Postgraduate & Undergraduate Learner Scheduling Guideline

EMSJ Postgraduate Program & Undergraduate Program

Department of Emergency Medicine, Horizon Health Network, Saint John

Guiding Principles:

1. The primary outcome of all learner participation in ED shifts will be a positive, educational experience for the learner.
2. Service to the department will be secondary to the learner’s education.
3. All EM certified faculty will have an equal opportunity to participate in on-shift clinical teaching with a wide variety of learners.

Supporting Policies:

All scheduling will follow the Periods of Duty rules laid out in the MarDocs Collective Agreement (found at www.maritimeresidentdoctors.ca) or the Dalhousie Undergraduate Medical Education Policies & Regulations (found at https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/core-units/undergraduate/current-students/policies-regulations.html) or the Memorial Undergraduate Medical Education Policies & Procedures (found at https://www.med.mun.ca/Medicine/Policy/Policies-Procedures.aspx).

From the MarDocs Collective Agreement (2022):

17.01 (c) With respect to Emergency Room rotations:

- (1) no shift shall be longer than ten (10) hours;
- (2) a maximum of forty (40) hours shall be scheduled in consecutive days;
- (3) a maximum of one-hundred and seventy (170) working hours shall be scheduled in a twenty-eight (28) day period;
- (4) Residents shall have a minimum of ten (10) hours off between shifts; and
- (5) Residents shall have a minimum of one (1) weekend off in three (3).

17.01 (d) A Resident who becomes pregnant shall not be required to do overnight call after twenty-eight (28) weeks gestation or earlier if recommended by her physician. If the Resident is able to complete all her clinical and academic duties other than overnight call, she shall not be refused the right to work during the day.

17.01 (e) A Resident shall not be scheduled for overnight call the night before travelling to another location for a rotation change.
19.02 Residents shall be permitted to take vacation periods at times agreed upon by the Resident and their program director in consultation with the service in which the vacation will be taken. Vacation requests cannot be denied due to service requirements unless another Resident(s) has already been granted vacation for that time period.

19.04 Recognizing the operational slow-down that occurs approximately between December 21st and January 3rd, Residents shall be entitled to six (6) consecutive days off between those two dates. One of these days must be either December 25 or January 1. The six (6) consecutive days represent a consolidation of three (3) statutory holidays (Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day) and three (3) regular days off. These days off shall not be deducted from the Residents’ regular vacation entitlement outlined in Article 19.01. These days off shall not be considered vacation leave for the purpose of Article 17.04 regarding the pro-rating of call when a vacation leave is taken during any twenty-eight (28) day period.

From Dalhousie UGME Policy on Clerkship Activities (2022):

1. Clerks will receive instruction by being given time to attend departmental rounds and lectures, formal teaching sessions, by attending resident teaching opportunities, and by any other method considered appropriate by faculty members.

2. Students are not expected to exceed an average of twelve hours per day in required clinical and non-clinical learning experiences, across the duration of a clerkship rotation.

From UGME Clerkship On-Call Policy:

Evening, night, and weekend call may be a required part of Dalhousie clerkship rotations. Decisions about the type of call to be required (in-house vs. home call) as well as the hours and frequency of call will be made by the individual Clerkship Director in consultation with their faculty and may differ among rotations and sites.

When the final night of the rotation is the Sunday before a new rotation starts, Clerks will not be on call past 10PM. Clerks who must move to a distant site for their next rotation will be dismissed no later than 6 p.m. 2 days before the next rotation begins, e.g., 6 pm on a Saturday if the next rotation begins on Monday morning.

Pregnant clerks will be excused from overnight call and overnight shifts after 28 weeks gestation. Any student requiring additional accommodation should seek the support of the Student Affairs Office. Clerkship directors will work with pregnant students to adjust the educational experiences as needed in order to ensure the objectives are met.
Learner Scheduling Guideline:

1. **All learners:**

   1.1. The typical shift count is 4 shifts / week. Shifts are typically 8 hours, although this varies.
   - Dal Med 3 clerkship learners complete a total of 12 shifts in a typical 3-week rotation.
   - Postgraduate learners complete a total of 16 shifts in a typical 4-week block.

   1.2. Shifts will comprise a variety of day, evening, and weekend shifts, as well as high-acuity and low-acuity shifts.

   1.3. Approximately 25% of a learner’s shifts will be with the same preceptor, to facilitate ongoing feedback. The remainder of shifts will be with a variety of preceptors.

   1.4. Only some learner groups work nightshifts:
   - UG learners: no nightshifts
   - PGY1 Family Med & off-service residents: no nightshifts
   - PGY2 and above: night shifts for all residents
   - iFMEM residents: night shifts at all PGY levels
   - Royal College EM residents: night shifts at all PGY levels

2. **Undergraduate learners:**

   2.1. Include Dalhousie Med 3 clerkship students and Med 4 elective students, Memorial Med 3 clerkship students & Med 4 elective students, as well as visiting clerkship elective students.

