



General Psychiatry Residency Program Waivers of Training (WOT) Guidelines

Background

Policies and Procedures for Certification and Fellowship (October 2022)

<https://www.royalcollege.ca/content/dam/document/eligibility-and-exams/policy-procedure-certification-fellowship-e.pdf>

Section 4.2 Residency Training Requirements

4.2.2 By the end of training, the resident must have achieved the objectives of the specialty/subspecialty and must successfully meet the requirements of the CanMEDS competencies as they relate to their specialty/subspecialty. At any point during a resident's training, the Program Director with the approval of the Post Graduate Dean, has the authority to lengthen or change a resident's program if evaluations reveal that the resident is not meeting the specialty training requirements.

CBD Policy Working Group Communique: Waivers of Training (2016)

<https://www.royalcollege.ca/content/dam/documents/accreditation/competence-by-design/directory/cbd-policy-waivers-of-training-e.pdf>

Considerations and Recommendations

In considering the adaptations necessary to adjust these policies, the review of Royal College and CFPC policies pertaining to waivers of training may serve as a useful guide for faculties. The proposed Royal College policy will not indicate the circumstances that would qualify residents for leaves of absence; these circumstances would be determined by the university and/or the local collective agreement. Furthermore, the Royal College policy will state that following a leave, the Program Director and Postgraduate Dean should review the trainee's status with regard to stage of training to determine if any adjustments to the training program are required. It is therefore suggested that faculties review their existing policies to reflect that a leave of absence may not impact the total duration of training if the necessary competencies have been achieved. Faculties may also consider whether to require a minimum duration of training.

Additional Considerations for PGME: Accelerated Training

In light of CBME and the shift away from time-based training practices, faculties may consider developing policies that address the possibility of accelerated training. In the process of developing these types of policies, thought should be given towards determining if there is a minimum duration of training that must be completed, and if there are explicit service or organizational requirements that will be challenged in the event that training is shortened for some residents. Consideration could be given to separating the issues of competence and contracts within existing policy. Competence, as defined by achievement of all required EPAs, may be achieved before a resident satisfactorily completes his or her contract to provide service, but the latter may still need to be honoured.

University of Toronto Postgraduate Medical Education Guidelines for Residency Waivers and Accelerated Training (2025)

The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPS) require residents to complete all program training requirements, including duration and

competence. However, the university can set policies regarding criteria by which waivers of training time (if any) may be granted.

*A waiver of training results in a shorter duration to completion of all program training requirements. There are two possible ways that a postgraduate resident may be granted a waiver of training at the University of Toronto: a resident returns from a Leave of Absence and, **under exceptional circumstances**, is not required to make up all of the Leave of Absence time missed; or a resident meets Acceleration of Training criteria.*

It is expected that residents will make up time lost, or rotations missed, with equivalent time in residency upon return from a leave of absence.

However, the PGME office may allow a waiver of training following a leave of absence from a training program. A waiver of training may be granted on the premise that the resident is expected to reach the required level of competence set by their training program by the end of their final year. A waiver of training is not automatic and may be granted only in the absence of concerns regarding the resident's ability to meet the required level of competence and complete program requirements.

<https://www.royalcollege.ca/content/dam/document/eligibility-and-exams/policy-procedure->

Residency Program Considerations:

Waivers of Training (WOT) vs. Accelerated Training

There are no current national guidelines from the RCPSC regarding accelerated training and as CBD implementation has progressed "accelerated" training has been understood as opportunities for more challenging and complex clinical and/or scholarly experiences within the 60-months of Psychiatry training. As such, the "accelerated training" status that results in shortening of the duration of residency is currently not being considered at Competence Committee.

Residents who achieve all residency program Transition to Practice training requirements and who have additional time left in training as per collective agreement contract will be offered opportunities to develop enhanced competencies in the Transition to Practice phase of training.

Residency Training Program Requirements

Whilst the RCPSC defines minimum requirements, the University of Toronto has the purview to include additional requirements that all residents must fulfill to demonstrate their competence. As such, in addition to completion of all core rotations (including psychotherapy and after-hours coverage requirements), Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs), FOD and COD STACERs, and scholarly projects/assignments, the General Psychiatry Residency Program at the University of Toronto also requires residents to complete specific Transition to Practice clinical experiences (i.e. rotations) and attend the program's Transition to Practice Curriculum (minimum attendance 70%) alongside completion of Transition to Practice EPAs during TTP rotations. Completion of the aforementioned requirements will be reviewed at Competence Committee (i.e. Psychiatry Competence Subcommittee or PCS). Hospitals also have the purview to enforce collective agreement contracts in the service of patient care and professional responsibilities in collaboration with residency program leadership, PARO, and UofT PGME, informed by principles articulated by the CPSO (i.e. relating to Transitions in Care).

Formal and informal Remediation:

Residency training that is extended due to performance or professional conduct concerns as per Board of Examiners-Postgraduate Education (UofT PGME) or Resident Assessment and Support Subcommittee (RASC) support plans do not qualify for a waiver.

Subspecialty Training:

WOT can only be considered in the final year and TTP phase of training. PGY4/COD residents who have had leaves of absence during Psychiatry training who are entering subspecialty training in Geriatric or Child and Adolescent Psychiatry will have the Transition to Practice phase of training delegated to the subspecialty program – as such, they are not eligible for a WOT during Psychiatry training. Residents who are entering an Area of Focused Competence (AFC) (for example in Addictions or Consultation Liaison Psychiatry) are not eligible for a WOT, as these require 12 months for completion.

Implementation in Residency Program

- Informed by U of T PGME guidance, residents are expected to “make up time lost, or rotations missed, with equivalent time in residency upon return from a leave of absence”.
- “Only in exceptional circumstances” or if a resident meets Acceleration of Training, should this time be waived.
- There are currently no pathways for accelerated training in the General Program and as such the PCS will not waive time from residency training via acceleration of training (see above information regarding working on enhanced competencies).
- Residents who have approved leaves of less than 30 days, have met residency training program requirements as per PCS and who are in good academic standing may have the time waived by the Program Director so that they graduate “on-cycle” on June 30th of their final year of training.
- Residents and faculty members should contact the Program Director or Postgraduate Education Administrative Team (postgradoffice.psych@utoronto.ca) with any questions about Waivers of Training
- Residents who believe their situation represents an “exceptional circumstance” and would like to request up to 3-months waived from their training (as was permitted in pre-CBD/traditional stream of residency training) will be asked to submit materials to PRPC for consideration

Appendix – Acronyms

CBD – Competence by Design

COD – Core of Discipline

CPSO – College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

EPAs – Entrustable Professional Activities

FOD – Foundations of Discipline

PG- Postgraduate

PRPC – Psychiatry Residency Program Committee

RCPCS – Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

TTP – Transition to Practice

WOT – Waivers of Training

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