ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS

Academic Performance Improvement actions are designed to define and correct areas of marginal and/or unsatisfactory performance by a Resident in order to close an identified learning gap. These actions include structured feedback, developing a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), repeating rotation(s) and repeating an academic year. Each of these actions is designed to correct a deficiency. If an academic performance improvement action results in non-promotion of a Resident to the next level of training, non-renewal of contract, dismissal or other adverse academic action, then it is subject to the University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education (GME) Academic Appeal process. All disciplinary actions including probation, suspension and dismissal will become a permanent part of the Resident training record.

Structured Feedback
Structured Feedback regarding Resident performance in the six core competencies can occur in multiple ways including routine verbal discussions during training, written evaluations, semi-annual evaluation meetings, etc. Some poor performance may require Program Directors to provide some corrective action but not a formal intervention e.g. PIP. In this case, Program Directors may choose to utilize the “single incident” form to document the poor performance and discussion with the Resident.

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
PIP is an individualized academic improvement strategy that may be used by Program Directors in situations where a Resident fails to comply with the academic requirements established by the residency training program, University of Tennessee GME, and/or participating institutions. Placement on a PIP may serve as an official notice to the Resident of unsatisfactory performance and expectations for academic improvement. Typically, the deficiencies are associated with a significant lapse in one or more of the six ACGME competencies.

Each residency program should establish written criteria and thresholds for placing Residents on a PIP. Although program-level criteria are not required for every specialty, examples include but are not limited to the following: poor academic performance as documented by unsatisfactory Faculty evaluations; poor performance on program examinations and/or written in-service examinations; failure to attend scheduled monthly departmental activities; clinical performance or surgical skills which are below those expected for the level of training as documented by written evaluations by the Faculty; unprofessional or inappropriate actions; disruptive behavior; failure to complete medical records in a timely manner; and failure to maintain procedure or surgical logs in a timely manner. Residency programs requiring their Residents to achieve minimum standards, i.e. in-training scores, conference attendance, etc. must publish these requirements.

If the Program Director implements a PIP, he or she is required to provide the Resident with the GME PIP letter advising him or her of PIP status and the area(s) of unsatisfactory performance, measures to improve performance, time frame for completion, and
consequences of not addressing the issues outlined in the PIP. A copy of the notification letter, signed by the Program Director and Resident, must be sent to the DIO within 3 days of signature. The PIP checklist can assist the Program Director in documenting the elements necessary for successful performance improvement but is not a substitute for the GME PIP letter. If a Resident fails to satisfactorily meet the expectations documented in the PIP, additional improvement plans, repeating the academic year, disciplinary, or adverse actions may be implemented (see GME Policy #700 – Disciplinary Actions and Dismissal). All disciplinary actions including probation, suspension and dismissal will become a permanent part of the Resident training record.

**Program Director Quick Guide for a PIP**

1. Identifies a trend in poor performance or an egregious behavior
2. Reads Academic Performance Improvement Actions Policy and PIP Checklist
3. Completes GME PIP Letter; consults PIP Checklist
4. Contact DIO to review draft of the GME PIP letter
5. Meets with Resident to discuss GME PIP letter
6. Monitor Resident Progress throughout Improvement Time Period
7. Completes PIP Outcome Letter at the end of Improvement Time Period

If a Performance Improvement Plan includes an adverse academic action such as an extension of or repeating an academic year, the Resident has the right to appeal the action based on the GME Academic Appeals process (see GME Policy #720). If a Resident chooses to appeal the adverse academic action, the Performance Improvement Plan will be placed on hold until the appeal process is complete.

**Repeat Academic Year**

Repeating an academic year is an improvement action that may be used in limited situations such as: overall unsatisfactory performance during the academic year, or failure to pass an annual written in-service examination. Each residency program is responsible for establishing specific written criteria for repeating an academic year. At least four (4) months prior to the end of the academic year, the Resident will receive written notice of his/her requirement to repeat the academic year. If the primary reason(s) for non-promotion occurs within the last four (4) months of the contract year, the program will provide the Resident with as much written notice of non-promotion as circumstances reasonably allow. A copy of the notification, signed by the Program Director and Resident, will be sent to the DIO. Residents receiving notice of non-promotion to the next level of training may implement the GME Academic Appeal process.
UT GME ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROCESS

STRUCTURED FEEDBACK
Routine feedback consistent with educational programs:
Verbal feedback, Rotational and Semi-annual Evaluations
Single Incident needing some corrective action but not a formal intervention --
Use “single incident” form

Identify a Trend in Poor Performance

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)
Issued when there is an identified trend in poor performance or egregious behavior
Triggers PD consultation with DIO
Provides resident with formal notice and opportunity to cure
Must be signed by Resident, Program Director, and DIO
Signed Copy sent to DIO

Fails to Meet the PIP
Successfully Completes the PIP

Complete the PIP Outcome Letter and
determine next action which may include
DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS
(Appealable actions)
Extend or Repeat academic year
Non-reappointment Non-promotion
Suspension Probation
Termination
Triggers a second consultation with DIO

Complete the PIP Outcome Letter

ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCESS
Review meeting to ensure the process leading up to
the action was fair and reasonable
Requested by Resident
Levels:
Departmental (waiver is available)
GME – Associate Dean/DIO
Executive Dean College of Medicine

*The term “Resident” refers to both Resident and Fellow trainees.