

# **RESIDENT TRANSFER POLICY**

## **PREAMBLE**

The current system of placement of medical graduates into residency programs has severely restricted the opportunity for transfer between residency programs. Significant challenges can arise given the wide and varied circumstances that lead to residency transfer requests. This document outlines the principles and procedures by which residency transfer requests will be addressed, the objective being to ensure that such requests are considered in an objective, fair, and equitable manner.

## **I. PRINCIPLES**

- 1.1 This policy applies to resident transfers within the University of Alberta.
- 1.2 All transfers are at the discretion and require the final approval of the PGME Associate Dean.
- 1.3 The PGME Associate Dean shall act in consultation with the SCRT Chair, and where an appearance has been made before the SCRT, in consultation with the SCRT.
- 1.4 It is recognized that resident transfers can have a significant impact on relatively small residency programs. The PGME Associate Dean will make every effort to ensure that an appropriate balance of positions within small programs is maintained. This rebalancing process may involve a variety of actions (e.g. appeal to the Quotas Committee, looking for one to one trades within the transfer pool, addition, or removal of PGY-1 positions in the subsequent CaRMS match, etc.). Program Directors shall have the opportunity to provide input to the Quotas Committee and the PGME Associate Dean regarding rebalancing issues.
- 1.5 Inter-program transfer is not a mechanism to subvert the CaRMS match.
- 1.6 All parties involved in the transfer process will make every effort to regard each case with the utmost confidentiality.
- 1.7 No resident shall be subject to recrimination for initiating a resident transfer request.
- 1.8 Should a concern or complaint arise that a transfer request involves any issue of intimidation or harassment, existing GFC policies relating to intimidation and harassment shall be referenced by the PGME Associate Dean for potential application and precedence.
- 1.9 The approval of a transfer request in no way guarantees a successful transfer.
- 1.10 Funds for post-graduate training will follow the resident.
- 1.11 During and after the transfer process, every effort shall be made to ensure maximum credit for previous training.
- 1.12 The Office of the PGME Associate Dean will collect and compile data on resident transfers on an annual basis. The data will be reviewed annually by the PGME Council.

## **II. STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESIDENT TRANSFER (SCRT)**

- 2.1 The SCRT is advisory to the PGME Associate Dean on matters relating to the transfer of residents between training programs.
- 2.2 The membership of the SCRT shall consist of:
  - (a) a Chair, who shall be a faculty member selected by the Resident Well-Being Committee and approved by the PGME Council and the Professional Association of Residents of Alberta (PARA). This faculty member shall NOT be a residency Program Director;
  - (b) two faculty members selected by the PGME Council. These members shall NOT be residency Program Directors; and
  - (c) two resident members selected by PARA.
- 2.3 The terms of the SCRT Chair and of other SCRT members shall be two academic years with an option of renewing for one additional term.
- 2.4 The quorum for the committee shall be the Chair, one faculty member, and one resident member. Alternate faculty members will be selected by the PGME Associate Dean. Alternate resident members will be selected by PARA.
- 2.5 The Chair of the SCRT shall:

- (a) serve as a key advisor for residents, program directors, and the PGME Associate Dean in addressing transfer requests;
  - (b) be responsible for assisting and advising the resident, related Program Directors, and the PGME Associate Dean with respect to adhering to the principles and procedures outlined in this document; and
  - (c) make every effort to ensure that transfer requests are addressed with fairness, expediency, and confidentiality.
- 2.6 The SCRT Chair may consult with the PGME Associate Dean at any time during the transfer request procedure. The SCRT Chair will also have other members of the SCRT available for confidential advice and discussion.
- 2.7 The PGME Associate Dean and/or the SCRT Chair reserve the right to refer a transfer request to the entire Standing Committee on Resident Transfer (SCRT) at any time for advice and recommendation.
- 2.8 At any point after a transfer request has become official (see Section 3.6), and before a final determination has been made by the PGME Associate Dean (see Sections 3.11 and 3.12), a resident or a Program Director may request an appearance before the SCRT. Such a request will be directed to the PGME Associate Dean and the SCRT Chair. The SCRT shall meet to hear the resident or Program Director normally within 21 days of receipt of the request.
- 2.9 The following shall govern appearances before the SCRT:
- (a) The SCRT will be responsible for establishing the procedures for any such appearance.
  - (b) All appearances shall be held *in camera*. The SCRT shall have the right to hear from individuals involved in the transfer request to provide information and to answer any questions that the SCRT may have.
  - (c) At the conclusion of the appearance, the recommendations and advice of the SCRT shall be sent to the resident, the Program Directors, and the PGME Associate Dean. All discussion at the level of the SCRT will be considered privileged information and the written record of the committee's proceedings will be considered strictly confidential and accessible exclusively by the committee members only for the duration of the appearance.

