

Policy & Procedure: Transfer Policy, Provincial and McMaster Postgraduate Medical Education

Principles for Transfers in Ontario Residency Programs

The Ontario medical schools and Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) support a system of improved flexibility in postgraduate medical education. As of October 1, 2013, all transfer requests are handled in accordance with the principles outlined in this document, and under local transfer policies in force at each Ontario medical school.

Transfers will be accommodated through funding from:

- the usual local recoveries (e.g. vacated positions), and
- within the up-to numbers allocated in the Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA).

General Principles

The following general principles apply to all resident transfer requests:

- Wherever possible, transfers should not subvert the CaRMs Match.
- Discussions regarding transfers will remain confidential until such time as the resident consents to disclosure.
- Overall, transfers should not significantly alter the distribution of residency position allocation across schools and within disciplines.
- Residents must be acceptable to the program to which they are seeking transfer.
- It is strongly encouraged that residents utilize the second iteration of CaRMS as a route to change programs that residents may use outside of the regular transfer process.
- Capacity, funding, and other constraints may limit the availability of program transfers; it is therefore not possible to accommodate all requests.

Specific Principles

In addition to fulfilling the requirements of the general principles, the following specific principles apply:

- Transfers should optimize the supply and distribution of physicians in Ontario to meet provincial and /or societal needs that facilitate access to health care for all Ontarians.
- Each transfer request is unique and will be considered on its own merit; however priority will be given to transfers based on evidence of wrong career choice or demonstrated

need, e.g. disability, health issues that prevent residents from completing their initial program, etc.

- Internal transfer requests will be considered by each school after January 1st of each year.
- In most cases, intra-provincial transfers will be considered after the school's internal transfer process is complete. Intra-provincial PGY1 transfer requests can be made to the PGME Office of the resident's home school after January 1st each year, but will not be approved until after the second iteration of the CaRMS Match.
- PGY2 or higher internal transfer requests can be made at any time and will be forwarded to the programs at the discretion and internal procedure / schedule of each school.
- Final approval of any transfer lies with the Postgraduate Dean.

Resident Responsibilities

Residents are responsible for the facilitation of a transfer.

- A Resident requesting a transfer to another Ontario school should initially inform the Postgraduate Medical Education Office at the Resident's home school.
- A Resident should contact the program they are interested in to determine capacity, possibly arrange an elective and gather information regarding fit.
- A Resident must submit a curriculum vitae, ITERS and other documentation as requested by the program.
- Prior to accepting a transfer position, the Resident must request a release from his/her current program. Program Directors will then determine whether the resident may be released by their home program and will advise the Postgraduate Medical Education Office.
- Residents who apply for a transfer through CaRMS do not have to request a release from their home program.
- The formal decision will be made by the Postgraduate Office.
- It should be noted that IMG's who transfer out of province when in a base specialty are in breach of contract with the Ministry.

PGY1 Transfers (PGY1 covers the entire first 12 months of training)

- Residents must have at least 6 months of active training within the residency with ideally one block in the discipline from which they request transfer.
- Residents should have sufficient exposure to the discipline to which they are requesting transfer either in the last year of medical school or during their residency.

- Residents must be of similar aptitude to successful candidates through the CaRMS match by the receiving program, utilizing similar selection methods and rating systems where they are used; and
- If the resident applied through CaRMS to the program that they wish to transfer into, that program should ordinarily have ranked them favorably.

PGY2 or Higher Transfers

- Transfers within the last six months of a program will not normally be accepted, except in cases in which the programs significantly overlap i.e. Family Medicine to Public Health and Preventative Medicine.

The transferring resident is responsible for contacting the RCPSC or CFPC to have their prior postgraduate training assessed for credit towards the new program. Until notification has been received from the appropriate College, the resident will be registered at the lowest applicable PGY level to ensure adequate funds are available for a complete training path. The resident will be advanced, as appropriate, once the assessment notices have been received, accepted by the program and approved by the Postgraduate Dean.

Special Case

A transfer request that does not meet the principles outlined in this document may be brought forward to PGM: COFM as a special case at the discretion of the Postgraduate Deans.

Inter-provincial and U.S. Transfer Requests

Ontario Ministry of Health funded residents are free to seek transfer of residency programs outside Ontario schools, but funding is not transferrable / portable outside the province. Residents must advise their Postgraduate Medical Education Office that they wish to seek transfer to another province. The PGME Office will determine with the other school(s) if there is capacity / funding for the transfer. Please refer to the National Guidelines on Transfer.

Similarly, if a resident from another school, outside of Ontario, is seeking to transfer to McMaster, the request must come through the PGME Office. Program Directors may review such transfer requests according to the “General Principles” outlined above.

Any resident accepted for transfer must be officially released by his/her Program Director, as well as approved by the Postgraduate Dean. A letter from the Postgraduate Medical Education Office approving the release will be sent to the Postgraduate Dean at the receiving school.

Residents from other Canadian or U.S. medical schools are free to contact PGME Program Directors at Ontario medical schools directly regarding program capacity and transfer possibilities. Residents should indicate their interest in a transfer to their home Postgraduate Medical Education office.

McMaster University: Transfer Guidelines for Residents

McMaster University, Postgraduate Medical Education supports and adheres to the “Principles for Transfers in Ontario Residency Programs”. The process outlined below is one route to transfer; the second iteration of CaRMS is another alternative (please refer to CaRMS website, second iteration: <http://www.carms.ca/index.html>)

McMASTER PROCESS:

DEADLINE: is normally January 31 for all transfer requests.

TRANSFER REQUEST FORM: All Residents seeking transfer must complete this form and submit to the PGME Office. The form is available on medportal: <http://postgrad.medportal.ca/>, under “Policies and Procedures”

1. The Resident should make enquiries about the program that s/he is interested in; this may include seeking information from the PGME Office, talking to other residents and/or the Program Director of the program that s/he is interested in.
2. The Assistant Dean may wish to meet with the Resident to discuss the reasons for the transfer.
3. The Resident must meet the selection criteria of the program into which s/he wishes to transfer.
4. The Resident may receive a conditional offer of acceptance into a program, contingent on their release from their current program. The Resident should meet with their current Program Director to request the written release.
5. The PGME Office is provided with the letter of offer and the letter of release.
6. All transfers are contingent on funding. If additional funding is required to facilitate the transfer McMaster has four extra funding years (the funding allocation may change from year to year – funding provided since March 2003). The Resident should contact the PGME Office regarding funding.

INTRA-PROVINCIAL TRANSFERS

1. The Postgraduate Medical Education office will communicate with the Resident seeking a transfer to another university and determine if s/he wishes to proceed with the intra-provincial process.
2. Direct and equal transfers are sought during this process.
3. Transfers for geographic reasons are considered lower priority.
4. Intraprovincial transfers will not be approved until after the second iteration of CaRMS.

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