



**Department of Medicine – Internal Medicine
Postgraduate Program
Wellness Policy & Tips for Success**

Purpose/Policy Statement

Burnout amongst residents in the healthcare environment is an ever prevalent issue. It is critical for residents to maintain their psychological, emotional, and physical well-being throughout residency and into their future careers. Wellness is essential in the path to becoming an empathic and resilient physician. Self-care, like all other things, is a skill that requires attention and must be nurtured. It is our goal, through this policy, to outline not only the responsibilities of the Department of Medicine office but also provide some tools to optimize a healthy lifestyle both physically and mentally.

This policy will be reviewed annually or on an as needed basis to ensure resident health and well-being is supported by the program and hospital.

Tips for Success

- **Managing yourself**
 - **Healthy living:**
 - Keeping healthy snacks on you throughout a busy day helps to ensure you eat even if the day gets busy. Bringing snacks for nights on-call is also a key way to prevent yourself from eating unhealthy food overnight.
 - Bring a water bottle to work to help ensure you stay hydrated throughout the day.
 - Minimize fast food and take-out if possible or make healthy choices when ordering in.
 - Try to avoid relying on substances (i.e. alcohol) as a means to manage your frustrations and fatigue.
 - Try to exercise regularly. This includes jogging, going to the gym (PARO members get access to Goodlife for a reduced cost), doing yoga, or anything else that keeps you active.
 - Go to the doctor when you need to. If that means you need a few hours off during working hours, speak to your consultant/team or program director

- **Sleep:**
 - Despite the demands of a busy resident schedule, setting a regular bedtime is key to ensuring an optimal sleep schedule.
 - Practice good sleep hygiene; put all screens (including Powerchart) away at least 30 minutes before you intend to sleep. You can place a reminder or alarm on your phone to remind you to get ready for bed.
 - Try to limit caffeine intake in the morning if you are post-call. Also try to set an alarm for yourself in the afternoon to avoid significantly altering your sleep schedule after call shifts
 - If you're having trouble falling asleep, try an app like Calm which provides meditation techniques for sleep.

- **Know when to ask for help:**
 - Don't feel scared/embarrassed to ask for help when you're struggling
 - We work on teams in medicine and others are there to support you

- **Managing your time**
 - Book vacation time early! It is important to take time off, even if it is for a 'staycation'. Use all your entitled vacation time/personal days.
 - Take time during the busy week for yourself. Whether it is partaking in a hobby, reading a non-medicine related book or watching a movie - take time to relax.

- **Managing your surroundings**
 - Spend time with your friends and family! Whether these are friends in medicine or outside of medicine, it is important to maintain these relationships as they form your support system.
 - Try to create a space in your home and/or discover a third place that allows you to disconnect from work.

FAQ

What does the Western Internal Medicine Wellness Committee do?

We host a variety of events throughout the year, including debriefing sessions led by staff physicians, wellness academic half day, lunch rounds, Wellness Week with activities based on popular demand, a spring retreat, and dinners throughout the year.

Who do I contact if I am experiencing increased stress?

- **PARO Help-Line** (available 24/7)
 - 1-866-HELP-DOC
- **LHSC Staff Support Program** (available 24/7)
 - Pager 18182

- **Your preceptors on rotation**
- **Your Program Directors** (listed below)
- **Learner Equity & Wellness Office**
 - Dr. Donald Farquhar (Assistant Dean of Postgraduate Wellness)
Donald.Farquhar@sjhc.london.on.ca
 - Pamela Bere (Manager/Counsellor)
(519) 661-2111 x 86250 or pamela.bere@schulich.uwo.ca
- **Your Family Physician**
- **Psychologists/Counsellors** in the London area (ask your GP or Wellness Chairs for a list)

How will this information be disseminated?

The program will provide a specific orientation to wellness for incoming residents aimed at helping trainees integrate wellness into their residency training and knowing how to seek out resources when necessary.

For more information on Wellness Policies, please contact:

1) The Department of Medicine

- domedication@lhsc.on.ca

2) Your Program Directors

- **Dr. Sheri-Lynn Kane**
 - SheriLynn.Kane@sjhc.london.on.ca
- **Dr. Hatem Salim**
 - Hatem.Salim@lhsc.on.ca

3) Wellness Coordinators

- Rotate on an annual basis, please check this website for updated contact information:

https://www.schulich.uwo.ca/deptmedicine/about_us/people/education/resident_representatives.html