

**INOVA FAIRFAX MEDICAL CAMPUS  
GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION POLICY**

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**Institutional Policy on Transitions in Care**

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**I. Purpose:**

To establish a policy for all post graduate training programs at Inova Fairfax Medical Campus that provides a process to safely and accurately convey important information about a patient's care when transferring care responsibilities from one House Staff/House Officer to another.

**II. Scope:**

This policy applies to all house officers participating in post-graduate training programs at Inova Fairfax Medical Campus whether Inova sponsored or affiliated.

**III. Definitions:**

Transitions refer to hand-overs (hand-off or sign-out) which is the process of transferring patient care responsibilities from one physician/care team to another. A transition in care (hand-over) occurs when there is a change in physician providers at the conclusion of a shift, rotation or hospital unit transfer (i.e. ICU to floor).

“House Staff/House Officer” refers to all interns, residents, and fellows enrolled in post-graduate training programs.

“Post-Graduate Training Program” refers to a residency or fellowship educational program.

**IV. Responsibilities/Requirements:**

As per the ACGME Common Program Requirements, each program must develop a structured process for transitions in care (hand-over) which outlines expectations for the transfer of patients care. The following must be included:

- A. Programs must design clinical assignments to minimize the number of transitions in patient care.
- B. The Institution and each program must ensure and monitor effective, structured transitions to facilitate both patient safety and effective continuity of care.
- C. Each program must educate its core faculty and trainees regarding effective transitions in care.

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- D. Each program must ensure that House Staff/House Officers effectively communicate complete and accurate clinical information during the transition process. Programs should have a documented process in place for ensuring the effectiveness of transitions (*from FAQs*) This should include verbal or written feedback regarding their ability to adequately transfer patient care information. This expectation extends to all participating sites.
- E. The Institution and each program must ensure the availability of schedules that inform all members of the health care team of attending physicians and the residents currently responsible for each patient's care.
- F. Transitions in care must be conducted in a setting that is free of interruptions and one that ensures patient privacy and confidentiality.