

Departmental Policy Title:	Substantial Disruption in Patient Care or Education and Extraordinary Circumstances - GME	Policy ID:	11306
Keywords	Disaster Emergent Extreme		
Department	Graduate Medical Education (GME)		

I. Purpose of Policy

To define the responsibilities specific to Graduate Medical Education (GME) following a Local Substantial Disruption in Patient Care or Education at the Dartmouth Hitchcock (DH) Lebanon Campus.

II. Policy Scope

The policy applies to all Residents participating in Accreditation Counsel for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited programs at DH.

III. Definitions

- **Resident:** Any physician in an ACGME-accredited graduate medical education program including residents and fellows.
- **Designated Institutional Official (DIO):** The individual in a sponsoring institution who has the authority and responsibility for all the ACGME-accredited Graduate Medical Education programs.
- **Local Extraordinary Circumstances:** ACGME defines Extraordinary Circumstances as circumstances that significantly disrupt the ability of a Sponsoring Institution and/or its program(s) to support GME in compliance with applicable ACGME requirements. Extraordinary Circumstances may impact a Sponsoring Institution or program or have a regional or national impact. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include, but are not limited to, abrupt closure of a hospital or other essential clinical site resulting from a natural disaster; a catastrophic loss of funding; acts of terrorism or cyberterrorism; and loss of infrastructure or acute and prolonged health system disruption during epidemics or pandemics

IV. Policy Statement

A. Expectations of Residents during Local Extreme Situations

- Decisions regarding a Resident's involvement in a Local Extreme Situations should take into account the following aspects of the Resident's multiple roles as learner, physician, and employee.
 - The nature of the health care and clinical work the Resident is expected to deliver.
 - The Resident's level of post-graduate education specifically regarding specialty preparedness.
 - Resident safety, considering the level of post-graduate training, associated professional judgment capacity, and the nature of the disaster at hand.
 - Board certification eligibility during or after a prolonged extreme emergent situation.

- Self-limitations according to the Resident’s maturity to act under significant stress or even duress.
- A Resident with an advanced level of training and fully licensed in the state of New Hampshire/Vermont may be able to provide care independent of supervision during a Local Extreme Situation. The Resident discusses the scope of care with their Program Director, DIO, or immediate Supervisor.

B. Defined Responsibilities Concerning a Local Extreme Situation

• DH DIO

- Serves as the point of contact for Program Directors.
- Calls the Executive Director, Institutional Review Committee (ED-IRC) if a Local Extreme Situation cause serious, extended disruption to Resident assignments, educational infrastructure or clinical operations that might affect DH or any of its ACGME-accredited programs.
- Provides information on behalf of DH, the DIO to the ED-IRC regarding the Local Extreme Situation and status of the educational environment for its accredited programs resulting from the emergency.
- Submits a written description at the ED-IRC’s request of the disruption at the institution and provides details regarding activities undertaken in response and provides updates as requested.
- Receives email confirmation of this communication with the ED-IRC and distributes this confirmation to DH Program Directors.
- Notifies ACGME when the Local Extreme Situation is resolved.

• Program Directors

- Upon receipt of the email confirmation of the correspondence between the DIO and ED-IRC, a Program Director may contact their respective ED-RC, if necessary, to discuss any specialty-specific concerns regarding interruptions to Resident education or effect on the educational environment.
- A Program Director is expected to inform the DIO on the results of conversations with their ED-RC regarding program specific issues.

C. Declaration of a disaster by DH Administrator on Call / Incident Commander

- GME’s response to a declared disaster is provided in the procedure titled “Disaster Procedure – GME” (procedure ID 11293).

V. References

ACGME Institutional Requirements, ACGME.org

Responsible Owner:	Graduate Medical Education (GME)	Contact(s): email	Karen Miller
Approved By:	GMEC Approver Group; Office of Policy Support - All Other Documents	Version #	4

Current Approval Date:	08/28/2026	Old Document ID:	New
Date Policy to go into Effect:	08/28/2026		
Related Polices & Procedures:	Resident Supervision Policy - GME Disaster Procedure - (GME)		
Related Job Aids:			