### III. PROCEDURE

- 3.1 The initial step of a residency transfer request should be a meeting between the resident and the Chair of the SCRT, to review both the request and the application of principles and procedures set out therein.
- 3.2 If a transfer is subsequently pursued, the SCRT Chair shall write to the Program Director(s) of the potential recipient residency program(s). This letter will be copied to the resident and the PGME Associate Dean.
- 3.3 The acceptability of an incoming resident and the capability of a program to absorb an additional resident will be left to the discretion of the potential recipient residency program. It is expected that the potential recipient residency program will establish its own application, screening, or interview processes to deal with transfer requests from potential incoming residents. It is also expected that the potential recipient program's consideration of the transfer request will be thorough and fair.
- 3.4 The potential recipient Residency Program Committee(s) shall normally determine the resident's acceptability within 21 days of the notification to the Program Director(s) of the transfer request.
- 3.5 Up to this point, all discussions shall be confidential. The potential donor Program Director is not to be contacted by either the potential recipient residency program or the PGME Associate Dean without the written consent of the resident.
- 3.6 The decision of the potential recipient residency program shall be directly communicated in writing to both the resident and the PGME Associate Dean within 21 days, with a copy to the SCRT Chair:

- (a) If the program decides to offer admission, at this point the transfer request is considered to be “official”. A transfer request gaining “official” status does not imply approval of the transfer by the PGME Associate Dean.
  - (b) If the program decides NOT to offer admission, the resident may withdraw the transfer request, seek out a new potential recipient program, or seek the advice of the SCRT Chair.
- 3.7 In order for a transfer to occur on July 1, the transfer request must be made official by March 31 of the same year. In order for a transfer to occur on January 1, the transfer request must be made official by September 30 of the previous year. Therefore, residents will have two opportunities a year to seek an official transfer request. Transfers will normally occur only at these times.
- 3.8 Once a transfer request is official the PGME Associate Dean will contact the resident to seek agreement that the potential donor Program Director be informed of the transfer request. The PGME Associate Dean will only thereafter notify the potential donor Program Director, in writing, of the transfer request.
- 3.9 The potential receiving Program Director shall not advocate on behalf of the resident who is applying to make the transfer.
- 3.10 The donor Program Director will notify the PGME Associate Dean, in writing, of the decision to release, or not to release, the resident within 14 days of a notification having been given of the official transfer request.
- 3.11 If the decision of the donor Program Director is to release the resident:
- (a) The PGME Associate Dean shall notify the resident in writing of the decision of the donor Program Director.
  - (b) If the PGME Associate Dean approves the transfer request, the resident shall be so notified of this final determination. Otherwise, the PGME Associate Dean shall refer the transfer request within 7 days of receipt of the donor Program Director’s decision to the SCRT for advice and recommendation. The SCRT will provide such advice and recommendation within 28 days of such referral. The PGME Associate Dean shall refrain from making a final determination until receipt of the recommendations of the SCRT.
- 3.12 If the decision of the donor Program Director is not to release the resident:
- (a) The PGME Associate Dean shall notify the resident in writing of the decision of the Program Director.
  - (b) The PGME Associate Dean shall refrain from making a final determination as to the transfer request for a period of 7 days so as to allow the resident the opportunity to seek an appearance before the SCRT (in accordance with Section 2.8). If such an appearance is sought, the PGME Associate Dean shall refrain from making a final determination as to the transfer request until receipt of the recommendations of the SCRT.
- 3.13 The final determination of the PGME Associate Dean may be appealed by the resident in writing to the Dean within 21 days of receipt of that determination.
- 3.14 Once the PGME Associate Dean has made a final determination approving a transfer, the resident shall, within 7 days, notify the PGME Associate Dean in writing of agreement to proceed with the transfer.
- 3.15 A resident transfer may or may not require the approval of the PGME funding authority. If the PGME funding authority does not approve of the financial adjustments required by the transfer or if the resident, program directors, and PGME Associate Dean are not able to secure alternative funding, then the transfer will be denied.

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