

PROCEDURE GME17

Subject: CLINICAL OBSERVERSHIPS

Effective Date: MARCH 2005

Applies to: THE METHODIST HOSPITAL

Date Revised/Reviewed: n/a

Originating Area: GRADUATE MEDICAL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Target Review Date: MARCH 2006

I. GENERAL STATEMENT

As a [Sponsoring Institution](#), The Methodist Hospital must follow the standards and requirements of the [ACGME](#), the [TSBME](#), the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), and other regulatory bodies. Some standards affect the process for accepting [Residents](#) from non-TMH sponsored training [Programs](#) who wish to visit TMH and its affiliated participating hospitals. This procedure provides guidance to clinical departments and Programs that choose to offer clinical experiences and establishes some uniformity of educational experience for these “visiting” Residents. The availability of an educational experience for a non-TMH Resident is at the discretion of each individual Program of [GME](#) and its clinical department and must be based on the Program’s resources. The existence of this procedure creates no obligation for any Program or clinical department to provide such an experience.

II. REQUIREMENTS

- A. An Observership is a voluntary experience that does not constitute medical education, graduate medical education, continuing medical education, or training leading to licensure or board certification. The [Observer](#) receives no academic credit for the Observership. The Observer is not a student, Resident, medical staff member, or employee of Methodist, its affiliated hospitals, or [Participating Institutions](#) and must not represent him/herself as such.
- B. Permissible activities for an Observer include: Participation in grand rounds, seminars, and other didactic activities; discussion of patient interactions with the [Supervising Medical Staff](#) or designee, if the patient has agreed to permit observation; viewing and discussion of videotapes of patient evaluations, if the patient has agreed to permit observation and videotaping; and use of software and hard copy educational resources (teaching software, books, journals) of the TMH Library and access to the Internet from TMH Library computers or departments in accordance with Methodist policies.
- C. An Observership may be granted on a case-by-case basis to a physician who is a medical school graduate and a member in good standing of a Program of GME. An applicant for an Observership from a non-ACGME accredited Sponsoring Institution must submit certain information (see III.D.) in order to determine the applicant’s eligibility for an Observership in a Methodist Program. However, the following individuals are not eligible for observership:
 - Residents in ACGME-sponsored programs (who should seek [Clinical Rotations](#) rather than Observerships; see [Procedure GME16](#))
 - Individuals who have not yet graduated from Medical School (although they may qualify for a visiting Student Elective)
 - Individuals who are unable to submit to or pass a security background check
- D. Application Process: The following documents (see [Observership Checklist](#)), if not originally written in English, must be officially translated into English by a certified

translation agency and submitted to The Methodist Hospital, Graduate Medical Education Department, 6565 Fannin Street, M1-076, Houston, TX 77030:

1. Curriculum vitae
 2. Letter from the Resident's [Program Director](#) that addresses the following items:
 - a. The Resident's authorization and eligibility to pursue international elective experiences, if appropriate
 - b. The Resident's current level of training
 - c. Dates that Resident began and completed medical school
 - d. Date that Resident began residency training
 - e. Anticipated date on which Resident will complete residency training
 - f. Statement that the Resident is in good standing
 - g. Curricular requirements to be met by the Observership experience
 3. Official copy of Medical School transcript with Medical School seal
 4. Notarized copy of the Medical School diploma
 5. Evidence of proficiency in the English language
 6. Statement of desired Observerships(s)
 7. Documentation of immunization status for measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, hepatitis B, and polio using [Visitor/Observer Immunization Record](#); evidence of screening for tuberculosis to include a skin test and chest x-ray as clinically indicated (any immunizations required must be obtained at the Observer's expense)
 8. Proof of US citizenship, permanent resident status, or B-1 visa that will be in force for the entire duration of the observership
 9. Nonrefundable application fee of \$50.00 (US) as a certified check made payable to The Methodist Hospital Graduate Medical Education Department to be submitted with above materials
- E. After receipt of all application documents, the Designated Institutional Official will determine whether the Resident is eligible for an Observership at Methodist. If eligible, the application and the checklist will be referred to the specific Program(s). No program is obligated to accept an Observer, and any Program may require further application documentation, an interview, and/or an additional application fee. If the Program agrees to host an Observer, the Program must identify the person responsible for the Observer during the Observership and send written confirmation of the dates and rules of the Observership to the Observer. A copy of this correspondence must be sent to the GME Department.
- F. Once accepted for an Observership by a Program but before beginning an Observership, the Observer must:
1. Complete the Security Background Check process (see [HR42 Employment](#)) with a clear record
 2. Complete and sign the Methodist [Confidentiality and Information Security Agreement](#)
 3. Have a photo identification badge made by the GME Department
 4. Pay for health insurance and liability insurance for the duration of the Observership at Methodist (approximately \$125-\$150 US)
- E. Rules for Observership:
1. The Observer must obtain prior written authorization from the GME Department. Failure to obtain written authorization will be grounds for immediate escort from Methodist premises, its affiliated hospitals, or Participating Institutions.
 2. The Observer must wear appropriate photo identification at all times at Methodist, its affiliated hospitals, and Participating Institutions and must abide by all policies, rules, regulations, and bylaws of The Methodist Hospital and its affiliated hospitals, the host Program, and Participating Institutions, if appropriate.

3. A [Faculty](#) physician or designee (other Faculty from the same Program or a senior-level Resident) must supervise the Observer in the presence of patient(s) at all times. No Observer may have unrestricted access to Methodist and its participating institutions.
 4. In the presence of a patient, the Observer must introduce him/herself to the patient as an Observer and must request the patient's permission to be present during a clinical visit, procedure, or other patient service. If the patient declines to allow the Observer's presence, the Observer must leave the area. The Observer may not have other direct [Patient Contact](#).
 5. The Observer must not make patient chart entries (electronic or hard copy) or copy patient charts (paper or electronic).
 6. No Observer may have more than two (2) one-month Observerships and these may not be extended.
 7. The Observer must complete an evaluation of the rotation upon its completion.
 8. The Observer will receive no stipend support, compensation, or housing from Methodist, its affiliated hospitals, or Participating Institutions.
 9. If a visa holder, the Observer must comply with all terms of the visa during his/her Observership and failure to do so may result in immediate termination of the Observership.
 10. The Methodist Hospital may, at its sole discretion, terminate an Observership without recourse to due process or appeal process.
- D. If the Observer satisfactorily completes the Observership, the host Program will provide the Observer with a certificate of completion. Acceptance into or completion of an Observership will not construe or guarantee acceptance into Methodist Programs of GME.
- E. After the Observership, the Program should forward a copy of the Program's evaluation of the Observer and the Observer's file (original application materials, etc.) to the Graduate Medical Education Department for retention.

Approved by Graduate Medical Education Committee [10 February 2005]