



August 26, 2013

Dr. Jason R. Frank, Associate Director of the Office of Education  
Dr. Kevin Imrie, Vice President, Education  
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons  
774 Echo Drive  
Ottawa ON K1S 5N8

Dear Drs. Frank and Imrie:

The Canadian Association of Physician Assistants (CAPA) would like to endorse the National Steering Committee on Resident Duty Hours' report titled: *Fatigue, Risk and Excellence* released in June 2013.

After having reviewed the report and the recommendations put forward by the National Steering Committee; CAPA feels that a pan-Canadian approach should be developed to address resident duty hours in Canadian hospitals and other health care institutions. As stated in the report "resident duty hours, and issues surrounding the regulation of those hours, have significant implications for a number of vital domains, including health care delivery, excellence in medical education, and the provision of safe care." It is the Association's belief that a series of systems need to be put into place to monitor resident duty hours and to ensure that these vital domains are not being negatively affected.

Of particular interest is the key finding that states "resident duty hour regulations necessitate reorganization of health human resources deployment and care delivery models." Residents employed in the health care system have a large responsibility. Not only are they expected to have a strong academic performance but they are also responsible for the quality of care that they are providing to patients. Concerns are being raised about the impact of long hours and fatigue on the retention of knowledge. Reorganization of health human resources deployment and care delivery models would help to address concerns regarding retention of knowledge as well as the provision of care.

Utilizing other health professionals such as Physician Assistants (PAs) could assist in reducing the shift length and total number of hours incurred by the resident. The PA scope of practice mirrors that of their supervising physician. Since the PA works by way of delegation from a physician, some of the tasks performed by the resident could be shared with the PA. This would help to minimize the amount of stress placed on residents and would also assist in ensuring that patients are receiving timely access to quality care as well as aid residents to achieve a proper work life balance thus potentially improving their academic performance.

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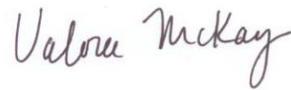
In addition, PAs are utilized in some settings to help facilitate residential educational opportunities by providing medical or surgical coverage thereby allowing residents to attend their academic opportunities.

The Canadian Association of Physician Assistants is pleased to have had the opportunity to submit feedback on such an important topic. The Association is optimistic regarding the recommendations set out in the *Fatigue, Risk and Excellence report* and hopes that Canadian health institutions will take the suggestions provided from the Steering Committee on Resident Duty Hours earnestly and begin to implement these recommendations within their respective health settings.

Sincerely,



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