

Resident Affairs (PGME, Residents & Fellows)

In postgraduate medicine (PGME) at McMaster, the offices of Resident Affairs provides **inclusive, private, and confidential support** to ALL learners, at arm's length from their programs, PGME and from the colleges and licensing bodies.

While the practice of medicine can be fascinating and rewarding, it can also be challenging and exhausting, and the healthcare environment can be a complex and difficult one to work within. Learners can encounter significant stressors and situations which are often unfamiliar and can be difficult to handle, alongside other life stressors. Identifying and talking about your experiences is often the first step to feeling better, finding solutions, hope, and a way forward. **We don't want you to suffer or struggle alone.**

Why might you reach out to Resident Affairs?

- You're **not feeling well physically or emotionally** (e.g., having physical symptoms, feeling anxious, blue, discouraged, confused, sad, having suicidal thoughts) and are not sure where to go to get the help and support you need
- You are **experiencing stresses in your professional, personal or academic life** (e.g., on academic remediation or probation, have received negative feedback, failed an exam, experiencing a relationship breakup, unsure whether medicine is for you)
- You have experienced or **witnessed a distressing or difficult incident** or situation or have **experienced mistreatment** (e.g., death, suicide, discrimination, harassment, bullying, sexual violence)
- You have a **disability** and require additional supports (Note: Both offices offer support for trainees with disabilities, however Resident Affairs addresses resident/fellow accommodations; medical student accommodations are managed by McMaster's Student Accessibility Service)

What can we do to help?

- You can meet individually with a wellness counsellor or Resident Affairs faculty member who can offer support and help you to find and access additional resources or services to meet your needs

Is there a downside to seeking help with us?

- In a word, NO! We discuss the boundaries of confidentiality and privacy with you at your first appointment and you can feel free to ask any questions you have, at any time
- Visits with us will not influence disability insurance as we don't provide health care



How do I arrange an appointment?

Resident Affairs

- [Book online](#) with a counsellor or faculty member directly on the Jane calendar
- Call the office, 905-525-9140 X22979 or email pgaffairs@mcmaster.ca, to reach a confidential administrator for Resident Affairs
- Resident Affairs includes: faculty directors/advisors, wellness counsellor(s), assistant dean and administrative support

What are other key resources for medical learners?

PARO Hotline: <https://myparo.ca/helpline/>

The PARO 24 Hour Helpline is available to residents, their partners and family members, as well as medical students. The toll-free number, 1-866-HELP-DOC (1-866-435-7362), is accessible anywhere in Ontario, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In order to provide this service, PARO has partnered with Distress Centres of Toronto. All calls are strictly confidential and cannot be traced. When you call the toll-free number you will be directly connected to a Helpline volunteer with extensive training in acute crisis intervention, depression, anxiety and many other conditions. They have also received special training relating specifically to residents including information about hours of work, working conditions and common stressors.

Ontario Medical Association (OMA) Physician Health Program (PHP)

The Physician Health Program (PHP) provides free, confidential support for physicians and trainees who are struggling with substance use and mental health concerns, as well as with other behaviours that have a personal and professional impact. The Physician Health Program also offers support and education to physician leaders, hospitals and other worksites; as well as to anyone else who is concerned about a loved one or colleague. All of their clinicians have experience working with health professionals. The PHP does not provide treatment, but matches callers to community services. Please note that the PHP is not a crisis service however you can obtain immediate support from the OMA Wellness Support Line at 1-800-851-6606.

Physician Health Program (OMA)

<https://php.oma.org/>

<https://php.oma.org/what-we-do/support-and-referral/>