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Notable UHN Department of Surgery Teachers:

Michael Fehlings
Michael Tymianski

Toni Zhong
Steven McCabe

Tom Waddell

Rob Hamilton
Girish Kulkarni

Thomas Lindsay
RJ Cusimano

Ian McGilvray, Sean Cleary,
Steve Gallinger,
Carol Anne Moulton,
Paul Greig

From the desk of the Director

Greetings to UHN Department of Surgery's Faculty, Residents and Fellows!



We are excited to roll out our **Dr. George Oreopoulos, Director** "Inaugural Edition" of the UHN Postgraduate Surgical Education Newsletter. While the website on the Corporate Intranet (http://intranet.uhn.ca/departments/pg_surgical) provides valuable resource information including the organization of Divisions and on-line manuals, the intention of this communication is to keep you updated with new initiatives, policies, and important educational events during your rotations with us. Now that the summer is over, I trust that you are settling in well and finding your way around.

Chief Resident Debriefing

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with Chief Residents from each of the Surgical Divisions at UHN. This was a great opportunity to meet an outstanding group of senior trainees and gain their perspective on a variety of issues going on in their Divisions. We discussed the training experience as well as process issues generic to all Divisions.

How we compare

When asked how they would compare their rotations at UHN compared with other sites at which they worked, Chiefs from almost half of the Divisions described them as "The highlight of my Residency Program," and "unparalleled surgical procedures compared to elsewhere." When it came to naming exceptionally good teachers at UHN, surgical Chief Residents from three Divisions told me that there were "too many to name just one."

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Relationships between Fellows and Residents

In almost all Divisions, UHN Surgical Fellows are actively mentoring our Residents inside and outside of the operating room and were cited as being a ‘value-add’ to the education of Residents in Royal College Training Programs. However, in some cases, Fellows were just learning the specialty and were less able to enhance the education of Residents on their team. I have certainly noticed this in my own specialty and as a Fellowship and Residency Program Director, have to take efforts to select Fellows who will do more than just fill a slot in the on-call schedule and find those who will enhance the experience for the entire team.

On-call Experience

I was pleased to hear that all Divisions have a Resident on-call schedule that is compliant with PARO guidelines. Residents had noted that the on call rooms, particularly at the Toronto Western site were often in need of repair. I had the opportunity to personally tour each call room used by the Department of Surgery at each site and strongly agree with the trainees that some improvements are in order. After meeting with the Wightman-Berris Academy Director and administrators from Medical Education, I understand that a plan to improve the rooms starting with those in worst repair is in progress.



While relationships between Residents and Emergency staff are sometimes challenging, the development of referral guidelines for appropriate referral to surgical Divisions has been extremely helpful when it comes to streamlining communications and patient care. This has had the greatest impact for Orthopaedics and there may be opportunities to ‘tighten up’ protocols for patients presenting with other problems.

Academic Commitments

All Divisions are doing a great job according to their Chief Residents when it comes to ensuring that Residents are attending their mandated academic half-days and centralized teaching. Most Residents are being given adequate time and notice to prepare for upcoming cases in the operating room. However, in a couple of Divisions, Residents did not know which rooms/cases they were to be assigned to until late in the afternoon, the day before. The best prepared Residents were those working in Divisions that distribute the elective OR list to the trainees the week before, allowing Chief Residents the opportunity to assign Residents and Fellows ahead of time to OR lists in an equitable and appropriate manner with enough time for trainees to be fully prepared to participate in cases when they arrived in the OR. Educational Site leads may consider this as a potential opportunity to improve our residents’ experience.

New Initiatives

Critical incidents related to hospital acquired infection have led to recommendations from the hospital Quality of Care Board to try to improve infection control practices and make this a part of regular medical practice by trainees. IPAC is developing a curriculum that is best suited to a small group-teaching format and we are in the process of trying to schedule this teaching with each of the surgical Divisions.

Patient Privacy and Personal Health Information (PHI)

Chief Residents from most Divisions understood that insecure email accounts (ie-gmail, utoronto, yahoo, etc.) are inappropriate for communicating patient information between team members. Only hospital email accounts (ie- uhn webmail) and OneMail meet the appropriate standard for secure communication of PHI. Recent improvements to OneMail have made it easier to use and more functional than ever before (ie-integrates more easily with your smartphone than uhn email), and for those of you who have not obtained a OneMail account yet, you can contact Tarann Ann Steane directly at: onemail.help@utoronto.ca and she will ensure that you receive a OneMail enrollment invitation.



Trainees are reminded that with the institution of the UHN patient portal, patients will now be able to review any of their own records in EPR, and can even delegate access of their medical record to family members/friends. We all have to ensure that when dictating operative or clinic/consult notes that the contents of these official records are not containing any inappropriate or contentious material that would be distressing to our patients or their families.

Mandatory Attendance at Department of Surgery Grand Rounds

While attendance at Grand Rounds has been mandatory for staff, there are excellent talks and discussions that are relevant to our trainees being delivered at these events. We are now instituting a policy of mandatory attendance for Residents and Fellows at UHN Department of Surgery Grand Rounds. Residents and Fellows are obviously exempt if they are on a previously scheduled vacation, or in the event that they have to attend to a patient emergency.

Open Door Policy



In my meetings with the Chief Residents, it is abundantly clear how very effective each of the Educational Site Leads is in addressing the needs and concerns of their trainees. In the rare instance where there is an issue that cannot be dealt with at the level of the Divisional Educational Site Lead, I am always happy to meet with Residents and Fellows and want them to understand that I will address any issues to the best of my ability with the utmost confidence. || **Dr. George Oreopoulos, Director Postgraduate Surgical Education**

Radiation Safety

Unfortunately, not all of our Residents are aware of the necessity to complete some basic education as it relates to radiation safety in the operating room and only about half of those I had interviewed had completed their on-

line training module and even fewer knew how to access dosimeters. The Ministry of Labor considers anyone close enough to touch the fluoroscopy pedal a 'radiation worker' and consequently must be appropriately trained and monitored. It will soon be a requirement to complete this module prior to registration (http://www.xrayfocus.info/training-med/audio/audioseminarPHYSICIANS/A1_oo_pg01.swf). For those who don't fully understand the ongoing risks of chronic radiation exposure, a short video by Dr. Edward Dietrich, one of North America's pioneers of endovascular therapy, may prove to be quite sobering:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXgtobF3GJM