ACGME Limits Resident Work Hours to 168 Per Week

CHICAGO, IL – In an effort to increase resident satisfaction and curb the current epidemic of burnout in health care professionals, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) has published new guidelines to limit resident work hours to no more than 168 per week.

“We recognize that that burnout is multifactorial but long, grueling hours are certainly part of the equation,” said ACGME spokesperson Bernie Blight in a written statement to the press earlier this morning. “We spoke with interns, residents, program directors, and leading experts on burnout across the country, and have decided that this was a necessary course of action.”

The ACGME has made strides in curbing hours over the past decade, but many critics argue they didn’t go far enough, that they could go further. The new ACGME guidelines should appease most if not all of them.

“By ensuring that our interns and residents work no more 168 hours per week or 24 hours per day, we can ensure they have time to eat properly, exercise, rest their minds, and come back to work refreshed and recharged,” continued Blight. “I have full confidence, starting with our current generation of young medical professionals, we will make burnout a thing of the past.”

Experts in health care policy predict the ACGME recommendations will have a snowball effect, leading other major professional organizations to issue similar
recommendations and help increase morale among all health care professionals, something at record lows and whose current state is best described as “FML.”

One organization actively drafting new guidelines is the American Nurses Association (ANA).

“Not only do we fully support the guidelines as set forth by the ACGME for its residents,” commented ANA spokesperson Rebecca Lassitude, “but we are currently drafting guidelines in parallel to decrease nurses work hours to no more than 200 per week.” Lassitude hopes to release the nursing guidelines next month, calling them a “no brainer.”