Resident Wellness Resources

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1. About Us

Overview

Established in 2006, the Office of Resident Wellness was created to help support the well-being of the University of Toronto’s Post Graduate Medical Education trainees and to offer assistance to those encountering difficulties during training.

Residency training can present a variety of challenges to personal and professional well-being, including: emotional and physical exhaustion, heightened anxiety, feelings of inefficacy, and social disconnection. One of the key roles of the Office of Resident Wellness is to help residents develop the skills needed to maintain their own wellness as a resident and as a practicing physician.

Services Offered

The Wellness Office provides the following services to current residents and fellows registered within the PGME system at the University of Toronto:

- Short-term in-house counseling, wellness coaching and external referrals, as required.
- Support during remediation/academic difficulty.
- Career and postgraduate training guidance.
- Disability and accommodation support.
- Educational programming/wellness workshops.
- Faculty development related to physician and resident well-being.
- Research pertaining to resident wellness.
- Contact information to the U of T community.
**Location Details**

The Wellness Office is located at:
500 University Avenue, Suite 501
Toronto, Ontario
M3G 1V7

We are on the west side of University Avenue, just north of Dundas Street West.

To access the office via subway, exit at St. Patrick station.

For all wellness questions and appointments:

**Tel:** 416-946-3074

**Email:** pgwellness@utoronto.ca

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**Resource Information**

**Dr. Susan Edwards**  
Director, Resident Wellness

Facilitates referrals to providers, supports accommodated educational programs (where required), and discusses career transfer issues.

- Available Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9am - 5pm

**Christopher Hurst**  
Education and Coaching Consultant

Offers one-on-one consultation with residents/fellows to assist them in acquiring the skills necessary to negotiate the personal and professional challenges of residency. Facilitates interactive, wellness-themed workshops and directs educational activities of the office.

- Available Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9am - 7pm

**Christiane Martin**  
Counsellor/Therapist

Offers one-on-one counselling with residents/fellows to assist them in acquiring the skills necessary to negotiate the personal and professional challenges of residency.

- Available Wednesdays (11am - 7pm) & Fridays (9:30am - 5:30pm)

**Diana Nuss**  
Wellness Administrative Coordinator

Coordinates the schedules of Dr. Susan Edwards, Christopher Hurst, and Christiane Martin. Helps coordinate wellness workshops.

- Available Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

**For all wellness questions or appointments:**

**Tel:** 416-946-3074

**Email:** pgwellness@utoronto.ca
2. Stress Management Tools

Stress is an inevitable component of life, and residency training. In this section, we offer a number of interactive on-line resources to help manage personal and professional stress. Anxiety states, panic, depression, perfectionism and loss are addressed through on-line programs. There are also resources for performance enhancement and time management.

Online Resources

Mental Health Online
A comprehensive, online mental health service from Swinburne University of Technology offering information, assessment, online diagnosis, and treatment programs ("eTherapy") for anxiety disorders, stress, depression and other mental health challenges.
http://anxietyonline.org.au

Depression Center (DC)
The Depression Program is an anonymous, self-guided treatment program based on the most current research in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Users have access to a wide range of features, including: downloadable workbooks; homework and tracking sheets; weekly check-ins and reviews; moderated online discussion boards, including the web-based instant messenger for private conversations; and glossaries with easy-to-understand explanations of common terms and medications.
www.depressioncenter.net

Dr. Mike Evans: The Single Most Important Thing we Can Do for Our Stress
As well as this video on stress, Dr. Evans has a YouTube channel with other videos on mental health topics.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6402QJp52M

Open to Hope Foundation
This online resource helps people find hope after loss. Its mission is to provide information and resources for people who have experienced loss.
www.opentohope.com

Panic Center (PC)
The PC offers personalized, interactive tools that have helped thousands of people challenge and overcome their anxiety and panic. Users have access to a wide range of features, including: downloadable workbooks; homework and tracking sheets; weekly check-ins and reviews; moderated online discussion boards, including the web-based instant messenger for private conversations; and glossaries of common terms and medications.
www.paniccenter.net

