Management of physician fatigue

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MANAGEMENT OF PHYSICIAN FATIGUE

Policy
The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) endorses the implementation of strategies to minimize the occurrence of physician fatigue. This policy seeks to promote the health and wellbeing of physicians and to support the maintenance of optimal patient care. The CMA acknowledges that physicians are subject to work-related stressors including long working hours, shift work, travel, and high patient loads. This policy encourages the implementation of strategies to minimize the occurrence of physician fatigue.

In 2007, the World Health Organization (WHO) noted that health-care workers experience high levels of work-related stress. As a result, the CMA encourages hospitals and other health-care organizations to implement strategies to minimize the occurrence of physician fatigue. These strategies may include the implementation of rest periods, the provision of patient care support, and the promotion of work-life balance. The CMA recommends that hospitals and other health-care organizations regularly assess the occurrence of physician fatigue and implement strategies to minimize its impact.

Current evidence indicates that physician fatigue can have a negative impact on patient care. Studies have shown that physician fatigue is associated with an increased risk of medical errors, reduced patient satisfaction, and decreased job satisfaction. The CMA encourages hospitals and other health-care organizations to implement strategies to minimize the occurrence of physician fatigue to improve patient care and maintain the health and wellbeing of physicians.