OPEN FORUM TOWN HALL  
THURSDAY APRIL 9, 2020 AT 2:00 – 3:00 PM

1. **Q:** Why did Dr. Bandiera sign the AFMC letter calling on the Royal College to cancel examinations? Does he not feel that any other options exist?  
   **A:** Deans of Medicine unanimously support postponing the MCCQEII, CFPC and RC spring exam until the fall of 2020. Consideration of resident safety and the inability to bring a larger number of trainees together, that universities are closed and organizations do not have the ability to safely facilitate the exams all played a part in this decision.

2. **Q:** What role did the leadership at PGME play in the delay of the Royal College exam and how are they advocating for PGY5s impacted by this delay?  
   **A:** Advocating strongly for the colleges to consider a lighter exam – quicker and more expedient exam which won’t require travelling across the country to write the exam. Wellness support has been increased for easier access to those who wish to use it.

3. **Q:** Why did Dr. Bandiera not consult with residents at UofT on the issue of exam cancellations before signing the AFMC letter?  
   **A:** Resident representatives were consulted on all committees that fed into this decision and the resident voice was considered by the colleges provincially and nationally.

4. **Q:** What is being done by UofT PGME to specifically help UofT residents whose exams were cancelled?  
   **A:** Working with the CPSO advocating around the nature of the provisional licence to make sure that residents will be able to enter into independent practice across the country with the exception of the territories and a solution is in the works with minimal bureaucratic issues.

5. **Q:** Is there a plan for the international residents who are supposed to start in July?  
   **A:** With all the travel restrictions there is still an uncertain plan, but we have been able to secure confirmation that the provision of medical care and/or engagement in a medical training program qualifies for an exemption of the travel ban at a federal level, but with the limited staff in licensing agencies we may have fewer joining in July. PGME is in contact with all trainees who are scheduled to come to confirm if they are and also for those who wish to stay longer, can.

6. **Q:** Will there be any regulations around ensuring residencies are not extended?  
   **A:** No regulations, and we certainly want to try and give as much credit for training that residents are putting in right now. Trainees who cannot complete training due to deferral since the pandemic and consideration of waiving training for completion so that certificates can be issued.
7. **Q:** What will be deployment look like in terms of clinical supervision and teaching?
   **A:** Currently, trainees have educational licences so they cannot work independently (i.e. need a supervisor) and that’s been made very clear to hospital partners, Chairs, etc and so when a trainee is redeployed they must still have a supervisor assigned to them in order to continue to receive assessment for training.

8. **Q:** Will there be training available for residents being redeployed in terms of PPE as well as department trainings?
   **A:** Yes. Both PGME and hospitals are providing training for all trainees of PPE: [https://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/the-latest-on-covid-19/](https://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/the-latest-on-covid-19/)

9. **Q:** Is there a possibility for fellowships that are set to start on July 1st 2020 to be delayed due to COVID (i.e. those of us staying in Toronto, remaining in Ontario, going to other provinces, or international)?
   **A:** We are doing our best to be flexible with timing so that trainees who may be delayed in arriving due to travel restrictions can get here. Also for trainees who are going elsewhere to start a fellowship and may be delayed, our office will fully support ways to make the transition possible when needed – most schools across the country are in alignment with this.

10. **Q:** My work permit expires on June 29 or 30, 2020 just after the fellowship is completed. I cannot stay in Canada for a single day after that, if the lock down continues in their home country or Canada international flight what should I do?
    **A:** If the individual fellowship will be extended – please speak with your fellowship director about possibilities of extension. Once OHIP expires as work permit expires, there is the ability to apply for UHIP coverage for up to 2 months during that period.

11. **Q:** Has there been an update regarding whether the CPSO will refund fees for canceled electives?
    **A:** CPSO will refund applications that were done but not processed before March 1st. CPSO will not refund fees for licences that were processed and granted in anticipation of an elective that was subsequently cancelled.

12. **Q:** Will PGME support/work with CPSO in order to provide an extension of licensing for those with educational licenses expiring on June 30th?
    **A:** Yes.

13. **Q:** Residents are having our booked vacations cancelled or are reluctant to book them while they may be cancelled. Will residents be allowed to carry vacation over into next year?
    **A:** Hopefully. This is something that needs to be discussed with PARO and the other 5 universities across the province to ensure fairness and equity to all.
14. Q: As you may know, as per Ontario minister of health there is a program launching to deploy IMGs for taking care of patients during CoVID pandemic, enables them to work under supervision. What is the impact of this decision on international clinical fellows and should they apply for this program?
   A: This program has potential and if you are a currently fellow, you’ll need to decide what’s best for you and how you can put your training best to use. PGME will support either decision.

15. Q: Is there any plan for hazard or overtime pay?
   A: There is currently not be hazard pay. It is under discussion with PARO and the other universities across the province. Overtime is covered by the MOH (call Stipends, etc).

16. Q: If redeployed, how will we be notified and will there be any notice prior to? Also, do we know how long we may expect to be redeployed?
   A: These requests will come from your PD. A list has been submitted by all programs of available trainees for redeployment along with hospitals requesting the same information. Some requests may be last minute due to the spread, but we are doing our best to provide as much notice as possible.

17. Q: How will redeployment affect residents in the surgeon scientist program - will this affect our MOH funding and will we be given additional time to complete our graduate work?
   A: Yes. The MOH will fund the additional training and extension to training. Those who are doing non-clinical work based on research, etc, are being released to clinical duties to support during this time. There are some exceptions and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

18. Q: Is it appropriate or permissible for staff to be less physically present in the hospital and reviewing more often with residents over the phone (or in some cases entirely over the phone), without that same possibility being extended to residents? What if staff are high risk of complications should they get COVID-19?
   A: This is appropriate in some circumstances. Staff must be responsible for burden of response to be across all levels not just trainees. Reviewing cases by phone can, and are being done in creative ways – balance again, is key.

19. Q: Can you please clarify EPA requirements for residents?
   A: The minimum number of assessments required has been relaxed during this crisis. PGME is encouraging all programs to use creative ways to assess at this time (i.e. one EPA and one ITAR). As long as the Competence Committees have enough to satisfy the requirements from the RC.

20. Q: Can fellows receive their certificate of completion prior to the end date of fellowship?
   A: PGME will issue a certificate of completion assuming you have met all the Goals and Objectives during the time of training. Currently PDFs of the certificate are being emailed and once the office is open again, certificates will be printed and couriered out.

21. Q: What should we do if we feel that we do not have access to the necessary PPE?
   A: You should feel secure identifying that to your supervisor, PD/FD, Wellness or anyone in the system. It is very important that trainees feel they have the authority to refuse to provide care if they don’t feel safe. We are relying on our hospitals and Public Health Ontario for guidance on this.
22. **Q:** What is PGME’s position on residents who are pregnant and direct patient care?

**A:** A directive around this is operationalized by our Wellness office and it is an accommodation. 