

Fitness for Duty Assessments: Information for Program Directors

What?

A formal assessment of a physician's fitness for occupational functioning. The evaluations are individualized and additional assessments beyond the initial assessment may be required based on any discoverable concerns. The evaluations are independent evaluations and not part of the Resident Assistance Program (RAP).

Why?

To ensure patient safety and the mental and physical well-being of physicians. Assessments will be requested when a physician has had behavioral or performance concerns and the ability of the physician to provide safe patient care is in question. The fitness for duty assessment is mandated and structured. The services provided for the Resident Assistance Program (RAP) are distinct from the fitness for duty assessment.

Who?

Referrals are made to the office of Gary Wood & Associates. Gary Wood & Associates will coordinate the fitness for duty assessment and will designate specific provider(s) to complete the assessment. The provider(s) performing services are not tied to the Resident Assistance Program (RAP) for a resident/fellow.

Results?

Possible results of the assessment to be relayed to the GME program director include (1) physician is fit (2) physician is fit for some duties but not others or needs some limitations and (3) unfit for duty at the time being.

Responsibilities of the program director:

- Consult with the DIO or GME Director to determine if a fitness for duty assessment is appropriate and prepare the appropriate documentation.
- Call Gary Wood & Associates to ask for the fitness for duty assessment and provide background information.
- Tell the resident why they are being referred for a fitness for duty assessment and that you will be getting a result that will tell you if they are fit, fit but needs additional resources, or unfit.
- Go over the resident/fellow handout so the residents know what/why/who.
- Provide coverage for resident/fellow clinical responsibilities to ensure patient care is safe.