   2.2. Scheduling:
   - Balance of day, evening, and weekend shifts
   - Balance of high acuity and RAZ shifts
   - No night shifts
   - Minimum 10 hours between shifts
   - Typically, 4 shifts / week
   - Approximately 25% of shifts will be with one preceptor for ongoing feedback, the remainder of shifts will be with a variety of preceptors.

   2.3. Undergraduate learners are expected to attend the following educational activities in addition to scheduled shifts:
   - ED Rounds, ED Journal Club, Thursday AM PG/UG Simulation

   2.4. All scheduling is done by EMSJ administrative staff. The Undergraduate Director has the authority to amend, cancel or reschedule shifts.

3. **All postgraduate learners:**

   3.1. Includes regularly rotating learners: iFMEM all PGY levels, SJ Family Medicine PGY1, RC EM PGY1, Radiology PGY1, Ophthalmology PGY1, and ESEM PGY3; as well as any visiting elective residents, including but not limited to RC EM residents, ESEM residents, Family Medicine residents, Internal Medicine residents, residents from other universities, etc.
3.2. Scheduling (in keeping w MarDocs Collective Agreement):

- Balance of day, evening, and weekend shifts
- Balance of high-acuity and low-acuity shifts
- Some groups work night shifts
- Minimum 10h between shifts
- Typically, 4 shifts / week
- Maximum shift length 10h
- Maximum 40h on consecutive days
- Maximum 170h in a 28d period
- Minimum of 1 weekend off in 3 weeks. Must include Friday (as of 1700h) evening off.
- Approximately 25% of shifts will be with one preceptor for ongoing feedback, the remainder of shifts will be with a variety of preceptors.

3.3. Postgraduate learners are expected to attend the following educational activities in addition to scheduled shifts:

- ED Rounds, ED Journal Club, Thursday AM PG/UG Simulation

3.4. All scheduling is done by EMSJ administrative staff. The Postgraduate Director (for FM residents) or the Assistant Postgraduate Director (for RC residents) has the authority to amend, cancel or reschedule shifts.

4. Specific postgraduate learner groups:

4.1. Saint John Family Medicine PGY1:

- No nightshifts
- Shift schedule may include 2 shifts per 4-week block in Sussex Health Centre (Day or Evening Shift) or Charlotte County Hospital (Day Shift) or St. Joseph’s Urgent Care (UCC).

4.2. iFMEM PGY1:

- 1-2 nightshifts per block
- Shift schedule may include 2 shifts per 4-week block in Sussex Health Centre (Day or Evening Shift) or Charlotte County Hospital (Day Shift) or St. Joseph’s UCC.
- Block 1: residents are required to attend SOS Sessions. Shift count will be pro-rated to accommodate.

4.3. iFMEM PGY2 & PGY3:

- Residents may submit scheduling requests to the Postgraduate Director, to facilitate other aspects of the resident’s schedule and provide for some repeated exposures to recurring preceptors.
- Shift requests must include attention to all items above in 3.2, as well as 1-2 nightshifts per block and 1-2 shifts in SHC or CCH.
- Scheduling requests must be submitted in writing (ex: email) a minimum of 8 weeks prior to the on-service block. This is to ensure that other resident & student groups can have their shifts scheduled by EMSJ administrative staff with a finalized schedule no later than 4 weeks before the Block starts. This is in keeping with the MarDocs collective agreement.
• The Postgraduate Director / iFMEM Program Director may amend the scheduling requests.
• After review by the PG Director, shifts are scheduled by EMSJ administrative staff.

4.4. RC EM all PGY levels:
• 1-2 nightshifts per block
• All shifts at SJ Regional Hospital ED.

4.5. Royal College off-service PGY1s:
• No night shifts
• All shifts at SJ Regional Hospital ED.

5. **Vacation time & Time off:**

5.1. All learners must follow Postgraduate / Undergraduate polices and their own program policies when requesting time off. **EMSJ requires that all vacation requests be submitted to EMSJ administrative staff a minimum of 8 weeks prior to the start of the rotation.**

