

UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION
SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY
CLERKSHIP ON-CALL STATEMENT

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Next revision: 2026

PURPOSE

As part of Clerkship, all clinical clerks are required to take call on some rotations. Some of these rotations will include “in house” call and others will involve call from home. On-call experience is considered to be an important learning opportunity. Being on-call does not necessarily entitle a student to be excused from clinical duties because they are “post-call” subject to the specific policies outlined below.

DEFINITIONS

UME	Undergraduate Medical Education
CEC	Clerkship and Electives Committee
LE	Learner Experience
Weekend Call	Saturday morning until Monday morning. Note that FRIDAY is not a weekend day.

STATEMENT

- 1.0 The “On-Call” policy, as approved by CEC, applies to all rotations.
- 2.0 Clinical Clerks will not be scheduled for in-hospital call duty more than:
 - One night in four
 - One weekend in three; the weekend duty will be calculated over the average length of the rotation
- 3.0 Requests from residents or others for students to do call more frequently than this will not be accepted and if raised shall be discussed immediately with the Rotation Director.
- 4.0 Clinical clerks will be relieved of work duties once they have completed handover after an in-house call. Total time from beginning work on a call day to being dismissed post call should not exceed 26 hours.

5.0 In those departments where the clerk is required to do shift work (emergency medicine, ICU, etc) the guideline is a maximum work week of 60 hours or five shifts of 12 hours each. As per Standards for Workload during Clerkship, these hours include both clinical and education hours.

- For the specific details of each rotation, students are to refer to the Clerkship syllabus.

6.0 A clinical clerk will not be expected to take call from home for two consecutive weekends.

7.0 Home call will not exceed more than one night in two.

8.0 For students doing call from home, they will be excused from clinical duties the day following call if they were in hospital after midnight. If such an occasion arises, the clerk must notify the most senior resident or preceptor as well as provide appropriate handover and notify their team.

9.0 All students must attend the teaching seminar for that day if the seminar commences at 0900 hours or earlier. If the seminar occurs later in the day, they are excused from the seminar for that day. Students are still responsible for the educational content taught during post-call sessions.

10.0 On the last day of a rotation, call will be over at 1800 hours on that day.

11.0 Any conflicts or concerns with respect to the Call Policy should be reviewed with the Clerkship Director(s), or brought to the attention of the student reps on the CEC.

12.0 Notification of On-Call Schedule in Clerkship

- Attendance at clinical duties and teaching during clerkship is part of the core professional and academic responsibilities of medical students. This includes being on-call during a number of rotations in clerkship. Timely notification of on-call schedules is an essential part of ensuring optimal student education during clerkship.
- The basis of the notification policy includes the following:
 - 12..1 On-call duties are an essential part of clinical education during clerkship.
 - 12..2 The provision of on-call duties constitutes a professional responsibility
 - 12..3 The provision of the call schedule on a timely basis is a professional responsibility of the Director and Admin Coordinator of the rotation.
 - 12..4 Medicine is practiced in a real-life environment, and rare and unusual circumstances may require changes in the on-call policy

in an unexpected manner.

12..5 Final on-call schedules will be provided to students a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of the rotation.

12..6 It is possible that the on-call schedule may need to be changed after the schedule is distributed due to rare and unusual events. In this case, students will be informed of the reason for the change and will be asked to assist in schedule changes on a volunteer basis. It is expected that this dialogue will be bilateral, i.e., students will have an opportunity to share which dates they are available and which dates they are not. If the required change cannot be accommodated on a voluntary basis, the schedule may be changed by the leadership of the rotation to address the rare and unusual circumstance. Students and faculty must remember that on-call duties and notification of the call schedule are professional responsibilities and governed by the Statement on Professionalism and will be taken as such by the CEC.

13.0 Pregnancy and Call Policy: The current policies governing pregnancy during medical school include provision for a non-academic leave of a year or a shorter period (four weeks). Leave is voluntary and the decision to undertake leave is at the discretion of the student. In the event that pregnancy occurs during clerkship:

- Students who are pregnant will be excused from call duty after the twenty-seventh (27th) week of gestation.
- For educational experiences that are call-dependent, the Rotation Director will be responsible for ensuring that alternate educational experiences are made available to the student.
- As the planning for relief from call and for alternate educational experiences takes some time, notification of need for relief and educational experiences should be made to the LE office at the earliest possible opportunity.