E-couch
This free interactive self-help program offers modules for depression, generalized anxiety and worry, social anxiety, relationship breakdown, and loss and grief. It provides evidence-based information and teaches strategies drawn from cognitive, behavioral, and interpersonal therapies, as well as relaxation and physical activity techniques.
www.ecouch.anu.edu.au/

MoodGym
An innovative, interactive web program designed to prevent depression. It consists of five modules, an interactive game, anxiety and depression assessments, downloadable relaxation audio, a workbook, and feedback assessment.
http://moodgym.anu.edu.au/

CALM: Computer Assisted Learning for the Mind
CALM contains podcasts and audio files that can be easily uploaded to mobile devices. The tunes included within this website are geared towards mental resilience, managing stressors, healthy relationships, and meaning in life.
www.calm.auckland.ac.nz/

Overcoming Perfectionism
This information package is organized into modules, is designed to help you understand what is helpful and unhelpful about being a perfectionist. The goal is not for you to give up your high standards altogether, but to learn to pursue healthy high standards.
Performance Enhancement

Study Strategies and Self-Assessment
Knowing how to study is like knowing how to fish. It’s a set of learning skills that lasts a lifetime and brings many rewards. Just as there are ways to know that you are a competent fisherman, there are also ways to develop study skills competency.

www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/strat/

Daniel Goleman - The Secret to High Performance and Fulfilment
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HTIYv3IEOqM

Jeff Nelsen - TED talk on “Fearless Performance”

Nigel Marsh - TED talk on “How to make work-life balance work”
http://www.ted.com/talks/nigel_marsh_how_to_make_work_life_balance_work.html

100+ Tips for being on-call
http://efficientmd.blogspot.ca/2008/09/100-tips-for-being-on-call-in-hospital.html

Wellness Rounds Blog - Mary L. Brandt, MD
Blog of an active Professor of Surgery, Pediatrics and Medical Ethics at Baylor College of Medicine; and practicing pediatric surgeon at Texas Children’s Hospital.
http://wellnessrounds.org

iMedical Apps: The Leading Physician Review of Medical and Healthcare Apps
www.imedicalapps.com/

Medical Topics explained clearly by world experts
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG-iSMVtWbbwDDXgXXypARQ

Time Management

50 Tricks to Get Things Done Faster, Better, and More Easily
www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/50-tricks-to-get-things-done-faster-better-and-more-easily.html

A Getting Things Done Resource List
Numerous blogs, books, online tools and resources on “Getting things Done.”
http://zenhabits.net/massive-gtd-resource-list

The Art of Science and Leadership
A comprehensive collection of articles and activities for developing leadership skills and knowledge. A good selection of time management and other leadership skills.
http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leader.html
3. **Mindfulness in Medicine**

The term mindfulness refers to a quality of awareness that includes the ability to pay attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. Mindfulness includes the capacity for lowering one’s own reactivity to challenging experiences; the ability to notice, observe, and experience bodily sensations, thoughts, and feelings even though they may be unpleasant; acting with awareness and attention (not being on autopilot); and focusing on experience, not on the labels or judgments applied to them.

M. Krasner et al., 2009

Mindfulness fits well with medicine. As a means of improving well-being and clinical performance, mindfulness has shown great potential in research trials with health-care professionals. Research findings on the effects of mindfulness have demonstrated improvements in attention and working memory, well-being, emotion regulation and empathy.

The following links lead to reliable sources for guided meditations, MBSR and MBCT courses, on-line mindfulness programs and sources of research on mindfulness.

