

## **STRESS AND IMPAIRMENT IN RESIDENCY TRAINING**

### **I. “Warning Signals” (Behaviors)**

- A. Poor or Deteriorating Patient Care
- B. Over-conscientiousness/”Workaholism”
- C. Avoiding Responsibility
- D. Unexplained Absences
- E. Seemingly Chaotic Lifestyle
- F. Pointless Friction/Conflicts with Attendings, Staff, & Students
- G. Peer Avoidance/Social Isolation
- H. Boundary Violations
- I. Other Unprofessional Behaviors

### **II. Categories of Impairment (Causes)**

- A. Normal Stress
- B. Incompetence
  - 1. Ignorance
  - 2. Inability
- C. Characterologic Problems
  - 1. Malicious
  - 2. Unethical
- D. Psychiatric/Emotional Disturbance
  - 1. Drug/Alcohol Abuse
  - 2. Depression
  - 3. Anxiety
  - 4. Denial of Medical Problems

### **III. Understanding the Cause vs. Performance Standards**

### **IV. Lines of Defense**

- A. Input from Supervising Resident
- B. Informal Contact with Chief Resident
- C. “Information Gathering” by Year Coordinator/Program Director
- D. Formal Intervention by Program Director
  - e.g. official meeting, warning
- E. Referral for Evaluation
- F. Boundary issues and conflicts of interest

Substance Abuse:

Contact Program Director and/or Dr. M.A. O'Donnell (828-9783)

General Psychiatric Issues:

Help Link (Employee Assistance Program) 828-2000

Intake and Referral – 828-2000

Dr. James Levenson

Dr. John Urbach

Dr. Yaacov Pushkin

Dr. Sherif Meguid

G. Probationary Status

1. To address competency/ethics issues
2. To “push” a referral for reluctant participants
3. Probation, promotion, and retention are based on behavior, not cause.

H. Insurance Selection Issues

1. Mental Health Benefits are Important!
2. Consider Choice or Plans Carefully