PHYSICIAN IMPAIRMENT & SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY
Penn State Hershey Graduate Medical Education

For the purposes of this policy, “impairment” is the inability of a resident to physically or mentally meet his or her responsibilities because of physical illness or injury, psychiatric or behavioral illness, dependency on alcohol and/or controlled substances or overuse of same or other condition.

Program Directors, faculty, and other medical center professionals are encouraged to be observant for signs of impairment from alcohol, drugs, psychiatric or medical disorders among residents.

When impairment is suspected, the appropriate Program Director or Department Chair should be informed and should utilize available resources to investigate the situation and take appropriate actions, including intervention, when warranted.

It is our goal to provide intervention and rehabilitation for impaired residents and to support them during the process. However, dismissal is possible if the resident refuses such.

Resources available to Program Directors, Department Chairs, faculty, or residents with respect to impairment include the ComPsych, the Student Mental Health Service, the Department of Psychiatry, professional counseling services and the Pennsylvania Medical Society’s Physicians Health Programs.