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1. **PARA - Know Your Contract:**

▪ Call Duration

The call frequency articles in the resident physician collective agreement were established to help ensure the health and well-being of resident physicians particularly in relation to fatigue. In a presentation to the Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA), Dr. Dianne Maier of the Physician and Family Support Program of the Alberta Medical Association highlighted the mass of studies likening sleep deprivation to inebriation; fatigue has been linked to decreased mental acuity and mistakes.

Dr. Maier lists the following as warning signs of fatigue:

- Falling asleep during conferences and rounds
- Restlessness and irritability with those around you
- Checking your work repeatedly
- Difficulty focusing on the care of your patients
- Feeling like you just don't care
- Inflexible thinking

To suggest ways to combat the risks of fatigue, Dr. Maier provided recommendations from the Australian Medical Association:

- Minimize occasions with more than 10-hour shifts
- Ensure a minimum of 8 hours of sleep between shifts
- Have a regular day (24 hours) free of work in every 7-day period
- Ensure a longer break between/following night shifts
- Take short breaks at work
- A period of extended hours needs to be compensated with a longer break before starting work again.

In line with these recommendations, make sure you are aware of the call frequency expectation established in your collective agreement. Article 14.04 (a) states "In-house call is on a one-in-four (1:4) basis. The number of days on service is specific to any individual Resident, and reflects the number of working days subtracting any time the Resident is away on vacation (inclusive of

the weekend prior to or following scheduled vacation as per 12.07), Education leaves, Sick and Special leave, and Maternity/Parental leave as follows:

01-06 days on service - 1 call
07-10 days on service - 2 calls
11-14 days on service - 3 calls
15-18 days on service - 4 calls

19-22 days on service - 5 calls
23-26 days on service - 6 calls
27-30 days on service - 7 calls
31 days on service - 8 calls"

Article 14.05 (b) states "Home call is on a one-in-three (1:3) basis. The number of days on service is specific to any individual Resident, and reflects the number of working days subtracting any time the Resident is away on vacation (inclusive of the weekend prior to or following scheduled vacation as per 12.07), Education leave, Sick and Special leave, and Maternity/Parental leave, as follows:

01-05 days on service - 1 call
06-08 days on service - 2 calls
09-11 days on service - 3 calls
12-14 days on service - 4 calls
15-17 days on service - 5 calls

18-20 days on service - 6 calls
21-23 days on service - 7 calls
24-26 days on service - 8 calls
27-29 days on service - 9 calls
30-32 days on service - 10 calls

As per the Combined Call Letter of Understanding in the Collective Agreement, any combination of in-house and home call service will reflect a proportional frequency ratio as follows (the following list assumes no vacation/leaves):

1 in-house call: A resident can perform 8 home calls
2 in-house call: A resident can perform 6 home calls
3 in-house call: A resident can perform 5 home calls
4 in-house call: A resident can perform 4 home calls

5 in-house call: A resident can perform 2 home calls
6 in-house call: A resident can perform 1 home call
7 switched call: A resident can perform 0 home call

For more information about Dr. Maier's presentation to the SMA, visit the SMA website at <https://www.sma.sk.ca/Default.aspx?cid=419>.

For a recent article on **patient concerns surrounding physician fatigue** in the *Edmonton Journal* and *Calgary Herald*, see the attached document.

▪ Health Spending Account Claim Reminder

Any eligible Health Spending Account (HSA) expenses incurred between July and December 2010 should be submitted before the end of February 2011. Remember, resident physicians are able to submit their final December paystub in order to claim their health and dental insurance deductions for the last six months. The HSA claim form can be found on the PARA website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/residents/frequently-used-forms/general-residency-forms>.

For more contract tips, visit the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/agreement/know-your-contract>.

2. **PARA Life Insurance Coverage Changes**

As of last Saturday, **PARA** members benefit from an improved life insurance package. Your life insurance benefit will increase from \$100,000 to \$150,000 and will additionally include Accidental Death and Dismemberment (ADD) coverage. This enhancement of your coverage was made possible through the **PARA** Board of Directors and meets the objectives of **PARA's** strategic framework for the continued review and improvement of member benefits. Your **PARA** life insurance program is one of the many benefits you receive through your membership in **PARA**. This benefit is made possible through a partnership between **PARA** and the Alberta Medical Association (AMA).

For more information on the new **PARA** life insurance plan, please review the booklet you should have received in the mail over the holidays or visit the Benefits Section of the **PARA** website: <http://www.para-ab.ca/agreement/benefits>.

