

**UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION**  
**SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY**  
**STANDARDS FOR WORKLOAD DURING CLERKSHIP**

**Date of last review:** April 2018  
**Revised:** Approved CEC May 2023  
**Approved by the Curriculum Committee:** June 2023  
**Next revision:** 2026

**PURPOSE**

The Doctor of Medicine Program (“Program”) course Meds 5475 Clinical Clerkship in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at Western University oversees and directs Year 3 curricular clinical learning in hospitals and other health care facilities in London, Windsor and the Distributed Network. In this stage of medical education, students will be asked to take an active role in delivering patient care under supervision during hours that involve evenings, overnight and weekends as part of the health care team.

This will require support for a balance between clinical patient care service and individual and group mandatory and independent learning.

CACMS Accreditation Element 8.8 mandates outlining and overseeing hours spent in curricular learning:

**8.8 Monitoring Time Spent in Educational and Clinical Activities**  
The curriculum committee and the program’s administration and leadership implement effective policies and procedures regarding the amount of time medical students spend in required activities, including the total number of hours medical students are required to spend in clinical and educational activities during required clinical learning experiences.

This Statement will provide direction for students, residents and faculty in allocating responsibilities for patient care and learning in Clerkship to allow for student education, wellness and development of clinical competency.

**DEFINITIONS**

**On-Call:** Hospital practice referring to a status in which a physician can be reached and arrive at the hospital within 30 minutes of being paged

**Workload:** The amount of clinical patient care related work that a health provider is expected to perform

Working Hours: Time spent in the act of delivering, communicating, planning, reviewing and documenting direct patient care

## STATEMENT

The total number of hours a Year 3 student or “clinical clerk” is expected to work in a week shall not exceed 60 hours or five shifts of 12 hours each, excluding on-call working hours. These hours include both clinical and education hours.

- Students not on call for patient care will not be supported to work electively on weekends in the assigned rotation or any other rotation.
- It is the responsibility of every site director for each clerkship rotation to actively monitor adherence to all aspects of this standard and to intervene if any are breached.
- Each rotation will request oversight of this policy during routine feedback from students during their mid-rotation and end-of-rotation interviews and surveys.
- Students in a clinical rotation cannot undertake additional learning in other clinical disciplines when not on call. Time not on call is created for individual independent learning to reach the education objectives of that rotation.
- Concerns from students, clinicians, residents or administrative staff members regarding breaches of the standard should be brought to the attention of the Rotation Director/Academic Director or delegate immediately. If the response is unsatisfactory or if a pattern of breaches emerges, the matter should next be raised with the Chair, CEC and failing that the Vice-Dean UME or the Associate Dean, Windsor, for action.
- If notified of a concern, the block coordinator shall consider all the following:
  - Approach the direct supervisor of the student to clarify their expectations of the student and rotation, and remind them of the Schulich Medicine Workload Policy for Clerkship.
  - Monitor and record the discussions with the student and faculty
  - If the situation does not change, reassign the student to a different supervisor in this rotation and notify the Chair of Clerkship
  - Ensure that the student is safe and is not experiencing any personal health issues.
  - Advise the student this will not impact their grade and rotation outcome
  - Offer the student support from the LEO Office.
- An annual central audit to monitor work hours will be conducted by the Chair, Clerkship and Electives Committee relayed to the MD Program Evaluation Committee and the Curriculum Committee through the academic year.