March 15 2020 FAQs

Programs have protected time to study during teaching days. Do residents still have access to protected time to study?

A. Yes, unless emergency and/or urgent circumstances require, then the protected study time can be cancelled.

Are residents on any hospital mailing lists? Could we be added to those e-mail lists? Re: policies, closure of services such as outpatient clinics. There are a lot of rumours, and we don’t have much information.

A. We will make sure the health care institutions are aware of the need to send residents and fellows various updates. The e-mails will go to your McGill e-mail address.

Is there a way for residents to be tested for COVID-19 and have their self-isolation cancelled? As for residents who came back from abroad, can those residents be tested and have their isolation period cancelled or shortened if already started?

A. We recommend you communicate with occupational health within your institution for questions about testing and self-isolation. All residents and fellows who are in self-isolation must communicate with 1-877-644-4545 for COVID-19 testing appointments.

Is there any way to postpone vacation-study days to a later date when we know when the exams will be held? So that these residents can come back to the clinic and help?

A. We encourage these residents to communicate with their Program Directors about changes to schedules.

Many residents have organized their rotations based on the exam and kept more demanding rotations (ICU, CTU, etc.) for after their exam. Is there a possibility to do these rotations now or after the exam?

A. We encourage residents to communicate with their Program Directors about changes to schedules.

What about those returning from travel or those who intend to go on vacation?

A. As of March 12, the Government of Quebec obliges all health care professionals, including residents, returning to Canada from another country (including the United States) to self-isolate for 14 days. IMPORTANT: The health care institution in which you are working or learning will make the final determination of how directives are applied in their facilities, including whether self-isolation is necessary for those returning before March 12. If you have questions, make sure to consult your supervisor or Program Director in your institution.

What is happening concerning international electives, both for learners coming to McGill and our learners going abroad?
A. We have cancelled all electives - international, Canadian, and within Quebec.

What if, due to self-isolation, residents don’t complete at least 75% of their rotation?

A. The principles of the Assessment and Promotion Policy or ‘75% rule’ apply. Residents are not to be penalized if they must self-isolate, even if they are asymptomatic. Complying with public health regulations is critical. In these instances, the Competency Committee and the Resident’s Program Director will look at the resident’s training to determine if competency has been achieved. The resident must be present for at least 50% of the rotation. The Program Director can ask PGME for a waiver, and if accepted the resident will be promoted. However, if while on leave, a resident chooses to vacation outside of Canada, they will be required to self-isolate for 14 days upon their return to Canada. In such cases, the ‘75% rule’ will be strictly applied. No exception to the 75% rule will be made in such instances.

Can residents care for patients with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19?

A. Yes, but only if they have completed their mask-fit test and have taken training in donning and doffing personal protective equipment. The mask-fit test must be done at the institution where the resident is working. Residents need to carry their training certificates with them at all times. When assigning work to residents, Program Directors must use their judgement, taking into consideration the resident’s level of training and skill level. The health and safety of our residents are paramount.

The MSSS directives are clear, if residents do not have access to PPE, they may not care for patients with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.