Distance Guidelines for Clinical Site Assignments

Senior Leader: Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education
Responsible University Officer: Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education
Policy Owner: Assistant Dean, Curriculum
Policy Contact: Director of Clinical Immersion and Transitions

POLICY STATEMENT

Required Clerkships
To provide students with a relevant, comprehensive and high quality medical education, the UMMS places students at teaching sites that may be at a distance away from the student’s home campus (see ‘Definitions’) for required clinical placements. For required clerkship assignments, medical students should expect to travel to a hospital or clinic located within a 50-mile radius of their home campus. Site assignments are made such that a student should expect to:
  ● not have more than a 50-mile one-way commute by car from their home campus
  ● not have more than a 40-mile one-way commute for required clerkships rotations which require daily attendance

Electives
Students may choose to do elective experiences at the UMMS or go on away (extramural) rotations at other institutions. These are done at the student’s own expense and any distance considerations are outside of the scope of this policy.

REASON FOR POLICY

The UMMS selects clinical sites based on their educational value and their ability to provide students with clinical experiences and training to meet the UMMS’ educational program objectives. While educational value is paramount, the UMMS also makes every effort to assign students to sites that are within a reasonable distance without creating substantial burdens on students.

It also ensures that the UMMS meets LCME Accreditation requirements as follows:

Element 10.9 Student Assignment. “A medical school assumes ultimate responsibility for the selection and assignment of medical students to each location and/or parallel curriculum (i.e., track) and identifies the administrative office that fulfills this responsibility. A process exists whereby a medical student with an appropriate rationale can request an alternative assignment when circumstances allow for it.”

PROCEDURES

Special Considerations for Site Assignments
Some students may have circumstances that impact the sites to which they can be assigned and for which an exemption may be granted. Exemptions are granted for the following reasons:
The student has a documented disability impairing their ability to travel the required distance to an assigned site.

The student serves in a caretaking role for a minor dependent (e.g., child, grandchild, sibling) or a substantial caretaking role for an adult family member (spouse, parent, grandparent, or domestic partner) who has a serious health condition.

In these instances, the student must share their accommodations plan or provide an explanation of their caretaker needs with the relevant course manager prior to scheduling of site assignments. (See the Medical Students with Disabilities Policy.)

Appealing Site Assignments
Any student who believes they may be unable to complete their required clinical experience at their assigned site due to hardship must, within 1 week of site assignments being posted:

- Notify the clerkship coordinator, course manager, and clerkship director
- Petition the Dean of Students on their respective campus

If a reassignment is granted, and feasible, an alternative placement will be arranged in a timely manner. When site reassignment is not granted, the student must complete the required clinical experience at the originally assigned site.

Financial Aid
The Office of Undergraduate Medical Education aims to support students and ensure they have what they need to successfully progress through the curriculum. Any student who has concerns regarding their financial aid package is encouraged to reach out to the Financial Aid Officer for their respective campus.

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

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HISTORY

Created: May 2003

Reviewed and Approved: Assistant Dean for Curriculum, February 2023

Reviewed and Approved: Senior Associate Dean, UME, February 2023

Reviewed and Approved: Senior Associate Dean, UME, March 2024