The following are responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in this document

**Responsible Policy Administrator**
Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education

**Responsible Department**
Graduate Medical Education

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**Policy Statement:**

UMass Medical School does not offer opportunities for observership experience to physicians seeking clinical exposure or experience at UMass Memorial Medical Center. There are limited circumstances, however, that a training program director may wish to allow a physician to observe patient care activities in order to assist in the assessment of the physician as a potential candidate for a UMMS residency program. All requests for Observerships MUST be initiated by the responsible UMass Memorial Residency Program Director. A written Observership Agreement must be signed by the Program Director, the Observer and the Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education. This agreement must indicate the duration of the appointment, the nature of responsibilities and the supervision requirements. The Observership must be in full compliance with procedures included in this policy.

In a separate but related issue, residency and fellowship applicants may want the opportunity to observe patient care as part of the interview process. (see GME Applicant Interview and Observation Policy)

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**Reason for Policy**

Directly supervised patient care observation and discussion can provide a valuable opportunity for residency program directors to observe some competency levels of program applicants who have had no prior LCME-, ACGME- or AOA-accredited medical training or experience. There may also be circumstances where visiting physicians may wish to observe the provision of patient care in order to learn new procedures. Because of licensure regulations and malpractice insurance limitations, there is no current mechanism that allows such individuals to care for UMMMC patients in a “sub-intern” or medical student capacity, even under the supervision of attending physicians. These individuals may function in “observer” status only. They may not have any responsibility or active involvement in the care and treatment of patients.
Entities Affected By This Policy

- Residency and Fellowship Program Directors and Coordinators
- All UMMS Clinical Faculty involved in resident and fellow education

Related Documents

1413 Observers of Patient Care Activities – UMass Memorial Medical Center

Scope

This policy applies to all physician observers who are not currently enrolled in an LCME-accredited or AOA-accredited or foreign medical school and do not hold a Massachusetts Medical License and are not otherwise covered by UMass Memorial Medical Center Policy #1413 Observers of Patient Care Activities.

Responsibilities

The UMMS Residency or Fellowship Program Director is responsible for ensuring that all procedures are followed. The program director or a designated attending physician has full responsibility for the observer. The observer must remain under direct supervision of an attending for all interaction with patients.

Procedures

1. All requests for Observerships MUST be initiated by the responsible UMass Medical School Residency Program Director. A written Observership Agreement must be signed by the Program Director, the Observer and the Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education. This agreement must indicate the duration of the appointment, the nature of responsibilities and the supervision requirements. A copy of this agreement must be kept on file in the Office of Graduate Medical Education. Observers must also sign a UMMS Confidentiality Agreement and a UMass Memorial Medical Center Confidentiality Agreement.

2. Observers are not considered employees of UMass Medical School. However, all observers are expected to abide by all policies and procedures of UMass Medical School and, as applicable, the UMass Memorial Medical Center. Violation of University or hospital policies may result in immediate termination of Observership.

3. Observers are just that. They may observe the examination of patients with the patient’s consent. The observer may discuss findings with the attending physician and develop a differential diagnosis and treatment recommendations. However the actual diagnosis and treatment recommendations are the responsibility of the attending physicians. Observers may not perform procedures or write any notes or orders in the patient record.

4. All residents, fellows and attending physicians who have supervisory responsibilities for the
observer MUST be informed of the observer responsibilities and of supervisor responsibility for writing and signing all notes and orders.

5. At the discretion of the Program Director, a written evaluation may be completed by the supervising attending at the conclusion of the Observership.

6. Observers must complete a full UMMS pre-placement medical evaluation including a health history and immunization status and documentation of TB screening within the past six months.

7. Observers shall provide evidence of coverage by a health insurance policy.

8. UMMC shall provide emergency first aid for any illness or injury to the Observer while on UMass Memorial's premises in the course of the Program through UMMS regular procedure for handling such emergencies, provided that Observers shall be responsible for their own medical expenses whether incurred at UMMC or elsewhere. UMMC and UMMS will not be responsible for providing or financing any ongoing or follow-up care for Observers.

9. Neither UMMC nor UMMS will be responsible for loss or damage to personal property of the Observer occurring at UMMC.

10. The residency/fellowship program is responsible for orientation of observers to Medical Center policies and procedures including infection control, public safety and confidentiality.

11. Observership experience does not count toward months of accredited training nor toward board eligibility.

12. Participation in a program as an observer does not guarantee acceptance into that or any other UMass training program.

13. Observer agrees that all reference to the Observership experience on his/her CV or employment applications will be limited to the written description provided by the OGME that confirms that this experience involved no direct patient care.

14. An individual may be appointed in an Observership status at UMMS for a maximum of three months.

**Approvals**

Approved by Graduate Medical Education Committee

Approved 11/05/2004
Revised 8/12/2008

Date