

Geisinger Northeast Internal Medicine Residency

Wellness Program

The Geisinger Internal Medicine Residency Program is dedicated to the wellness of our residents and faculty. We have developed a Wellness Initiative that is resident/faculty-centered, and activities are driven by the needs and areas of interest as identified by all of us. We strongly believe that creating an environment of empowerment, respect and trust is essential for the collective wellbeing of our team, which leads to reduced risk of burnout and improves the quality and efficiency of our patient care.

The Wellness Initiative provides education and awareness for IM residents and faculty on various topics through social events, conferences, reflection sessions, interactive group activities, online resources and incentive programs. In addition, the program oversees a Wellness Committee that includes a group of residents dedicated to promoting well-being throughout our program. The committee will be chaired by a core faculty member and include representation from each PG year as well as faculty.

Our Wellness initiative is based on the Hettler's Hexagon®, which breaks down wellness into 6 dimensions. Each of these six dimensions will be incorporated into our didactic curriculum. Each of these dimensions nurture an important aspect our well-being, leading to a healthy body and a healthy mind.

Activities and sessions through the year will be linked to these dimensions. Our goal is to introduce activities, oversight and training to build a nurturing environment, which helps in achieving balance in these dimensions:

Social: A person who is Socially active and alive is one who is able to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with others:

- Quarterly Wellness Retreats during weekly didactics for residents, and faculty
- Social gatherings to celebrate diversity of individuals, backgrounds, and cultures throughout the year (International Smorgasbord (representing our diversity)).
- Meaningful community activities to help us be one with the community we serve
- Activities that promote team building and trust
- Joint retreats/planned social activities, organized with residents from other programs in the Northeast as well as Central Campus

Physical: The Physical dimension of wellness is much more than getting the right amount of exercise. It also means eating balanced, nutritious meals; maintaining proper body weight and giving the body enough rest and sleep to heal. Physically healthy physicians not only make the right choices for themselves, but also become role models that their patients can aspire to:

- Health promotion through awards for highest levels of physical activity achieved. (pedometer tracking) for both inpatient and outpatient rotations (In development)
- Access to affordable gym facilities available on campus at GWV and GSW
- Fatigue mitigation training focusing on adequate sleep, sleep hygiene and prioritizing healthy habits and schedules
- Six Protected wellness half days assigned throughout the year to be utilized as personal wellness time, appointments, preventive and health maintenance visits.

- Nutrition – Plan to have nutritious, healthy, and culturally sensitive dietary snack and options available to residents during on call hours

Intellectual: Intellectually healthy people tend to engage in creative, stimulating mental activities. They are active problem solvers and learn from mistakes. Curiosity, the interest in learning, and the development of new skills throughout life are also signs of intellectually well people:

- Humanism and population care rotations followed by reflective commentaries and lessons learned by rotating residents
- Developing a continuously evolving and improving didactic framework with direct resident feedback and involvement
- Minimizing travelling between sites and interrupted patient care by introducing a laid back and interactive Academic Half Day (AHD)

Career: Career Development is another side of a well-rounded person. Having a goal or direction in life is as important as taking the steps to achieve these goals. A positive attitude towards one's work and maintaining balance is extremely important and requires our mindful efforts achieve it:

- An active Mentoring Program to address professional development, career choices and early warnings. Mentors will be assigned with resident preference in the beginning of PGY 1. Regular meetings and feedback will be required to keep open doors of communication
- Program leadership and faculty will encourage open access to residents for advice in current as well as future concerns regarding career planning
- Mentoring sessions with subspecialists for PGY 2 residents as they begin to focus on a subspecialty fellowship of choice and its application process
- Faculty mentoring program based on a buddy system approach.
- Senior faculty mentor assignment to new faculty members

Emotional: Emotional well-being is related to one's awareness and acceptance of feelings and the ability to express feelings in a positive, productive manner. They also accept others' expressions of feelings and can cope with stress more effectively leading to added resilience:

- Wellness curriculum and interactive sessions during didactics
- Group activities to promote Awareness and Mindfulness
- Healthcare and Mental Health resources with protected time to address concerns
- Plans to introduce, on-demand appointments with a psychologist/wellness consultant available to all residents with protected time. Residents may choose to or not to avail them
- Oversight of work hours, learning environment, and strong stress on education rather than service
- EAP (Employee Assistance Program)
- Longitudinal Well-being evaluation (using WHO-5 Well-being Scale) after each rotation (done anonymously with composite results tabulated each quarter) to identify highs and lows of specific rotations. This evaluates, residents as well as faculty
- Wellness Workshops, available to residents on a voluntary basis. Scheduled throughout the year depending on demand in the format of seven, hour-long, weekly sessions for groups of up to 7

Spiritual: Spiritually well people are involved in the on-going development of a purpose and philosophy of life. They are involved in the internal development of a personal set of values, beliefs and ethics and strive to live by them.

- Reflection sessions to share experiences; celebrate successes, and console heartaches that are an integral part of patient care
- Regularly scheduled wellness retreats to celebrate our accomplishments
- Humanism rotation for PGY 1 residents to recognize a physician's role in patient care beyond physical healing as a caring individual, and share their experiences and lessons learned with their colleagues
- Six Protected wellness half days assigned throughout the year to be utilized as personal wellness time, appointments, preventive and health maintenance visits.