

Policy Title: Disaster and Extreme Situation	Policy Number: SOMGME-012
Original Date: 15-11-2023	Next Review Date: 15-11-2027

I. Purpose of the Policy

To address administrative support, including assistance for continuation of trainee assignments, for Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs and residents/fellows in the event of a disaster that may or may not lead to interruption in patient care. The policy addresses situations that align with level 4 “Maximum Readiness - Strict Emergency Mode” at LAU School of Medicine.

II. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all trainees, including residents and fellows, during times of disaster or extreme emergencies that pose an immediate threat to life, health, or property and require urgent action.

III. Definition

A disaster is an event or series of events that cause significant alteration to the residency/fellowship experience of one or more programs.

A disaster would include any or all the following:

- A. Natural disaster such as an earthquake, fire, floods, hurricanes etc.
- B. A medical emergency as a pandemic
- C. Armed conflicts (war, military coup, terrorist attack...)
- D. Large-scale accidents (chemical spills, industrial explosions...)

- E. Any situation that overwhelms local resources and necessitates coordinated response efforts

IV. Policy Statement:

It is the LAU SOM GME policy to maintain financial and administration support for its GME programs and its Trainees in the event of a disaster and/or interruption in patient care. The LAU GME will apply this policy to abide by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education-International when deemed necessary and will strive to restructure and reconstitute the adequate educational experience as quickly as possible following a disaster.

The Assistant Dean for Graduate Medical Education (i.e., DIO) along with the program directors are responsible for ensuring that all procedures are followed.

A. Procedure

1. Communication is paramount in a disaster.
 - a. DIO and program director information must be maintained in duplicative manner (cell phones, home phones, email, and pagers) to ensure appropriate communication. Programs must have their own communication systems.
 - b. The DIO and program directors will establish a central point of operations from which to manage the disaster response.
 - c. Program directors must be able to account for all members of their programs to the Office of Graduate Medical Education.
 - d. A roster containing trainee contact information including cell phones, place of residence, an emergency contact and a landline if available is maintained in a

document on LAU portal, shared by the LAU Dean's office, LAUMC CMOs, program directors, faculty, and staff

- e. All faculty and staff must always maintain up-to-date personal contact information.
 - f. When possible, residents and/or fellows will notify their program directors or the office of GME as to where they will be evacuating (if necessary for eg. in case of physical damage to the hospital or place of residence) if time allows.
2. The GMEC will develop an action plan for residents/fellows that might include housing of residents/fellows after careful consideration from the perspective of resident education and the overriding commitment of all physicians to patient care during emergency.
- a. Assessment of gaps in training must be made immediately by the Assistant Dean for GME, the Dean and other institutional leadership.
 - In the case of complete interruption of training that exceeds one month, program directors, after consulting with the CCC, should submit their recommendation to the DIO regarding the possibility of remedial, extension of training or transfer to other programs/ training sites as needed.
 - The DIO in collaboration with higher administration will ensure that financial and administrative support of all programs and residents/fellows will continue for the duration of the emergency.
 - b. Patients must be provided for in the event of a disaster.

- Each department will have a protocol outlining resident/fellow responsibilities should a disaster occur. Program faculty, staff and residents are expected to attend to personal and family safety and then render humanitarian assistance where needed.
- Residents and fellows must be expected to perform according to the professional expectations of them as physicians, taking into account their degree of competence, level of training, and context of specific situation.
- Once a disaster is called upon by LAUMC, first-line emergency teams, as devised and approved by the corresponding programs, should attend to their duties at the hospital. All second-line emergency teams should be on a standby mode.
- Residents/fellows should not be first-line responders without consideration of their level of training and competence and/or beyond the limits of their self-confidence in their own abilities.
- Medical centers should not rely only on trainees for hospital coverage during a disaster. All faculty and staff members are expected to answer the call.
- Emergency teams will be required to stay and care for patients.
- Additional resident teams may be needed to stay at the hospital to ensure patient care is maintained. Duty hours and fatigue will be monitored in such situations.

- c. In the event of an extreme emergent situation, called for by the President of the university or hospital administration, the following should be followed:
- The program directors' (PDs) first point of contact for answers to questions regarding a local extreme emergent situation must be their Office of Graduate Medical Education/DIO.
 - The Program Director of each affected residency/fellowship program shall communicate with the DIO to determine the clinical duties, schedules, and alternate coverage arrangements for each residency program.
 - PDs are expected to follow their institutional disaster policies regarding communication processes to update the DIO regarding any specialty-specific issues.
 - The DIO will update the accreditation body (for accredited programs) of the situation if (and, only if) the extreme emergent situation causes serious, extended disruption that might affect the Institution/Program's ability to remain in substantial compliance with ACGMEI requirements. If notice is provided to the ACGMEI, the DIO will notify the accredited body when the extreme emergent situation has been resolved.
 - The DIO will meet with affected Program Directors to establish the needed monitoring to ensure the continued safety of residents/ fellows and patients through the duration of the situation; to determine that the situation has been resolved; and to assess additional actions to be taken

(if any) to restore full compliance with each affected resident's completion of the education program requirements.

B. Relocation:

This section addresses both temporary and permanent relocation. In case of devastating emergency where the training of trainees is not possible within the training sites, other universities and medical centers will be contacted to reallocate trainees to those sites.

The DIO will work with the involved residents/fellows, program directors, program chairs, and leadership of receiving institutions to:

1. Arrange temporary transfers to other programs/institutions until such time as the residency/fellowship program can provide adequate educational experience for each of its residents/fellows.
2. Contact the trainees on a periodic basis updating them about the situation at the main training site.
3. Residents/Fellows will continue to receive their pay and benefit for one additional month until other arrangements are in place.
4. Assist the residents/fellows in permanent transfers to other programs/institutions should the situation be considered permanent or the return to normal expected to take a very long time.

Refer to the GME policy on Reduction or Closure of the GME Programs and Discontinuing of Major Participating Sites.

C. Provision of Academic/ Educational Activities

Didactic activities should be resumed virtually (in a synchronous or asynchronous mode) based on the availability of internet and other connection methods.

Didactics directly related to the emergency and special training related to the disaster should be prioritized eg. trauma care, biological or chemical warfare, mechanical ventilation....

1. Trainees who want to volunteer in other frontline institutions or more affected areas should submit a request to the program director.
2. Trainees who wish to travel abroad during a disaster should inform the PD as soon as possible. In the case of travel, the trainee's salary will be suspended.

The resumption of their training will be dependent on total interruption duration and the lag in exposure when compared to other trainees who stayed in the country.

Temporary or permanent transfer cannot be arranged by the GME to trainees who are outside the country but the GME will support trainees if they initiate the process with a program outside Lebanon.

Approved by	Date
GMEC	17-11-2024
Interim Review	15-11-2024