

Fatigue Mitigation Policy

Division of Nephrology, University of Washington

Introduction

The purpose of the fatigue policy is to ensure that faculty and fellows develop awareness of the symptoms and dangers of physician fatigue in order to ensure patient safety, establish a work environment with physicians fit for duty, and conducive to fellow education. “Fatigue” may be a precursor to burnout or depression and impacts both patient safety and physician well-being.

Major Causes of Fatigue

- Busy night call leading to circadian rhythm disruption or sleep deficit
- Task or mental overload due to high-volume or high-acuity patient care
- External pressures (e.g. family or child-care) not related to clinical activities
- Non-work related activities such as moonlighting

Fatigue Mitigation

(A) Recognition by either a fellow, co-fellow, or attending the signs of fatigue that may adversely affect patient safety and enactment of a solution to mitigate the fatigue. Fellows should also incorporate self-care during their program and seek support if they deem it necessary.

(B) Inpatient Coverage - Fellows invoking the fatigue policy may sign-off at 3 p.m., provided they notify the inpatient attending. Coverage until 5 p.m. sign-off will be as follows:

1. UWMC rotation: Co-fellow/attending
2. HMC rotation: Co-fellow/attending
3. VA rotation: VA attending or RDU fellow
4. Transplant rotation: Transplant attending or transplant fellow. In the event of a busy service, the Transplant team may reach out to the UWMC General Nephrology consult service for assistance.

(C) Transportation - GME sponsors the Emergency/Safe Ride Home Program detailed in the UW House Staff contract as stated below:

“If a situation arises where a Resident is unable to safely get home at the end of or during his/her shift due to extreme fatigue, illness or the late hour, the Resident may use the Emergency/Safe Ride Home Program. This program provides transportation to the Resident’s place of residence via Uber, Lyft, or taxi from an approved training site. The GME office will reimburse 100% of the fare (which does not include tip) within a reasonable time after receipt of submission. “

(D) Call Rooms – TBD Sleep/Rest Facilities

List of sleep/rest facilities, meditation, and quiet spaces available at each site posted on GME’s website here: <https://sites.uw.edu/uwgme/training-site-info/>

(E) Lactation Rooms

List of Lactation stations available at each site posted on GME’s website here: <https://sites.uw.edu/uwgme/lactation-stations/>