

SAN ANTONIO UNIFORMED SERVICES HEALTH EDUCATION CONSORTIUM
Allergy/Immunology Fellowship Program
DUTY HOURS POLICY
AY 2011-2012

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND APPLICABILITY: During all clinical rotations within the Allergy/Immunology Fellowship program, trainees and staff shall conform to existing ACGME, RRC and SAUSHEC duty hour policies. This includes rotations at non-SAUSHEC institutions. The program will work to ensure an environment that is optimal for both fellow education and for patient care, and that minimizes undue stress and fatigue among fellows while providing for continuity of care. Due to the intermittent and unpredictable nature of important patient care, GME opportunities and the need to always insure continuity of care, duty hours can occasionally be exceeded. This is only applicable when it is in the best interest of the fellow's training and/or continuity of care. However, duty hours may *not* be consistently exceeded and may never be exceeded just to have fellows provide service. Further, it is the responsibility of the supervising staff to ensure that patient and fellow safety is assured at all times.

2. DEFINITIONS. Duty hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the residency program, i.e., patient care (both inpatient and outpatient), administrative duties related to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled academic activities such as conferences. Duty hours do not include reading and preparation time spent away from the duty site or when the fellow chooses to conduct elective, personal study activities at the duty site while in an off-duty status.

3. SPECIFIC DUTY HOUR LIMITATIONS:

a. Fellows will not be scheduled for more than 80 duty hours per week, averaged over a 4-week period.

b. Fellows will on average (over a 4-week rotation) have one day (24 hours) out of seven free of patient care responsibilities.

c. There is no in-house call for the Allergy/Immunology Fellowship program.

d. Continuous on-site duty must not exceed 24 consecutive hours. Fellows may remain on duty for up to four additional hours to ensure an appropriate, effective, and safe transition of care as defined in Allergy/Immunology RRC Program Requirements. Residents who have satisfactorily completed the transition of care may, at their discretion, attend an educational conference that occurs during the four hours. No new patients or procedures may be accepted or performed, respectively, after 24 hours of continuous duty nor may fellows be assigned to outpatient clinics during this four hour period.

e. Adequate time for rest and personal activities must be provided. This should consist of a 8-hour time period provided between all daily duty periods.

f. While it is desirable that residents in their final years of education have 8 hours free of duty between scheduled duty periods, there may be circumstances (required continuity of

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care for a severely ill or unstable patient, or a complex patient with whom the resident has been involved; events of exceptional educational value; or, humanistic attention to the needs of a patient or family) when these residents must stay on duty to care for their patients or return to the hospital with fewer than eight hours free of duty.

g. At-home call is not subject to the every third night limitation. However, at-home call will not be so frequent as to preclude rest and reasonable personal time for each fellow. Fellows taking at-home call will be provided with 1 day in 7 completely free from all educational and clinical responsibilities averaged over a 4-week period. When fellows are called into the hospital from home, the hours fellows spend in-house are counted toward the 80-hour limit. The Program Director and the faculty will monitor the demands of at-home call and make scheduling adjustments as necessary to mitigate excessive service demands and/or fatigue.

4. CONTINGENCY PLAN: The Program Director will implement a contingency/backup system so that patient care can continue in a safe manner during periods of heavy use or unexpected fellow shortages or concerns of fellow fatigue. Depending on the circumstances, timing and duration, this will consist of utilization of either the back-up weekend first year fellow covering or a second year fellow to cover after-hour at-home call. The Program Director and supervising faculty will monitor fellows for the effects of sleep loss and fatigue, and take appropriate action in instances where overwork or fatigue may be detrimental to fellow performance and the well-being of the fellows and/or the patients. Depending on circumstances, coverage may be provided by other fellows during the duty day or staff if fellow coverage is detrimental to fellow or patient safety.

5. EDUCATION. Fellows and staff of the Allergy/Immunology Program will receive annual training to recognize the signs of fatigue and to how apply preventive and operational countermeasures. All fellows, including those rotating from another program will be made aware of the program's Duty Hour Policy at the beginning of the program, academic year or rotation.

6. DUTY HOUR POLICY COMPLIANCE MONITORING. The Program Director and faculty will monitor compliance with this policy by monitoring call and duty schedules, direct observation by supervising staff, interviews/discussions/surveys with fellows, review of fellow evaluations of rotations and by maintaining an open door policy so that any fellow that has a concern have them addressed immediately. The Program Director will work with the clinic rotation coordinator of offsite rotations to ensure that duty hour limitations are followed on those rotations and this requirement will be written into the rotations PLA. If problems are suspected the Program Director will notify the Dean and gather direct duty hour data to clarify the problem and come up with immediate solutions. In addition, the SAUSHEC GMCEC's Duty Hour Subcommittee will confirm program compliance during an annual duty hour check of the program.

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7. MOONLIGHTING. In keeping with SAUSHEC policy, Allergy/Immunology fellows are prohibited from “moonlighting” and other activities outlined in the SAUSHEC Policy Manual.

/SIGNED PROGRAM DIRECTOR/
Program Director, Allergy/Immunology