

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

Academic Performance Improvement actions are designed to define and correct areas of marginal and/or unsatisfactory performance by a Resident in order to close an identified learning gap. These actions include structured feedback, developing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), repeating rotation(s), and repeating an academic year. Each of these actions is designed to correct a deficiency. If an academic performance improvement action, such as failure to successfully complete a PIP, results in non-promotion of a Resident to the next level of training, non-renewal of appointment, dismissal, or other adverse academic action, then it is subject to the University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education Academic Appeal process (GME Policy #630). Academic failure may be reportable for future credentialing and verification purposes. It will become a permanent part of the Resident training record.

A Resident may be subject to any level of academic performance improvement actions which can be tailored to fit the individual. There is no mandatory “step” process, and the level of action can be based on the severity of the academic deficiency or action based upon the sound judgment of the Program Director and the University. Consistent with other University policies, this policy is not to be construed as a contract and as warranted by the circumstances, the University may terminate or dismiss a Resident at any point in the academic process.

Forms for academic performance improvement actions are found at:
<http://www.uthsc.edu/comc/gme/chattanooga-coordinators-forms.php>

Structured Feedback

Structured Feedback regarding Resident performance in the six core competencies can occur in multiple ways including but not limited to routine verbal discussions during training, written evaluations, and semi-annual evaluation meetings. Some poor performance may require Program Directors to provide some corrective action but not a formal intervention e.g., PIP. In this case, Program Directors may choose to utilize the “single incident” form to document the poor performance and discussion with the Resident

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

A PIP is an individualized academic improvement strategy that may be used by Program Directors in situations where a Resident fails to comply with the academic requirements established by the residency training program, University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education, and/or participating institutions. Placement on a PIP may serve as an official notice to the Resident of unsatisfactory performance and expectations for academic improvement. Typically, the deficiencies are associated with a significant lapse in one or more of the six ACGME competencies.

Each residency program should establish written criteria and thresholds for placing Resident on a PIP. Although program-level criteria are not required for every specialty, examples include but are not limited to the following: poor academic performance as documented by unsatisfactory faculty evaluations; poor performance on program examinations and /or written in-service examinations; failure to attend scheduled monthly departmental activities; clinical performance or surgical skills which are below those expected for the level of training as documented by written evaluations by the faculty; unprofessional or inappropriate actions;

disruptive behavior; failure to complete medical records in a timely manner; lapses in professionalism; and failure to maintain procedure or surgical logs or EMR records in a timely manner. Residency programs requiring their Resident to achieve minimum standards, i.e., in-training scores, conference attendance, etc. must publish these requirements.

If the Program Director implements a PIP, he or she is required to provide the Resident with a written GME PIP letter advising the Resident of PIP status, the area(s) of unsatisfactory performance, reassessment criteria and strategies, time frame for completion, and consequences of not successfully completing the PIP. A copy of the PIP letter, signed by the Program Director and Resident, must be sent to the Associate Dean/DIO for an acknowledgement signature. The PIP checklist can assist the Program Director in documenting the elements necessary for successful performance improvement but is not a substitute for the GME PIP letter nor is its use mandatory. At the end of the PIP timeframe, the Program Director or designee must document in writing the Outcome of the PIP (e.g., GME Outcome Letter, CCC assessment, etc.). This document also must be signed by both the Program Director and Resident with the Associate Dean/DIO's acknowledgement signature. (NOTE: The PIP is in effect whether or not the Resident signs the form).

Failure to Meet Academic Expectations

If a Resident fails to satisfactorily meet the expectations documented in the PIP or other feedback, additional improvement plans, repeating the academic year, or other adverse academic action may be implemented (*see* GME Policy #700 – Disciplinary and Adverse Academic Actions).

Program Director Quick Guide for a PIP

1. Identifies a trend in poor performance or an egregious behavior
2. Reads Academic Performance Improvement Actions Policy and PIP Checklist
3. Completes GME PIP Letter; consults PIP Checklist
4. Contact DIO to review draft of the GME PIP letter
5. Meets with Resident to discuss GME PIP letter
6. Monitor Resident Progress throughout Improvement Time Period
7. Completes PIP Outcome Letter at the end of Improvement Time Period

If a Performance Improvement Plan includes an adverse academic action such as an extension of or repeating an academic year, the Resident has the right to appeal the action based on the GME Academic Appeals process (*see* GME Policy #720). If a Resident chooses to appeal the adverse academic action, the Performance Improvement Plan will be placed on hold until the appeal process is complete.

Repeat Academic Year

Repeating an academic year is an improvement action that may be used in limited situations such as: overall unsatisfactory performance during the academic year, or failure to pass an annual written in-service examination. Each residency program is responsible for establishing specific written criteria for repeating an academic year. At least four (4) months prior to the end of the academic year, the Resident will receive written notice of his/her requirement to repeat the academic year. If the primary reason(s) for non-promotion occurs within the last four (4) months of the contract year, the program will provide the Resident with as much written notice of non-promotion as circumstances reasonably allow. A copy of the notification, signed by the Program Director and Resident, will be sent to the DIO.

UT GME ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROCESS

STRUCTURED FEEDBACK

Routine feedback consistent with educational programs:
Verbal feedback, Rotational and Semi-annual Evaluations
Single Incident needing some corrective action but not a formal intervention --
Use "single incident" form

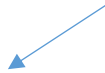
Identify a Trend in Poor Performance



PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

Issued when there is an identified trend in poor performance or egregious behavior
Triggers PD consultation with DIO
Provides Resident with formal notice and opportunity to cure
Must be signed by Resident, Program Director, and DIO
Signed Copy sent to DIO

Fails to Meet the PIP



Complete the PIP Outcome Letter and
determine next action which may include

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

(Appealable actions)

Extend or Repeat academic year
Non-reappointment Non-promotion
Suspension Probation
Termination

Triggers a second consultation with DIO



ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCESS

Review meeting to ensure the process leading up to
the action was fair and reasonable

Requested by Resident

Levels:

Departmental (waiver is available)
GME – Associate Dean/DIO
Executive Dean College of Medicine, UTHSC
Chancellor, UTHSC

Successfully Completes the PIP



Complete the PIP Outcome Letter

*The term "Resident" refers to both Resident and Fellow trainees.

Approved most recently by the GMEC at its 4/19/2022 meeting.