

Policy: Clinical Backup Coverage

PURPOSE:

To provide a system for clinical care coverage during unanticipated absences by Pediatric Emergency Medicine (PEM) Fellows and facilitate communication to all ED faculty, fellows, and support staff during these events.

BACKGROUND:

PEM Fellows rotation in the UMHS Children's Emergency Services clinical area & HMC Children's Emergency Department are required experiences in the training program. Fellows function in graduated responsibility roles to provide care, supervise house staff, teach at the bedside and ultimately serve as physician leaders during clinical duty. Unanticipated absences by fellows has a negative impact on their education, results in decreased physician staffing which in turn affects both patient care and education of other house staff and may affect schedules of co-fellows. Attendance during clinical care is a professional responsibility of all house officers and faculty. Back up clinical coverage will be provided by fellows within the limits of ACGME program definitions, policies (including duty hour limitations) and the UMHS PEM Fellowship program. This policy addresses operations, roles of fellows, faculty and fellowship program staff when an unanticipated fellow absence is communicated to the program.

PRIORITIES FOR BACK UP CLINICAL COVERAGE:

- Remove the burden of sorting out unanticipated absence/fellow coverage from the CES faculty; provide fellow coverage during the most likely volume burden in the CES.
- Establish a "system" for providing fellow coverage in event of emergency/unanticipated absence.
- Priority for fellow back up coverage of shifts (in descending order of priority):
 - Overnights (and any shift where senior fellows are in "staff" positions ex: 3-11 potentially during holidays),
 - Shifts covered by a single attending
 - Fellow swing shifts (6p-2a)
 - Shifts covered with two attendings

BACK UP SYSTEM OPERATION:

Fellows are required to notify the UMHS PEM fellowship Program Coordinator of absences at the earliest time. Fellows should call the PC during 7 a.m. – 4 p.m. hours of operations (leaving a message if answering machine is on) AND e-mail the PC, PD and senior fellow covering back up operations (noted on all CES calendars). After 4pm the PD should be paged AND e-mail to the PC, PD and senior fellow backup coordinator should ensue.

During work hours (7 a.m. – 4 p.m.), the PC, in conjunction with the Senior Fellow will review the schedule and make a decision regarding coverage needs. The PC will then contact fellow(s) available/assigned to back up the necessary shift. The program will use UMHS pagers as the PRIMARY mechanism for contact; "BACKUP EMERGENCY" will be entered in the alpha numeric page request. Fellows are required to respond within 30 minutes. The PC will edit the back up coverage database. After 4 p.m., the PD will contact the senior fellow and together they will review and decide appropriate coverage needs; contacting fellows as necessary and updating

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the PC for tracking purposes.

The PC (before 4 p.m.) and the PD (after 4 p.m.) will be responsible to notify the CES faculty affected by absences (and rearranged schedules) and support staff.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Fellows

- All fellows are required to submit contact information (and keep updated) to the program including: Home, Cell, Pager
- All fellows are required to carry (on their person) the UMHS pager in working order.
- It is expected that unanticipated absences by fellows will be rare events.
- All fellows are expected to participate in back up emergency operations to support other fellows and patient care operations.
- All fellows are required to respond to “BACKUP EMERGENCY” page within 30 minutes unless on program approved vacation or leave.
- Senior fellows (2nd and 3rd) year fellows assign themselves to monthly work calendars (UMHS CES and HMC) as available to assist in back up operations (program ED administration); these assignments are communicated to the PC (who facilitates these on the printed UMHS CES and HMC calendars).
- Senior fellow assigned to assist during back up coverage operations provide the PC with “best options” for coverage for the absence (fellows available and shifts/work to be covered, rearrangement of future shifts if necessary).
- Fellow’s record of absences during scheduled duty time will be reviewed with the PD; make up shifts/shift reductions due to coverage as per PD.

Faculty

- Communicate any knowledge of possible fellow absence to the PC and PD.
- Communicate any problems with program arranged coverage to the PC and PD.

Program Coordinator (7 a.m. – 4 p.m.)

- Facilitates communication to Senior fellow backup assistant, PD regarding impending fellow absences
- Works with the Senior Fellow backup assistant to determine best coverage options
- Facilitates communication to fellows available to cover absence
- Communicates directly to affected faculty/staff changes (e-mail / phone) in fellow scheduling as soon as possible once scheduling is confirmed.
- Tracks absences in program files

Program Director (after 4 p.m.)

- Facilitates communication to Senior fellow backup assistant, PC regarding impending fellow absences
- Works with the Senior Fellow backup assistant to determine best coverage options

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- Facilitates communication to fellows available to cover absence
- Communicates to affected faculty/staff changes in fellow scheduling
- Follows up with fellows regarding absence
- Reviews absences with fellows during quarterly program reviews.
- Adjusts shift numbers per fellow as necessary and within ACGME duty hour guidelines as necessary.

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Revised							
Initial(s)	mn						