3. **PARA** Negotiation Update

Interest Arbitration between the Educating and Employing Entities and the Professional Association of Resident Physicians of Alberta has been scheduled for Monday to Wednesday, March 7 to 9, 2011. **PARA** will be preparing for this event over the next few months. The arbitration settlement will be awarded within a month of the hearing, at which time the new contract in its entirety will be distributed to you. **PARA members will be required** to ratify the negotiated components of the agreement. The PARA Negotiation Team is grateful to you, our members, for your ongoing patience and support for our efforts in seeking an optimal settlement that respects both the sustainability of the system and the front-line patient care that you provide.

For past negotiation updates, visit the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/news-and-events/negotiations-update>.

4. Call for **PARA** Executive Nominations

PARA will be accepting nominations for the 2011/2012 Executive until **January 15, 2011**. Members of the 2011/2012 **PARA** Executive will have the opportunity to attend the executive retreat in Canmore or Banff on the weekend of June 3rd – 5th. Executive members are responsible for implementing direction set by the Board of Directors; through this role, resident physicians can access opportunities to fulfil a number of CanMEDs roles: develop their leadership skills, liaise with health and medical-education stakeholders, and represent Alberta's resident physicians at the regional, provincial, and national levels.

Elections for positions on the Executive Committee shall be held as follows:

- Nominations for Executive positions shall be solicited from the Board and from the entire membership; only general members are eligible for nomination. The nomination deadline is **January 15th**.
- If there is more than one nominee for a position, an on-line ballot will be mailed to each member of **PARA**. These ballots shall have the names of all nominees listed with a brief biography and platform description from each of the nominees. Elections will close on February 15th.
- The ballots will be tabulated by survey software. The candidate with the most votes for each position will be the "Director Elect" for that position. The names of the Directors Elect shall then be posted in the next communiqué to the membership. The new executive will take office July 1st of the election year.
- In cases of electoral dispute, a ruling shall be made by the Past President who shall act as the Chief Returning Officer, unless he/she is running for another executive position, in which case, the President shall take on this role.

A copy of the **PARA** Executive Nomination Form is attached. Additional information about elections and position descriptions can be found on the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/board/para-executive/executive-nominations>.

5. **PARAdime** Update

If you have a backpack or stuffers that you have not yet donated, please contact the following individuals:

- Calgary: Dr. Florence Obianyor - fnobianyor@ucalgary.ca
- Edmonton: Dr. Patricia Ting - patriciating@gmail.com

The bags and necessities collected during this campaign will be donated to homeless shelters in Edmonton and Calgary in conjunction with Resident Physician Awareness Day on February 22. A final update on the success of the campaign will be provided at that time. Thanks to everyone who made a donation to the **PARAdime**.

6. Medical Student Political Action Day

Talking about diversity in medical school with MLAs

Sahil Gupta, University of Alberta Medical Student

When asked to list some of the qualities that make a good doctor, people usually suggest everything from intelligence to good communication skills.

Understanding the mechanics of the political process in order to advocate for patients and social change is not a quality that generally makes that list.

Nevertheless, medical students

from both the University of Alberta (U of A) and the University of Calgary (U of C) challenged that notion by participating in the Third Annual Political Action Day (PAD) on November 29, 2010.

This year's theme focused on diversity in medical school classes; First Nations, rural, and low socio-economic status (SES) students are demographics that are under-represented in medical schools. These students add to the diversity of thought and encourage the development of cultural competency skills for the whole class; moreover, these students are more likely to return to practice in their respective communities. As the shortage of rural physicians continues to be a concern in Alberta, the recruitment of these students needs to be considered.

Fifty students from both of Alberta's medical schools participated in this year's PAD. They spent one full day learning about the process of advocacy, through speakers and sessions, and then applied that knowledge in meetings with MLAs at the Alberta Legislature the next day. The students met with close to thirty MLAs; in small groups, they talked about increasing diversity in medicine and asked the MLAs to examine the demographics of medical students attending Alberta's post secondary institutions and consider outreach efforts in under-represented communities.

Throughout this process, the students involved had a chance to consider the dynamics and challenges of policy making and moving an agenda forward through government. Additionally, students heard from Dr. Raj Sherman about his political journey and sat in on Question Period! The day provided an interesting glimpse into the complicated relationship between politics and health care.

7. AMA Resident Members' Guide

Each year, the Alberta Medical Association (AMA) produces a membership guide for its resident physician members. This guide describes what the AMA does and offers to its resident physician members as well as tips on how to become involved in the organization.

You can find a copy of the updated Members' Guide on the **PARA** website at http://www.para-ab.ca/upload/files/docs/ama/Resident_Guide_Dec_10.pdf.



