

STATEMENT 3.2.11 – STATEMENT ON “ON-CALL” IN THE CLINICAL CLERKSHIP

Undergraduate Medical Education

Approved by:	Curriculum Committee
Date of original approval:	August, 2013
Date of last review:	November, 2018

I. 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.

II. DEFINITIONS

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

III. 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 to do call more frequently than this will not be accepted and if raised shall be discussed immediately with the Rotation Director.
- 4.0 Should the clinical clerk have had less than four hours of sleep due to their clinical duties while on in-hospital call,, he/she will be relieved of further duties after an adequate time for handover of patient care responsibilities. This does not apply to educational responsibilities (e.g., lectures and seminars). Students should be aware that during holiday periods, the expectations for call may be heavier.
- 5.0 In those departments where the clerk is required to do shift work (emergency room, ICU, etc) the guideline is a maximum work week of 60 hours or five shifts of 12 hours each. As per Statement 3.2.1, these hours include both clinical and education hours.
 - For Emergency Medicine, clinical clerks will not be scheduled for more than 8 shifts in a 2 week period. Clinical clerks will be expected to work one weekend within the 2 weeks. Weekday time off requests may result in a clerk working 2 weekends to insure that the full complement of shifts is fulfilled. Clerks working in the Emergency Department will be expected to work a variety of shifts that span all hours of the day. A minimum of 8 hours off clinical duty must occur between shifts.

- For Obstetrics & Gynaecology, clinical clerks are scheduled on night float shifts and 24-hour call over the course of the rotation. Clinical clerks will not be scheduled for more than 7 overnight shifts in six weeks, including both night float shifts and 24-hour call. Night float shifts will not exceed four 15-hour shifts in one week (60 hours total).
- For Medicine, clinical clerks will have a maximum of 7 calls in six weeks on CTU. Buddy Call may be assigned to supplement solo calls – the number of solo calls can vary depending on service needs. During Medicine subspecialty selectives, the on-call duties will vary depending on whether the rotation is either an inpatient or outpatient service. On-call duties during the Selective rotations are at the discretion of the rotation and may vary from service to service but will not exceed 1:4 in-house calls and 1:3 at-home calls.

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 may be excused from clinical duties the day following call if they have had less than four hours of sleep due to their clinical duties while on call. If such an occasion arises, the clerk must notify the most senior resident on the service prior to leaving the hospital and review why they need to be excused from clinical duties.

9.0 All students must round with their teams in the morning following call and should be excused from clinical duties once morning rounds are complete.

10.0 All students must attend the teaching seminar for that day if the seminar commences at 0900 hrs 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.

11.0 Clerks who are on-call before an Academic Half Day are not excused from clinical duties earlier than is required to travel to attend the Half day, i.e. clerks on call the night before an Academic Half Day are expected to work their full scheduled shift (up to the dismissal time of 12 noon before the session).. If the clerk is too tired to attend the Half Day session after being on-call, they may be excused if they notify the Clinical Education Coordinator (x 86480) **before** the Half Day begins, although the clerk would still be expected to be familiar with the material. Powerpoint slides (if provided) and an audio recording of the presentations are posted to OWL within a few days after the Half Day.

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

13.0 Any conflicts or concerns with respect to the Call Policy should be reviewed with the Clerkship Director, Dr. Lisa Shepherd, or brought to the attention of the student reps on the CEC.

14.0 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:
 - 14..1 On-call duties are an essential part of clinical education during clerkship.
 - 14..2 The provision of on-call duties constitutes a professional responsibility pursuant to the Professionalism Policy at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry.

- 14..3 The provision of the call schedule on a timely basis is a professional responsibility of the Director and Admin Coordinator of the rotation pursuant to the Code of Conduct at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry.
- 14..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.
- 14..5 **Final** on-call schedules will be provided to students at a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of the rotation.
- 14..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. In the event that 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 subject to the policies outlined above and will be taken as such by the CEC.

15.0 Pregnancy and Call Policy: The current policies governing pregnancy during medical school include provision for 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, consideration needs to be made as to when students should be excused from call duty.

- 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 LEW office at the earliest possible opportunity.