

**NEPHROLOGY FELLOWSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM – WESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**TRAINEE WELLNESS/ILLNESS POLICY AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

---

**Revised:** November 21, 2024

**Reviewed and Approved by the RPC Committee:** December 17, 2024

**Date of Next Scheduled Review:** December 2027

**PREAMBLE**

The overall purpose of the Trainee Wellness Committee (RWC) for the Nephrology Training Program is to promote the well-being of nephrology trainees at Western University. Promotion of wellness may be provided through various means, including but not limited to, educational events, social events, mentorship, coaching, peer support and formal support at the postgraduate level.

**POLICY REFERENCES**

[General Standards of Accreditation for Institutions with Residency Programs](#)

[Standards of Accreditation for Residency Programs in Nephrology \(adult\)](#)

[PGME Fatigue Risk Management Guidelines](#)

[Learner Experience](#)

**TRAINEE WELLNESS COMMITTEE COMPOSITION**

The Nephrology Trainee Wellness Committee is comprised of the following:

- 3 Physician Wellness Leads (faculty representatives) – Dr. John Johnson, Dr. Lakshman Gunaratnam and Dr. Andrea Cowan
- Trainee Wellness Representatives: Chief Nephrology Resident(s)
- Nephrology Program Administrator

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

- Promote trainee wellness and positive coping mechanisms.
- Monitor trainee well-being and identify any factors (positive or negative) which would impact trainee well-being and take the necessary steps to act upon this information.
- Create and maintain a strong support network within the program.
- Create a culture within the program that embraces and fosters trainee well-being and community.

**TRAINEE WELLNESS COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The Trainee Wellness Committee will serve in an advisory role to the Residency Program Committee (RPC).

- Educate and increase awareness about issues affecting trainee wellness through such avenues as [Learner Experience](#) & journal articles.
- Organize and support “community events” such as a welcome BBQ, semi-annual social events.
- Ensure trainees have access to support when needed, i.e.: physician wellness leads, mentorship opportunities, coaching etc...
- Encourage trainees to engage in peer support.

#### **PHYSICIAN WELLNESS LEAD RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Serve as the secondary point of contact for wellness-related issues (including personal issues) that are brought forward by the program administrator, faculty, or other trainees. This leader will operate independent from the postgraduate program in order to minimize concerns related to confidentiality.
- Serve as physician contact points for individuals in their year who are undergoing challenges, provide advice, and/or model resilient coping.
- Solicit information and feedback from the chief residents regarding institutional and personal challenges faced by trainees.
- Meet one-on-one with each trainee on a semi-annual basis to discuss wellness and identify any factors that may compromise their wellness.
- Coordinate with the Assistant Dean, [Learner Experience](#) for help and advice regarding personal and wellness related issues as needed.
- If the physician wellness lead is unable to support the trainee due to a conflict of interest, the wellness lead will refer the trainee to one of the two remaining co-wellness leads. If there continues to be a conflict of interest, then the trainee will be referred to an external wellness lead within the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry.

#### **TRAINEE RESPONSIBILITY**

- Postgraduate trainees are responsible for reporting fit for duty and able to perform their clinical duties in a safe, appropriate, and effective manner. Postgraduate trainees have a professional responsibility to appear for duty appropriately rested and must manage their time before, during and after clinical assignments to prevent excessive fatigue.
- Postgraduate trainees are responsible for assessing and recognizing the signs of impairment, including that which is due to illness and/or fatigue in themselves. Trainees experiencing such impairment are to seek appropriate help with their Wellness Lead, Program Director, or PGME office.
- If a postgraduate trainee is experiencing any disability-related barriers, including physical or mental conditions that could impair their ability to perform their duties, they are encouraged to seek assistance from their Wellness Lead, Program Director, or Learner

Experience (LE) office before clinical, educational and/or professional performance, interpersonal relationships or health are adversely affected. Trainees are entitled to reasonable accommodation in accordance with and subject to applicable law and policy (see Accommodation Policy).

- If a postgraduate trainee recognizes physical, mental, or emotional problems affecting the performance of another trainee, including impairment due to excessive fatigue, that trainee should encourage their fellow trainee to notify the Program Director or designate.
- A trainee is not expected to work if they experience a medical illness and are unable to perform their clinical duties. In this event, they are required to inform their immediate supervisor for that day as well as the Program Administrator.
- At no time will trainees be denied visits for acute care for illnesses (physical or mental) or dental emergencies during work hours.

### **ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS**

- Consultants arrange informal get-togethers throughout the year, providing an opportunity to check in with the trainees in a safe environment. The gathering provides an opportunity to share stories in a casual atmosphere.
- Trainees have the opportunity to meet with consultants on an individual basis once or twice a year. This meeting provides an opportunity to build a connection and to check in with the trainee. Conversations from these meetings are held in strict confidence and are not shared at mentorship meetings.
- [OMA Health and Well Being](#)
- [HealthForceOntario- Physician Wellbeing](#)

### **BUDGET**

The Residency Wellness Committee is allocated \$3000 per academic year to support initiatives such as a welcome BBQ and social events throughout the year.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY/REVIEW**

- The committee will update the Residency Program Committee and [Learner Experience](#) office with trainee wellness status and challenges on an as needed basis.
- The committee will conduct a meeting at least once every two years to review whether the terms of reference are being met and identify any internal concerns.