decisions regarding learner presence, and we will keep you informed in a timely manner.

Employment Impact:

- Residents under self-isolation or quarantine will remain on salaried pay throughout (there will be no change or stoppage to pay).
- Residents will not be required to use sick days, vacation days or any leave days while in isolation or quarantine.
- Residents who are experiencing COVID symptoms less than 30-days after receiving a negative COVID-19 test result may require additional time away from training. In consultation with the program, residents will be required to utilize sick, vacation, personal, or unpaid time (or a combination thereof) to account for time away from training due to illness.
- All efforts will be made to not ask other residents to “fill the gap” in call schedules caused by residents requiring isolation, quarantine, or post-COVID symptoms. In instances where there are not enough staff physicians to provide service resulting in residents being asked to work excess call, all relevant articles of the collective agreement apply: residents must be asked to work excess call before scheduling and can say no if it is not feasible; and any excess call will be compensated as outlined in the collective agreement.

Post-COVID Impact Beyond 30-Days:

- Residents who are experiencing post-COVID symptoms more than 30-days after infection may require additional time away from training. Residents will be required to utilize sick, vacation, personal, or unpaid time (or a combination thereof) to account for time away from training due to illness. As each resident’s circumstance is unique, residents must speak with their program director to determine the best way to account for their time away from the program.
- Residents who require additional time away from training due to post-COVID symptoms must be under the care of a physician. A physician’s note must be provided to the program.
- When a resident with post-COVID symptoms is well enough to return to training, programs may provide the resident with a reduced work schedule, revised duties, or permit residents to work from home when possible. A [graduated return to residency training plan](#) (GRR) should be developed, a decrease in FTE and extension of training may be required.
- Residents experiencing post-COVID symptoms have additional supports available to them. Residents can contact [SunLife](#) to discuss health benefits, the [Saskatchewan Medical Association](#) to discuss short- or long-term disability benefits, the [Saskatchewan Workers Compensation Board](#), the [PGME Resident Resource Office](#), or the [University of Saskatchewan Employee & Family Benefits Program](#).

Sincerely,



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