Dartmouth
GEISEL SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Healthy for Clinic / Class Policy

Summary of Purpose

The purpose of the Geisel School of Medicine Healthy for Clinic / Class Policy is to create systems of support for medical students experiencing challenges related to substance misuse or behavioral concerns that may impact their success in medical school and as future physicians. The policy and processes described herein will help students to navigate these challenges, engage with resources to support their well-being and health, and reduce the likelihood of negative impact on their academic success, academic record, the learning environment, and on patient care. Geisel medical students are held to the same ethical and behavioral standards as physicians, both during their preclinical and clinical experiences in training. Students will benefit by identifying and addressing any problems through a supportive and formative approach during medical school. As part of its academic program, Geisel will identify conduct that impairs, or threatens to impair, a student's ability to function as a student doctor. Geisel has a responsibility to ensure safe care is provided to patients treated by supervised medical students.

Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all enrolled Geisel School of Medicine students.

Definitions

Impairment: in this context is considered any changes in psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function that leads to an inability to safely perform the duties of a medical student. Impairment may stem from a physical or mental health issue or substance misuse. It could also apply to knowingly reporting to clinical or classroom settings with a communicable illness that could impact the health of classmates and community.

Fit for Duty: is a student's ability to perform safely, without an impairment, all essential functions of their position, as described in the Geisel Essential Standards for Matriculation, Promotion and Graduation, from the time the student reports to class or clinical work and throughout the entirety of the student's scheduled work shift, as determined by Geisel and/or Dartmouth Health or other Geisel clinical affiliates at their discretion.

Fitness For Duty Evaluation: is an assessment conducted by Occupational Medicine or an equivalent provider to evaluate a student's fitness for duty. Such evaluation may include, but is not limited to, medical exams, drug and/or alcohol testing, interviews with the student and others, internal Geisel record reviews and audits, public record reviews, consultations with the student's provider(s), and psychological assessments. Geisel, Dartmouth College Health

Service, and Dartmouth Health/clinical affiliates reserve the sole discretion to determine the method and means of evaluation.

Policy Statement

Medical students are held to the same ethical and behavioral standards as physicians during both the pre-clinical and clinical years of medical school. Each student doctor must demonstrate conduct that respects the public confidence and trust bestowed upon one as a health care professional. This requires the student to possess and maintain emotional health and judgment, as well as the ability to behave in a professional, reliable, mature, and responsible manner. To meet this standard, every medical student must be healthy for clinic/class and fit for duty.

Procedure

To recognize impairment and provide appropriate supportive treatment and rehabilitation for students and to minimize risk to the public, Geisel instituted the following evaluation process, as outlined below. The student will self-refer or be referred to Occupational Medicine at their current clinical site for an evaluation to determine their fitness for duty as a medical student. This may include a medical or psychological exam and/or any relevant testing, such as drug screening per the policies of the clinical affiliate. They will assess the student and refer them to the Associate Dean for Student Life for advisement on options and/or next steps for how to best navigate their unique situation. The student may be referred to the New Hampshire Professionals Health Program (NHPHP) for coordination and monitoring of a treatment program. If there are any professionalism and/or conduct concerns these will be routed through the institutional process separate from the impairment concerns.

LCME Standard

Standard 10.5 – Technical Standards

A medical school develops and publishes technical standards for the admission, retention, and graduation of applicants or medical students in accordance with legal requirements.

Related Information: Documents, Policies, Links, Etc.

University Documents

None.

Other Documents

Geisel Essential Standards for Matriculation, Promotion and Graduation

Related Links

Geisel Drug Screening Policy

DHMC Drug-free Workplace Policy

DHMC Fit for Duty Policy

New Hampshire Professionals Health Program (NHPHP)

Policy Administration

Policy Number:	UME-OSL-0023		
Reviewed By:	Director, Student Life	**Effective Date:**	May 8, 2023
Approved By:	UME Affairs	**Last Date Approved:**	May 8, 2023

Policy Contact Information

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History

Date	History
5/8/23	Policy approved by UME Affairs and Student Gov't Exec Board
10/15/24	Updated to reflect name/title change to Office of Student Life and updated link to Essential Standards, DHMC Fit for Duty Policy, and NHPHP

Background

This policy was established to create systems of support for medical students experiencing challenges related to substance misuse or behavioral concerns that may impact their success in medical school and as future physicians. The policy and processes intend to help students to navigate these challenges, engage with resources to support their well-being and health, and reduce the likelihood of negative impact on their academic success, academic record, the learning environment, and on patient care.