

AV2600 – Minimizing Fatigue, Errors and Injury

1.0 PURPOSE

This Policy outlines organizational and individual responsibilities for reducing staff fatigue. It is intended to improve quality care through increased patient and staff safety by reducing levels of staff fatigue associated with working too many consecutive shifts/hours, including overtime.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Fatigue	An overwhelming, debilitating and sustained sense of exhaustion that decreases one's ability to carry out daily activities including the ability to work effectively and function at one's usual level in family or social roles.

3.0 POLICY

Interior Health (IH) will enforce policies and practices to limit the impact of staff fatigue on both staff and patient safety in compliance with WSBC regulation 4.19 Physical or mental impairment. These include:

- 3.1 Staff shall not work more than 7 consecutive days without a day of rest.
- 3.2 Staff shall not work more than 70 hours in consecutive days without a day of rest.
- 3.3 Staff will not work more than 16 hours in a 24 hour period.
- 3.4 Hours worked anywhere within IHA are included in the calculation of work hours.
- 3.5 Shift rotations will be forward rotation (days, evenings, nights); minimizing the number of changes between shifts to allow for adaptation of circadian rhythm; and provide for adequate rest and recuperation between shifts.
- 3.6 Shift exchanges/swaps are also governed by this policy and should not be approved if they result in a schedule that would exceed the limits listed above.

IHA Leaders are Responsible for:

- Facilitating work schedules and processes that maintain safe staffing levels for quality care.
- Monitoring staff for signs of fatigue and responding appropriately when identified.
- Recognizing the rights and obligations of staff to decline an assignment if impaired by fatigue.
- Promoting work schedules that provide for adequate rest and recuperation between scheduled shifts.
- Collaborating with their staff, to establish shift duration and shift rotations that meet the Collective Agreement provisions.
- Denying requests for shift exchanges that would exceed the maximum shift/hours limits described in this policy.

IHA Staff are Responsible for:

- Arriving at work adequately rested and prepared for duty.
- Recognizing personal limits and declining requests to work overtime if fatigued.

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- Planning mitigation strategies to prevent fatigue including a personal commitment to work-life balance, healthy nutrition and regular exercise.
- Reviewing their work schedule and not submitting requests for shift exchanges that would result in their schedule exceeding the maximums shifts/hours outlined in 3.1 through 3.6 for either employee.
- Report impairment caused by fatigue to manager/supervisor.

4.0 PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Managers and supervisors will establish, in collaboration with staff and union representatives, the following:
- 4.1.1 Shift schedules that meet the policy and collective agreement requirements; and
 - 4.1.2 Will discuss with their staff opportunities for shift scheduling that decrease the impact of fatigue.
- 4.2 Operational and Staffing Service Centre managers will establish processes to prevent employees being scheduled to work in excess of the shifts/hours outlined in 3.1 through 3.6 above.

5.0 EXCEPTIONS

During disasters, emergencies or other exceptional circumstances, this Policy may be waived with the approval of Manager/Designate at the unit/department level.

6.0 REFERENCES

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