

# An Innovative Assessment of Trainee Understanding of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education's 80-Hour Workweek Rule

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## Abstract

### Background

ACGME (Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education) duty hour regulations limit resident trainees to 80 hours per week on average. In 2019, the ACGME implemented a new policy to issue citations for any violations. Given the high stakes for these violations, it is important to explore resident understanding of the 80 hour rule.

### Objective

To assess resident interpretation of the 80-hour workweek rule and if an educational intervention changed reporting of violations on the ACGME survey.

### Methods

A quiz was developed by a three-person task force of the CU Graduate Medical Education (GME) Subcommittee on Education in the winter of 2020. The quiz encompassed 8 scenarios surrounding possible 80-hour workweek violations with binary response options. The quiz was distributed to 209 GME programs at CU approximately two weeks prior to the annual distribution of the ACGME resident survey. Survey responses from AY 2019-2020 were compared between programs, across postgraduate years, and to AY 2018-2019 responses.

### Results

The response rate was 99.5% (1107/1112), categorized as medical (61%), surgical (23%), and hospital-based (16%) programs. Residents and fellows generally answered the questions correctly, except for scenarios surrounding personal educational pursuits and surrounding moonlighting. Compared to the 2018-2019 survey responses, there was increased compliance across all programs in 2019-2020.

### Conclusions

Residents and fellows understand the ACGME-defined 80-hour workweek rule, except for situations involving additional educational pursuits and moonlighting. This is the first formal evaluation of trainee interpretation of the 80-hour workweek rule using an innovative, large-scale educational quiz.