



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Department Heads, Program Directors, Program Administrative Assistants, RDoS & PGME Staff
(copies to: SHA, CPSS, College of Medicine Academic & Administrative Leads)

SUBJECT: 2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE: [REDEPLOYMENT](#) and [RESIDENT REDEPLOYMENT HUB](#)

FROM: Dr. Anurag Saxena, Associate Dean, PGME

DATE: April 02, 2020

This is to ensure that we are all working from the same set of principles and utilizing the same processes for effective and organized redeployment of our residents. As well, we want to ensure the best possible medical education experiences given the unique, uncertain and rapidly evolving situation.

1. COVID-19 is in our hospitals and there has been community spread in the province. A continuing increase in the numbers of COVID-19 cases is a reasonable projection. In this context, the virus is ubiquitous, and it will be increasingly difficult to avoid interaction with infected patients in our service learning/care provision settings.
2. As the SHA continues its workforce planning to meet population needs, our residents as both health care providers and postgraduate learners, could expect a disruption in the “usual” residency training - that has already commenced and is expected to continue. The challenge is and will continue to be to uphold the dialectic approach to the dual roles (health care provider and learner) of our residents.

Principles: These times require additional patience, collaboration, and teamwork to ensure the proper delivery of patient care in a very rapidly changing landscape; a) the College of Medicine and the SHA working collaboratively and b) the Program Director working collaboratively with the Provincial Head/Area Lead and residents.

How are redeployment requests approved and implemented? (please see the PGME memo dated 20 March 2020)

- 1) **At the Department/ Service Area level:** The need is identified by the Dept. Heads/Area Leads/Program Directors and a joint decision is made after consultation with each other and with resident input.
 - a) **Within** the programs the decisions for changing rotations/clinical learning experiences are made at the program level (PDs/RPC/Resident input and addressing concerns). Please have back-up schedules utilizing a healthy cohort. Ensure that the PGME office is informed. **(Points 1a & 1d in the 20 March memo)**
 - b) **Between the programs (and between different sites of geographically distributed programs,** as these might involve travel from one site to another) the decisions are arrived at collaboratively between the programs/sites (the PDs/site directors, Provincial Heads/Area Leads and resident input). These need to be approved at the PGME/College of Medicine level prior to implementation. **(Points 1b, 1c, & 1e in the March 20 memo)**
- 2) **At the systems level – identified by SHA:**
 - a) Request will follow the process 1 above (as far as possible), OR
 - b) If extensive cross-program redeployment is required the PGME office (Associate Dean, Regina and/or Associate Dean PGME) will coordinate with the programs involving the Dept. Heads/Area Leads, PDs and Chief residents. The approval of Vice-Dean Education will be required prior to implementation.

Utilization of a cross-program information system (Resident Redeployment Hub): Some redeployment across programs is already occurring on a smaller scale (e.g., an increased presence of General Surgery residents in the ICU)



Should a need arise that would require extensive mobilization, we need to be able to provide a timely and coordinated response. Therefore, an information hub (Resident Redeployment Hub-RRH – sent to PDs and PAAs) is being utilized to assist with redeploying residents to areas of greatest need in a manner that balances the needs of residents, programs, and clinical services – across all programs and across our province. The RRH is not on behalf of a single program or campus or healthcare facility but on behalf of and for all of us across Saskatchewan.

- 1) It provides a bird's eye view of how many University of Saskatchewan residents are available for redeployment to areas in need.
- 2) The workforce planning from SHA will identify additional workforce requirements and the clinical areas where this is needed.
- 3) The RRH is a coordinating document that will assist the collaborative decision-making involving PDs, Dept. Heads/Area Leads and residents.

What is being asked:

- 1) This is to kindly ask our PDs and PAAs to complete the information required on the excel sheet. The list is already pre-populated with some information. The intent is to identify who might be available for clinical service within/beyond the program at a time of need and to keep track of residents' clinical/learning experiences. Please do not redeploy residents who are experiencing academic or professionalism difficulties.
- 2) To ensure a supportive and collaborative approach to redeployment we kindly ask that PDs have discussions with their residents regarding their specific concerns about redeployment. Please send an anonymized list of these concerns to the PGME office, so these can be addressed.

How will the RRH work?

- 1) For the first wave of redeployment, availabilities from March 30 – May 3 are being asked.
- 2) We will be resending each PD/PAA their resident deployment list on a fortnightly basis (and if needed, then on a weekly basis) for updating.

How will redeployment be assessed? A generic redeployment rotation objective and simple assessment form is being sent to programs (PDs and PAAs) (please feel free to modify).

Might this redeployment strategy change? Given the high likelihood of an increase in COVID-19 cases in our hospitals, it might be necessary to request further workforce supplementation through a collaborative process.

How can program directors support resident wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- The PGME Resident Resource Office continues to be available.
- The information of resources available on the PGME and RDoS websites continues to be updated:
- <https://medicine.usask.ca/residents/wellness.php>
<http://www.residentdoctorsk.ca/resources/wellness>
- In addition, the Faculty Development website has resources for well-being:
<https://medicine.usask.ca/facultydev/index.php>

This document was developed based upon consultations with key stakeholders including but not limited to residency programs, SHA, RDoS and information shared between postgraduate offices across the country.

The [PGME office](#) will work with all residents, programs and staff during this time and we are available to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anurag Saxena
Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education, University of Saskatchewan