**Audio Resources**

**UCSD Center for Mindfulness:**
Guided Audio Files to Practice Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction
http://health.ucsd.edu/specialties/mindfulness/mbsr/Pages/audio.aspx

**Dr. J. Mark Williams** - Audiobook: The Mindful Way through Depression
Four uniquely qualified experts explain why our usual attempts to think our way out of a bad mood or just snap out of it leads us deeper into the downward spiral.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raBlerz8S4

**UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center:** Free guided meditations
http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22

**University of Wisconsin, School of Medicine and Public Health**
Digital Media Library: Mindfulness
www.fammed.wisc.edu/our-department/media/mindfulness

**UW Integrative Medicine** - Mindfulness in Medicine audio podcasts

**MIT Medical:** Community Wellness Downloads
Sleep, Mindfulness Meditation, Relaxation and Stress Reduction
http://medweb.mit.edu/wellness/resources/downloads.html

**Dr. Christopher Germer - Mindfulness and Self-Compassion,**
Free Meditation Downloads
www.mindfulselfcompassion.org/meditations_downloads.php

**The Mindfulness Solution:**
Free Meditation Downloads
www.mindfulness-solution.com/DownloadMeditations.html

**The Mindfulness Clinic:** Yoga & Meditation Audio/Video Files
www.themindfulnessclinic.ca/downloads-resources/downloads

**Meditation Classes**

**The Centre for Mindfulness Studies**
This innovative, not-for-profit social enterprise provides professional training, clinical treatment, and personal development programs in mindfulness-based practices and therapies. Highlights include an accredited 8-week long program on Mindfulness for Healthcare providers as well as 3-day introductory silent retreat.
http://www.mindfulnessstudies.com

**The Mindfulness Clinic**
This organization offers resources to Health Professionals and students such as their free one-day retreats and the popular "Meet, Eat, Sit" - a free lunchtime meditation. There is also links for finding psychotherapy in Toronto.
www.themindfulnessclinic.ca/health-professionals/
Online Meditation Sessions

UCLA Health: Mindful Awareness Research Center
The 6-week online course is self-directed and paced. Participants will have access to audio and video materials as well as the opportunity to participate in a weekly live chat with one of the instructors and other participants.
http://marc.ucla.edu

Insight Meditation Center - Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation
This course is based on Gil Fronsdal's six-week Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation class. It's supplemented with written material, exercises, and reflections for bringing the practice into daily life. Ines Freedman, as the online teacher for the course, provides further teachings.
www.insightmeditationcenter.org/programs/online-courses/

Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation: Free Six-Week Online Course
The eight-week online course is delivered in eight weekly units of online instruction on the theory and practice of meditation. The course also includes daily meditation practices with audio/video-guided instruction and an internet forum for interaction with the instructor and other students.
http://sites.google.com/site/mindfulnessonlinecourse/Home

Research Resources

The Mindfulness Research Guide
This comprehensive electronic resource and publication database provides information to researchers, practitioners, and the general public on the scientific study of mindfulness, including:

- a database of research publications in the area of mindfulness;
- measurement tools to operationalize mindfulness;
- interventions incorporating mindfulness techniques; and
- universities and centers conducting mindfulness research.

www.mindfulexperience.org
4. Career & Financial Management in Medicine

This section contains information on job search resources, a selected list of recommended readings regarding career development and key financial management resources.

Career Resources

Practice Ontario @UofT
A free dedicated job search service for postgraduate medical residents. Located on the St. George campus of the University, this initiative is a joint venture of the U of T Faculty of Medicine, Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) Office and HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency (HFO MRA).

To have an advisor help you find the right job in Ontario, make an appointment by calling:
Phone: 1-800-596-4046 ext. 3697
http://www.healthforceontario.ca/en/M4/Practice_Ontario

Canadian Association of Interns and Residents (CAIR): Transition into Practice Service
CAIR recently launched the “Transition into Practice Service” (TiPS), a new pilot program designed to help find the right position for you, anywhere in Canada. Whether you are a first or last year resident, it’s never too early to start planning your future.