5.2. Postgraduate vacation time results in a pro-rated number of shifts in the rotation.
• For example, if a resident on a 4-week block takes 1 week of vacation, the resident will work 12 ED shifts during the block.
• For example, if a resident on a 4-week block takes 3 to 4 days of vacation, the resident will work 14 ED shifts during the block.
• Specifically, a resident is pro-rated to 0.57 shifts (rounded) less for each one day of vacation taken.
  • 1 vacation day: 15 shifts in block
  • 2 vacation days: 15 shifts in block
  • 3 vacation days: 14 shifts in block
  • 4 vacation days: 14 shifts in block
  • 5 vacation days: 13 shifts in block
  • 6 vacation days: 13 shifts in block
  • 7 vacation days: 12 shifts in block
• Please note, requests for “days off” (shifts stacked away from a particular day or days without an associated reduction in shift count) may also considered on a case by case basis. Such requests must be submitted in email, and are provided at the discretion of the PG, UG or Assistant PG Director. Any such requests must still allow for a schedule that meets all criteria in item 3.2 and can be accommodated by the department capacity of EMSJ on that block.
• Please note, all educational activities are mandatory. ED Rounds may typically be attended virtually, and PG/UG Sims requires in-person attendance. Therefore, a learners cannot request a “day off” for a Thursday Sim, however vacation days may be requested.

5.3. Postgraduate learners are required to attend a minimum of 70% of a rotation for the rotation to be considered completed. In a typical 4-week block, this would mean a minimum of 12 shifts must be completed, regardless of the reason for absence.

5.4. December holidays:
Dalhousie Med 3 clerkship students typically have a two week break during the Christmas season, during which time there are no Dal Med 3 clerks on rotation.

- The December holidays occur during Block 7 of the postgraduate academic year.
  1. Per the MarDocs collective agreement, residents are entitled to 6 consecutive days off between Dec. 21 and Jan 3. One of these days must be Dec. 25 or Jan. 1. These days are not considered vacation days for the purpose of pro-rating of call or shifts.
  2. During Block 7, all MarDocs rules must be followed regarding shift scheduling.
  3. In order to meet MarDocs rules, shift count may be lower during Block 7 than other blocks or may be preserved.
  4. Residents working Block 7 at EMSJ should expect to typically work 14 to 16 shifts.
  5. Vacation is permitted during Block 7, with a commensurate pro-rating of shift count, however a minimum of 12 shifts in a 4-week block must be completed for the rotation to be considered completed.

6. SJRH ED, SHC and CCH shift scheduling:

6.1. At SJRH ED, efforts will be made to spread learners throughout the shift schedule, to avoid having too many or too few learners in the dept at a given time.
  - This is important for both the quality of the learning experience and learner service in the ED.

6.2. At times, some periods may seem “crowded” with learners and other periods sparser. When this occurs, it is likely due to efforts to schedule learners with a core preceptor for 25% of shifts, or to meet MarDocs or Dal UGME policies.

6.3. All efforts will be made to include all SJRH EM-certified scheduled faculty members in on-shift clinical teaching.
  - Exception: any EMSJ faculty who are in their first 6 months of practice are not assigned learners; this is to support their own transition into independent EM clinical practice. Additionally, while in their first 1 year of practice, new faculty are typically not assigned as the main preceptor (25% of shifts) for an individual student or resident.

6.4. With the noted exceptions regarding night shifts, learners may be scheduled for any shift in the SJRH ED.

6.5. At Sussex Health Centre (SHC), learners may be scheduled for Sussex Day (7:30am – 4:30pm) or Sussex Evening (2:30pm – 11:30pm). However, due to space restrictions, only one learner shall be scheduled per day, and typically no night shifts.

6.6. At Charlotte County Hospital (CCH), learners may be scheduled for the CCH Day shift (8am – 7pm). Due to space restrictions, typically no night shifts.

6.7. At SHC and CCH, all learner shifts will be supervised by an EM-certified physician.

6.8. At St. Joseph’s UCC, learners may be supervised by an EM-certified physician or a CCFP-certified family physician.
Implementation:

1. EMSJ administrative staff create each learner rotation schedule.
   - iFMEM PGY2 & PGY3 residents must ensure they submit requests in adequate time for these requests to be included in the shift schedule, at least **8 weeks** in advance of their rotation.
   - **All learners** must ensure they submit vacation requests and December holiday requests in adequate time for these requests to be included in the shift schedule, at least **8 weeks** in advance of their rotation.
   - Learner rotation schedules are released approximately 1 month prior to the start of the rotation, in keeping with the MarDocs Collective Agreement.

2. If a resident has a scheduling question or concern, they should email EMSJ administrative staff, at Melanie.Kelly@horizonnb.ca. Concerns will be addressed by the corresponding director:
   - Undergraduate learners ➔ Undergraduate Director: Dr. Matt Greer
   - Family Medicine learners ➔ Postgraduate Director: Dr. Robin Clouston
   - Royal College learners ➔ Assistant Postgraduate Director: Dr. Cherie Adams

3. If a faculty member has a scheduling question or concern, this will be addressed by the corresponding UG or PG director, or by all three directors together.
   - Ongoing concerns may be discussed at EMSJ Academic Council.