Students at legislature during the Political Action Day. (Left to Right)Front: Adil Abdulla, Ambica Parmar, Sahil Gupta, Ling Ling, Haitham Kharrat **Back:** Mischa Snopkowski, Allan Pickard, Harbir Gill, Kelsey Macleod, Anthony Lott, Ameer Farooq, Alistair Waugh

8. Upcoming Events

▪ **PARA Board of Directors Meeting**

Date: Monday, January 31, 2011

Location: Hotel Alma, 169 University Gate NW, Calgary (Tel. (403) 220-3203)

Time: 12:30 – 5:30 PM

- Lunch will be provided starting at noon.
- **RSVP to para-ab@shawbiz.ca by Thursday, January 13.**

• **Education Session: Resident Physician Remediation: Opportunities and Risks – Co-sponsored by PARA and the University of Calgary PGME**

Date: Monday, January 31, 2011

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 Noon

Location: Hotel Alma, 169 University Gate NW, Calgary (Tel. 403-220-3203)

Presenter: Derek Puddester, MD, Med, FRCPC – Dr. Puddester completed a residency in Psychiatry at McMaster University and a Masters of Education at the University of Ottawa with a focus on physician health. He is currently the Director of the Faculty Wellness Program in the Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa. This unique program provides preventative, educational, interventional, and rehabilitation services to medical students, resident physicians, and staff physicians.

Take Away: At the end of this 2-hour workshop, Resident Physicians will be able to:

- Discuss factors involved in identifying the need for remediation
- Summarize at least three factors that add culture and learning complexity to the development of a remediation plan
- Describe the critical elements of a remediation plan and how to ensure its effective implementation.

RSVP to para-ab@shawbiz.ca by Thursday, January 13.

• **PARA Seasonal Social: Jubilations Dinner Theatre**



Since the Holiday Season is a busy time, **PARA** is hosting our holiday event in the New Year. PARA still has a few tickets remaining. The first 8 resident physicians in each city who reply with their complete mailing address and pager number to para-ab@shawbiz.ca shall receive two adult dinner tickets. **The date of these tickets is not interchangeable.**

Night at the Museum of Rock & Roll

http://www.jubilations.ca/jubilations/cal_now_playing.html

Date: Thursday, January 20, 2011

Location: Westbrook Mall 1002 – 37 Street SW

Doors: 6:15 – 6:30 PM

For more information on upcoming events, visit **PARA's** events calendar online at <http://www.para-ab.ca/calendar.aspx> and PARA's upcoming events page at <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/events>.

PARA has a facebook page to allow resident physicians to RSVP for **PARA** events. You can find our page at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=185755111347>

Feedback on the site is welcome.

9. **PARA's Spot the Stethoscope Contest**

Check out the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca> and win. Each month until March 2011, a stethoscope will be hidden somewhere on the **PARA's** website. The first 14 resident physicians who correctly reply by email detailing where on the **PARA** website the stethoscope is hidden will win!!!*

The Spot the Stethoscope Contest was established to encourage **PARA's** resident physician members to get familiar with the **PARA** website and the resources available there. Since its overhaul the summer before last, www.para-ab.ca has had more than 33,900 visitors!



*Resident physicians are eligible to win hockey tickets only once per academic year; runners-up prizes will not be awarded to any resident physician two months in a row.

December 2010 First Prize Winners

Drs. Angel Chu and Jennifer Landero, University of Calgary
Drs. Michael Chu and Cameron Elliott

December 2010 Second Prize Winners

University of Calgary

Dr. Amyeen Hassanali
Dr. Janel Nadeau
Dr. Kevin Yee
Dr. Laura Stinton
Dr. Michael Stewart
Dr. Robyn Doucet
Dr. Ava Baker

University of Alberta

Dr. Breanne McCook
Dr. Chris Gee
Dr. Florence Cheng
Dr. Ian Sutanto
Dr. James Yeung
Dr. John Walker
Dr. Karen Tang
Dr. Kerri Chung
Dr. Pang Young
Dr. Simon Ko
Dr. Stephanie Mullin

For more information on **PARA** Contests, see <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/contests>.

10. **PARA's December 2010 Resident Physician of the Month**

Dr. Katie Wiltshire, Neurology PGY 4, University of Calgary

A fellow resident physician had this to say about Dr. Wiltshire:

Katie was senior when I got to know her and I was a very green resident. She took the time to show all of the residents and the medical students how the systems worked at ACH and she spent time teaching us approaches to common problems. She was always happy to switch call shifts when it would help you and she always offered to buy coffee. She definitely made the job at children's hospital fun.

For this and previous months' Resident Physician of the Month announcements, visit **PARA** online at <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/news-and-events/awards>.

Regards from,
Your **P**rofessional **A**ssociation of **R**esidents of **A**lberta