HOW TiPS WORKS

- Sign up for this free service by creating an account
- Once you are registered, fill in the questionnaire provided to let the TPS program manager know what you’re looking for post residency, what you want in a practice, your preferred practice location, etc.
- We will contact recruiters across the country, on your behalf, to investigate what positions are available that fit with your criteria
- If any of the options interest you, we will arrange for you to meet the recruiters and visit the communities.

http://www.cair.ca/en/tips/

Career Centre at U of T Student Services
Free career counselling services to recent U of T graduates within 2 years of graduating.
www.careers.utoronto.ca/

Medical Employers
This new web portal has been created for Canadian residents. This free web application has been developed to centralize medical job listings in Canada, but also includes medical curriculum-vitae and resume-building templates, world-wide medical conference listings, dozens of career guides, including tips on how to start a medical practice and legal employment contracts [locum, part-time, full time, hospital, private], accounting and banking guides, and much more.
http://medicalemployers.com/

American College of Physicians – Resident Career Counselling Site
ACP offers you a comprehensive resource for your career planning -- including detailed guides to assist you with: Training, certification and licensing; practice and career options; searching for the right career opportunity; marketing yourself; the contract, compensation and malpractice Insurance; personal finances; and setting up the practice
www.acponline.org/residents_fellows/career_counseling

Mark Franklin, Career Counselor - individual and group career counselling
Mark is CareerCycles President & Practice Leader; CareerCycles is a well-established career services organization that advises clients with career development, exploration, and clarification. He has helped more than 2000 clients both locally and internationally to optimize their career and personal choices. Costs are applicable.
http://careercycles.com
**Career Articles**


**Financial Resources**

**MD Management (MDM)**

MDM offers full financial planning services in 49 branch offices. Their more than 190 designated MDM advisors will meet with you to explore your financial goals, review your financial picture, assess your risk tolerance, and make recommendations. http://mdm.ca

**Investors Group**

Investors Group is an organization with a holistic approach to wealth creation, protection, and management. This includes cash management, tax planning, risk management, retirement planning, investment planning, and estate planning. www.investorsgroup.com/
5 Mental Health & Wellness Resources

Below you will find informational resources related to distress and referral services as well as physician health educational web links.

Distress & Referral Services

PARO Distress Helpline
http://www.myparo.ca/24_HOUR_Helpline
More information about the help-line: 416-979-1182
e-mail: paro@paroteam.ca

Physician Health Program
A confidential service providing assistance on issues, such as stress, burnout, mental health, and substance use issues, to both physicians and their families. They offer expedited referrals to third party providers with expertise in physician health.
Phone: 1-800-851-6606
www.php oma.org

Physician Health Education Web Sites

ePhysicianHealth.com
The world’s first comprehensive, online physician health and wellness resource designed to help physicians and physicians-in-training become resilient in their professional and personal lives.
ePhysicianHealth.com

CMA Centre for Physician Health & Well-being
The CMA Centre for Physician Health and Well-being is a centre of excellence providing leadership, education, and research to keep Canadian physicians healthy.
www.amc.ca/living/centrephysicianhealthwellbeing

CMPA Physician Wellness
This section on Physician Wellness on the CMPA website is filled with many links to promote wellness in medical practice. Many topics are covered ranging from physician stress arising from adverse events and medico-legal issues to how to deal with a CPSO complaint. The “Sharing experiences” section of this web page will allow physicians to benefit from the insights and coping strategies of their colleagues, and to realize that they are not unique or alone when confronted with such problems.
https://oplfrpd5.cmpa-acpm.ca/physician-wellness

CAIR Resident Wellbeing
The E-Library is a comprehensive repository of documents about CAIR and resident issues. It is also an online resource centre for information about CAIR’s stakeholders and other key organizations involved in health care in Canada and around the world.
www.cair.ca/en/elibrary/

PARO - Resident Well Being
http://www.myparo.ca/During_Residency

eWorkplaceHealth.com
Teaches the visitor about the many factors that shape workplace health.
http://eworkplacehealth.com
6. **Fitness, Nutrition, & Fatigue Tip**

Do you rarely get the chance to sit down for a meal or snack? If so, you’re not alone. In fact, more than half of Canadians report that they eat in a hurry because of a busy schedule. Many of us even resort to what is known as “dashboard dining” (or eating in the car) because we lack time.

