AID FOR IMPAIRED RESIDENTS PROGRAM (AIRS)

The Aid to Impaired Residents Program (AIRs) is a confidential program which functions in coordination with the nationally recognized Aid for Impaired Medical Students Program (AIMS) developed by the University of Tennessee. The program is a cooperative effort with the Tennessee Medical Foundation (TMF) Physician’s Health Program (PHP) and is designed to assess and provide assistance for psychological or substance abuse problem that might affect a Resident’s or Fellow’s health or academic performance.

Entry into the AIRS Program is a formal process and requires that a Resident or Fellow follow a TMF PHP prescribed rehabilitation program. For individuals that admit and seek help prior to termination from the University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education Programs, and who enter the AIRS Program, their positions may be protected until the individual receives advocacy of the TMF PHP and is ready to resume training or a determination is made that the individual will not be able to continue training. The residency position may be protected for a period not to exceed one year. If PHP treatment recommendations are followed, the GME Program will work with the resident or fellow to maintain financial support through payroll or disability benefits to determine what health insurance benefits are available to assist with treatment costs.

A resident or fellow who resumes training after completing TMF PHP treatment will be subject to immediate termination if there is a recurrence of distressed behavior or if the resident/fellow fails to maintain ongoing progress. Any exceptions to the policy, including requests for readmission to the TMF PHP due to recurrence of a resident’s distressed behavior, will be considered on a case-by-case basis by GME administration.

Referrals may be made confidentially by a health care provider, a co-worker, family member, friend, or the Resident/Fellow. To make a referral or obtain more information, contact local AIRS Committee Chair, Dr. Robert Fore, at 423-778-6956. Residents and fellows may also contact Dr. Roland Gray, Medical Director for the TMF PHP, or another member of the AIRS Committee:

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