



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



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BACKGROUND

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- 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

AIM:

- 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 post graduate years, and to AY 2018-2019 responses.

Figure 1. 80-hour workweek quiz questions and correct response

Question	Correct Response
1. You log the following hours after four weeks of a rotation: Week 1 = 90, Week 2 = 70, Week 3 = 85, Week 4 = 50. Is this an 80-hour work week violation?	No
2. You are on a rotation where trainees work 6 days a week from 6am to 6pm. Will this end up causing an 80-hour work week violation at the end of a rotation?	No
3. You routinely do your documentation from home at the end of the day after rounds and conferences. While documenting, you look up items and study. Your estimated study time is 2 hours each day (totaling up to 10 hours each week). This time is intermingled in the charting time and places you over 80 hours of work each week. However, if study time was eliminated, you would not go over 80 hours. Is this an 80-hour work week rule violation?	No
4. You are currently on a rotation that involves shifts. The total hours each week for the shifts will be 76 hours. It is easy to finish the shift on time each day. You opt to work on your research project for about 2 hours each night as well. This ends up being another 10 hours each week. Is this an 80-hour work week violation?	No
5. You work full day shifts every day of your rotation (6am to 6pm) 6 days per week for four weeks. You find yourself staying late by 3 hours four times each week of this rotation because you seek out additional experiences with procedures and you stay to discuss the care plan with patients' families. Does this constitute an 80-hour work week rule violation?	Yes
6. Does moonlighting count towards the 80-hour maximum weekly limit?	Yes
7. Is reading done in preparation for the following day's cases, studying, and research done from home included in work hours?	No
8. Does on-site conference attendance for your program count towards the 80-hour work week rule if attendance is required?	Yes

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.

DISCUSSION

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.

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