Government of Alberta, Healthy U

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**Fitness & Nutrition**

**U of T Athletic Centre (Fee Schedule)**
www.athletics.utoronto.ca/facilities.htm

**Eat Right Ontario**
www.eatrightontario.ca

**Dietitians of Canada**
www.dietitians.ca

**Queen’s Healthy U: Health Tools, Calorie, BMI, Heart Rate, and calculators.**
http://healthyu.hr.queensu.ca/health_tools.html

**Food & Nutrition Tips for Residents on-call** - Dr. Matthew Chamberlain
From CAIR’s Learning from the Master Series.

**Cooking Light**
www.cookinglight.com

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**Fatigue Management**

**AMA Online Fatigue Risk Assessment Tool**
The AMA offers all doctors a unique web-based tool that enables them to evaluate the safety of their roster, and help make hospitals safer for patients and doctors.

**Sleepio**
An evidence-based digital sleep improvement program, featuring proven Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) techniques. The six-session program is offered at different cost levels.
www.sleepio.com

**American Academy of Sleep Medicine: Sleep, Alertness, and Fatigue Education in Residency**
www.gme.northwestern.edu/pdf/SAFER.ppt

**National Sleep Foundation**
www.sleepfoundation.org/

**Managing Fatigue in Operational Settings (Part 2): Fatigue Countermeasures Group, NASA Ames Research Center**
http://human-factors.arc.nasa.gov/zteam/PDF_pubs/ops2.pdf

**Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS)**
The ESS is a self-administered questionnaire with 8 questions. It has become the world standard method for making this assessment.
http://www.stanford.edu/~dement/epworth.html

**Fatigue Video** [opens in media player]
http://libvideo.uams.edu/Resident/Rock_Star_Resident.mp4
7. **Additional Resources**

Professional organizations supporting the needs of various groups within residency and a link to the PGME sexual harassment protocol. The section also contains a list of recommended readings related to resident well-being.

**Professional Resources**

- **Canadian Association of Physicians with Disabilities**  
  [www.capd.ca](http://www.capd.ca)

- **Federation of Medical Women of Canada**  
  [www.fmwc.ca](http://www.fmwc.ca)

- **Gay and Lesbian Medical Association**  
  [www.glma.org](http://www.glma.org)

- **Hours Watch**  
  [www.hourswatch.org](http://www.hourswatch.org)

- **Sexual Harassment Protocol**  
  [http://www.pgme.utoronto.ca/content/policies-guidelines](http://www.pgme.utoronto.ca/content/policies-guidelines)

- **Student BMJ – Medical Marriages and Other Resources**  
  [http://student.bmj.com/student/student-bmj.html](http://student.bmj.com/student/student-bmj.html)

- **Resources for Newcomers to Canada**  
  [www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org)

- **Community/Social Services in Toronto**  
  [www.211toronto.ca](http://www.211toronto.ca)

**Useful Articles**

- **CMA Guide to Physician Health and Wellbeing**  
  [www.cma.ca/multimedia/staticContent/HTML/N0/I2/PhysicianHealth/resources/guide-PHWB.pdf](http://www.cma.ca/multimedia/staticContent/HTML/N0/I2/PhysicianHealth/resources/guide-PHWB.pdf)

- **Gautam M. Irondon: Practical Stress Management Tools for Physicians.**  

- **Johnson S. Hold Me Tight: Seven Conversations for a Lifetime of Love.**  

- **Myers MF. Medical marriages and other intimate relationships.**  

- **Peterkin AD. Staying Human During Residency Training, Fourth Edition:**  
  How to Survive and Thrive after Medical School. 4th ed. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division; 2008.


