

Policy on Student Health and Ensuring Safety of Others

Category: Academic
Responsibility: Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education
Approval: Student Academic Management Committee
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Purpose:

The purpose of the *Policy on Student Health and Ensuring Safety of Others* is to describe the rights and responsibilities of the medical school in situations where a student's health may pose a safety risk to others including patients, other students, staff, faculty or members of the community with whom the student engages during learning activities.

This policy, and associated procedures, ensure that the Undergraduate Medical Education program meets or exceeds the following Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) accreditation standard:

9.10 STUDENT HEALTH AND PATIENT SAFETY

A medical school has effective policies and processes to address situations where a student's personal health may pose a risk of harm to patients. These policies and processes are clearly communicated to students. These patient safety policies and processes include:

- a) timely response by the medical school*
- b) provision of accommodation to the extent possible*
- c) leaves of absence*
- d) withdrawal from the program*

Principles:

Responsibility: Medical students have a responsibility to ensure that their health conditions do not put the well-being of others at risk. Faculty, staff and other students have a responsibility to address situations in which a medical student may pose a safety risk to patients or others. The Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) program has a responsibility to ensure the safety of patients and others with whom a student engages during their learning activities. The UGME program has a responsibility to notify relevant partners when a student's health conditions may pose a safety risk to patients. The UGME program has a responsibility to facilitate timely processes to support a student's progress in program, whenever possible, while still ensuring safety of others.

Transparency and Privacy: The UGME program will share information only on a need-to-know basis with relevant partners, recognizing that information should be shared in a manner that respects student privacy while also ensuring safety of patients.

The UGME program will share information transparently with a student regarding processes required to mitigate or address safety risks to others. Medical students similarly have an obligation to provide information transparently to fulfill their obligation to protect the safety of others.

Security and Safety: The UGME program will act to safeguard the safety and well-being of patients, as well as students, staff, faculty and members of the community with whom students engage during their learning activities.

Definitions:

Partners: Relevant partners may include:

- **College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS):** The regulatory authority for physicians in Saskatchewan. University of Saskatchewan undergraduate medical students require educational licensure with CPSS in order to participate in the MD program and must abide by CPSS policies.
- **Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA):** as defined by The Provincial Health Authority Act, provides most health services in Saskatchewan, either directly or through affiliated health care organizations
- **Physician Health Program:** A program of the Saskatchewan Medical Association which provides physicians and medical learners with “assessment and treatment, education, counselling and coaching, monitoring, and advocacy to help physicians continue in effective medical practice.”

Office of Student Affairs (OSA): An arms-length office of the College of Medicine Student Services that provides support for students including access to resources for managing health concerns.

Student Academic Management Committee (SAMC): The committee responsible for making promotion decisions, which includes decisions regarding conditions of return to program after leaves. Chaired by the Academic Director, UGME.

Scope of this Policy:

This policy applies to all undergraduate students registered in the Doctor of Medicine (MD) program at the University of Saskatchewan irrespective of the geographically distributed site/campus to which they are currently assigned.

Related policies and documents include:

- CPSS:
 - [Regulatory Bylaws – Part 2 Licensure – Section 2.12 Educational Licensure](#)
 - [Blood -borne Viruses: Screening, Reporting and Monitoring of Physicians/Medical Students](#)
 - [Physicians at Risk to Patients](#)
- UGME:
 - [Functional Core Competencies Required for the Study of Medicine](#)
 - [Leave of Absence Policy](#)
 - [Procedures for Concerns with Medical Student Professional Behaviour](#)
 - [Student Records Policy](#)
 - [Accessibility and Accommodations Information](#)
- University of Saskatchewan:
 - [Academic Misconduct Regulations](#)
 - [Standard of Student Conduct in Non-Academic Matters and Procedures for Resolution of Complaints and Appeals](#)

Policy:

Students may experience health conditions, including but not limited to blood-borne infections, physical health conditions, mental health conditions and substance use disorders, which could pose a safety risk to patients or others with whom they engage during learning activities. Upon recognizing that they have a health condition which may impact the safety of patients or others, a student should consult with the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) to determine if their health condition may reasonably pose a safety risk to patients or others. If it is felt that a risk exists, the student must report that to the UGME program and work with the UGME program/Office of Student Affairs/relevant partners on a need-to-know basis to take steps to ensure the safety of patients and others.

If others such as faculty, staff or students, recognize that a student may have a health condition which could impact the safety of patients or others with whom a student engages during learning activities, this must be reported to the UGME Program, or to the Office of Student Affairs (who will report to the UGME program if it is felt that a safety risk may exist). Investigation and/or further assessment (by the UGME program, partners, or independent health care providers) will be undertaken if needed to determine if a safety risk exists, and to identify ways to mitigate any safety risk. If necessary, the student's participation in the program may be temporarily restricted or a leave required pending results of any investigation/assessment in order to ensure safety of patients or others.

Investigation/assessment will be done in as timely a manner as possible. Investigation/assessment will be initiated within two business days of a report of a potential safety risk concern, with a goal of any investigation/assessment being completed and a plan developed within two weeks of a concern being identified. After completion of investigation/assessment, the UGME program will report, or ensure that the student reports, health concerns that may impact patient safety to the CPSS, and CPSS may require specific assessment, treatment and monitoring in order to authorize ongoing educational registration.

Health information of the student will only be shared with those who have a need to know that information for the purposes of implementation of this policy. To safeguard a student's privacy, health information will be provided by the student/ health care providers to the Office of Student Affairs who will share only relevant information to the UGME program to support the implementation of this policy.

Where reasonable accommodations or adjustments to the student's learning program will allow the student to continue to meet the program's functional core competencies and any program or CPSS requirements to ensure the safety of patients and others, these accommodations or adjustment will be provided to allow the student to continue in program. In situations where such accommodations or adjustments to the learning program cannot be made to allow the student to meet the program's functional core competencies and any program or CPSS requirements to ensure the safety of patients and others, the student may be required to take an extended leave from the program to address health issues, or to discontinue the program

Responsibilities:

The Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education, has responsibility to ensure this policy and associated procedures are followed.

The Academic Director, UGME, has responsibility for approving leaves from the program and overseeing any return to the program, including conditions of return for students. The Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education (or Academic Director as a delegate) has responsibility for determining accommodations or adjustments for ongoing participation in the program, informed (where relevant) by the student's Accommodation Planning Committee.

The Student Academic Management Committee (SAMC) has responsibility for identifying conditions required for students to return to the program after an extended leave. The SAMC also has the authority to make decisions regarding students' progress in program, including decisions regarding promotion and continuation in program.

Students have a responsibility to follow this policy in order to support the safety of patients and others.

The Office of Student Affairs has the responsibility to provide supports to students in seeking appropriate health care services, required assessment, treatment and monitoring (if relevant) and any needed accommodations.

All members of the College of Medicine have a responsibility to report should they have reason to believe a student's health condition may present a safety risk to patients or others with whom a student engages in their learning activities.

Non-compliance:

Non-compliance with the policy by students may be addressed through the UGME Procedures for Concerns with Medical Student Professional Behaviours. Non-compliance with this policy by other members of the program (such as faculty or staff) may be addressed through relevant processes for professional behaviours by faculty and staff.

Contact:

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