



## Distance Guidelines for Clinical Site Assignments

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**Senior Leader:** Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

**Responsible University Officer:** Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education

**Policy Owner:** Assistant Dean for Curriculum

**Policy Contact:** Director of Clinical Immersion and Transitions

### Policy Statement

It is a basic expectation that students be able to travel to their home campus for required onsite curricular and co-curricular activities (lectures, Becoming a Doctor Sessions, Advising meetings, etc). While the medical school makes every effort to minimize the impact of traveling to off campus clinical sites, required clinical assignments in the Foundational, Clinical Immersion and Specialty-specific Transitions phases, sites may be at a distance from the home campus (see '*Definitions*'). Distance considerations must be balanced against the need to ensure students are provided with appropriate resources for clinical instruction in both ambulatory and inpatient settings that offer adequate numbers and types of patients. Students should be prepared for travel to and from clinical sites at a distance from their home campus.

#### I. Distance Limits

Site assignments for required clerkships are made such that a student can expect to:

- not have more than a 50-mile one-way commute by car from their home campus (ie. their campus of matriculation - Twin Cities, Duluth, or St. Cloud)
- not have more than a 40-mile one-way commute by car from their home campus for a given required clerkship with an average minimum in-person required attendance of four weekdays per week

#### II. Exceptions

Rural Physician Associate's Program (RPAP): Inherent to the concept of rural training, rural clinical sites used by the RPAP are distributed throughout Minnesota. Students choosing to participate in the RPAP must prepare for clinical placements at sites exceeding the distance limits outlined above.

Foundations Phase Clinical Experiences: Students participating in immersive rural experiences during the Early Clinical Experiences (ECI) weeks in the Foundations phase may need to travel distances exceeding the distance limits outlined above.

Duluth or Saint Cloud Lanes: Students who opt into Duluth and/or Saint Cloud lanes, LICs, or individual clerkships should expect to travel distances exceeding the 50-mile limit from their home campus.

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### III. Electives

Students may choose to do elective experiences at the UMMS or go on visiting electives at other institutions. These are done at the student's own expense and any distance considerations are outside of the scope of this policy.

## 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 may be considered for the following reasons:

- The student has a documented disability that limits travel to 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
- The student has a significant financial limitation (see "Financial Aid" below)

In these instances, the student must provide appropriate evidence to support the exemption (i.e. their accommodations plan, an explanation of their caretaker needs, or a letter of support from the Financial Aid Office) with the Office of Student Affairs who will communicate with the relevant course personnel 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, and before starting the rotation must notify the Manager of Student Affairs. The Manager of Student Affairs will review the appeal in consultation with the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or Regional Campus Dean for UME 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 supports students and ensures they have what they need to successfully progress through the curriculum. Any student who has concerns regarding their financial status as it pertains to their ability to travel to and from clinical sites for educational purposes, should reach out to the Financial Aid Officer for their respective campus to discuss options.

## Additional Contacts

Role/Title	Name	Email
Director of Clinical Immersion and Transitions (Twin Cities)	Holly Proffitt	<a href="mailto:proff022@umn.edu">proff022@umn.edu</a>
Assistant Dean for UME (Duluth)	Kendra Nordgren	<a href="mailto:knordgre@d.umn.edu">knordgre@d.umn.edu</a>
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Assistant Dean for UME (St. Cloud)	Jill Amsberry	<a href="mailto:amsberry@umn.edu">amsberry@umn.edu</a>

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### LCME Accreditation Relevance

This policy ensures that the UMMS meets LCME Accreditation requirements as follows:

**Element 5.5 Resources for Clinical Instruction.** “A medical school has, or is assured the use of, appropriate resources for the clinical instruction of its medical students in ambulatory and inpatient settings that have adequate numbers and types of patients (e.g., acuity, case mix, age, gender).”

**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.”

### History

**Created:** May 2003

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