

Safety Policy in Family Medicine

The safety and security of the Family Medicine Residents is of utmost importance to the Department of Family Medicine. We recognize and agree with the safety policies of each individual hospital or establishment, the University, and the FMRQ. These procedures would include such things as the use of universal precautions and isolation procedures, keeping immunizations up to date, recognizing increased risks during pregnancy, concerns related to overseas electives, etc.

The following is meant as a guideline in the context of the Family Medicine residency.

1. The residents must be provided a copy of their base hospital safety and security policies. They must also participate in all safety teaching and drills.
2. The residents personal information such as home telephone, pager, email, and mobile numbers must under no circumstances be given out to patients.
3. Residents on call must never be alone in the building to examine the patient. In urgent cases the resident may examine the patient in the local Hospital's Emergency Room.
4. Residents should be aware of emergency procedures if they feel threatened by a patient in the examining room. Examination of potentially psychotic or violent patients should be done in an area where help can be summoned quickly. Examinations rooms should have "panic buttons" or some other means of summoning help.
5. An initial home visit should always be done in conjunction with a supervisor. The resident may be alone for subsequent visits, but may request that another health worker be present if the home situation is perceived to be dangerous in any way. All home visits should be scheduled, and the unit should be aware of the time of the visit. The resident should have access to a mobile phone.
6. Dangerous weather conditions must be considered when doing home visits or travelling to and from work for any reason. It is the responsibility of the resident to report that he or she is unable to travel because of the road conditions.
7. Residents must have a resource individual to report any concerns with regards to their safety and security. The default person is the supervisor of the clinic or service involved. It is the responsibility of the residents to report any situation that they feel might present a safety risk. The resident should feel free to report any safety risk without fear of reprisal.
8. Threatening behaviour, harassment, and intimidation are never acceptable; whether the source be a patient, a colleague, an allied health professional, or a supervisor. The resident must be aware of the Faculty policy on intimidation, and should be made aware that they may report such behaviour without fear of reprisal.

It is imperative to remember that safety and security is everyone's responsibility. The above rules are not comprehensive and are to be regarded as the minimum requirement with regards to resident safety and security.