

McGill University Pediatrics Residency Program  
Resident Wellness Policy

The well-being of Residents is of paramount importance to our Program. However, individuals cannot always be well. There is much complexity in life that is only apparent to the individual experiencing it. Resident trainees are frequently stressed through exposure to events over which they have little or no control. Stress is a reality in their lives, yet personal growth can result from trying times and from the choices made in response to difficult situations.

Our aim is to enhance the capacity of trainees to perceive such situations, to approach them with awareness, and to recognize and tolerate negative emotions that may arise therefrom, then respond with clarity. The more developed the inner environment, the more is growth possible from dissonance. The result will be an enhanced personal resilience which will allow learners to thrive and flourish during residency training.

Residents should be encouraged to lead healthy lives and make healthy choices that support them in their personal and professional growth. Enhancement of the psychological, emotional, and physical well-being of the trainee is critical to the development and maintenance of the competent, compassionate and resilient physician. Self-care, therefore, is an important component of personal and professional development, and is a skill that must be nurtured in the context of other aspects of residency training.

In order to diminish professional stress and the symptoms of burnout, the Program must make efforts through formal curricular activities, to enhance the meaning that Residents find in the experience of being a physician. In order to increase the Residents' capacity for resilience, the Program must promote the cultivation of introspective awareness and mindfulness as well as create opportunities for social connectivity within the resident community.

The Resident Wellness Policy therefore outlines the responsibility of the McGill Pediatrics Residency Program and the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education to address trainee wellness, and as well provides the following strategies to support and optimize trainee health, well-being and resilience.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WELLNESS POLICY:

For Residents:

Trainees have a responsibility to themselves, their patients and programs to display

- Proactive self-care and modeling of healthy lifestyles and behaviors
- Effective time management surrounding clinical assignments
- Impairment recognition and notification, either from illness, fatigue, distress or substance use in themselves or in their peers

For the Program:

The program has a responsibility to provide

- Opportunities for resident reflection on aspects of their work and personal life, and promote the ongoing practice of introspective awareness and reflection.
- Opportunities to cultivate the skills of mindfulness and compassion through didactic teaching and experiential activities including Narrative exercises, Appreciative Inquiry and meditation.
- Opportunities to debrief after patient deaths, medical errors and distressing events.
- Opportunities for social connection with professional colleagues.
- Education to recognize the symptoms of burnout, depression, and substance abuse in themselves as well as in their colleagues, and to alert the Program Director, a faculty mentor or Chief Resident when they have concerns.
- Education on implicit bias in healthcare
- Access to appropriate tools for self-screening and follow-up with distressed residents.
- Education regarding fatigue management, in conjunction with the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education:
  - I. Must educate residents to be appropriately rested in order to provide compassionate, high-quality patient care as well as self-care, as per the Resident Health and Safety Policy.
  - II. Must educate residents to recognize the signs of fatigue and sleep deprivation, in alertness management and fatigue mitigation processes, and encourage residents to use these processes to manage the potential negative effects of fatigue on patient care and learning. Please refer to the WELL Office publication for resources concerning sleep and for the Fatigue Management Toolkit. (Weblink: [https://www.mcgill.ca/thewelloffice/files/thewelloffice/thrive\\_summer\\_2018.pdf](https://www.mcgill.ca/thewelloffice/files/thewelloffice/thrive_summer_2018.pdf) )
  - III. Must adhere to the guidelines for working hours as per the FMRQ, in terms of fatigue management. (Weblink: <http://fmrq.qc.ca/files/documents/0e/c5/entente-collective-fmrq-msss-fran-ais.pdf>)
- Adherence to the FMRQ guidelines for resident absences, which includes having time away from work to engage with family and friends, as well as to attend to personal needs and to one's own health, including adequate rest, healthy diet, and regular exercise.
- Adherence to McGill University PGME guidelines for educational accommodation when necessary.
- A respectful, professional and civil learning environment that is free from mistreatment, abuse or coercion, in conjunction with the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education and as per the Resident Health and Safety Policy. Prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior towards and by residents will not be tolerated.
- Education regarding the confidential process for reporting resident mistreatment and concerns, in conjunction with the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education and as per the Resident Health and Safety Policy.

- Education regarding confidential support services for the management of stress and illness, in conjunction with the Office of Postgraduate Medical Education and as per the Resident Health and Safety Policy.