**Balancing Act Collection From AAFP**

This article collection features popular FPM content on the subject of life balance – from finding joy in your work to blending work and family. Topic links range from compassion fatigue, running on empty, and 15 tips for managing life at work and home to the 80/20 rule of time management, 6 ways to make play a priority, and ideas for managing stress and extinguishing burnout.  

8. Frequently Asked Questions

1. What types of matters does the Office of Resident Wellness address?  
The Office of Resident Wellness addresses a variety of matters pertaining to the University of Toronto’s medical residents. Services offered include professional referrals, advising about academic difficulty and career uncertainty, strategies to achieve a work-life balance, mental health and well-being matters, stress reduction, adaptation to change, cognitive behavioral strategies, and resident remediation planning.

2. Where are you located? How do I obtain an appointment?  
We are located at:  
500 University Avenue, Suite 501  
Toronto, Ontario  M3G 1V7

By TTC subway, we are directly north of St. Patrick Station. We are on the west side of University Avenue, just north of Dundas Street West.

Appointments can be booked by calling Diana Nuss at 416-946-3074 or pgwellness@utoronto.ca

3. When are the office resources available?  
Dr. Susan Edwards  [Director of Resident Wellness] is in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays, between the hours of 9am and 5pm.

Christopher Hurst  [Education and Coaching Consultant] is in the office from Monday to Friday. He is available for consultation on Tuesdays and Thursdays between the hours of 9am and 7pm. Additional times may be available.

Christiane Martin  [Counsellor/Therapist] is available on Wednesdays [11am - 7pm] and Fridays [9:30am - 5:30pm]

4. Is there a transfer policy that can be accessed by residents?  
Yes, there is a transfer policy. It can be accessed under the policies link on the PGME website:  
http://www.pgme.utoronto.ca/content/policies-guidelines/

5. Is there a leave of absence policy that can be accessed by residents?  
Yes, there is a leave of absence policy. It can be accessed under the policies link on the PGME website:  
http://www.pgme.utoronto.ca/content/policies-guidelines/

6. Are your services confidential?  
Yes, all sessions with our Wellness Advisors are completely confidential. If any information needs to be shared, we require both your verbal and written consent.

7. Is there a fee for the services rendered by the Wellness Office?  
No, as long as you are a resident registered in the Faculty of Medicine, Department of PGME, the costs are covered by the Office. However, if you are a resident registered within the Department of Dentistry, you may consult the Member Assistance Program, which is sponsored by the Ontario Dental Association. Further details can be found on page 35 of Dispatch’s Magazine, which can be found on their website:  
http://www.rcdso.org/KnowledgeCentre/DispatchMagazine
What are people saying about The Office of Resident Wellness?

“The counseling I received at PGME wellness helped float me through a rocky, difficult first year. I would strongly encourage any resident experiencing the stress of achieving a work-life balance or experiencing a difficult transition from med school to residency to seek help from the wellness office. They really do understand the daily stresses and strains on new doctors and are well prepared to help us get through it all.”

Current Resident

“(The ORW) was there for me at the worst time in my career. I was at the point where I was strongly considering quitting medicine. They made me feel normal and supported me through it all. Because of them not only will I continue being a doctor, but a stronger, better and more human one.”

Current Resident

“...as Program Director of one of the divisions at the University, I have had an opportunity to utilize the services offered by the Office of Resident Wellness. On several occasions, I have had a resident with significant issues relating to mental well-being, wellness and career counseling. The professional staff has been outstanding in managing these resident concerns. Our residents have benefited greatly by the support and guidance provided by the Office of Resident Wellness. It is an important resource for all Program Directors and trainees.”

Current Program Director in the Faculty of Medicine
INTEGRATION • INNOVATION • IMPACT

www.pgme.utoronto.ca/content/resident-wellness

Postgraduate Medical Education
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO