

## **Resident-Fellow Interactions: November 2020.**

The Division of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery at the University of Toronto is recognized as a center of clinical excellence which attracts a contingent of national and international fellows from around the world. The expectation of these fellows is to gain practical and clinical experience in areas of subspecialty plastic and reconstructive surgery. The Division of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery provides fellowship training in adult and pediatric craniofacial surgery, breast reconstruction surgery, hand and upper extremity surgery, pediatric plastic surgery, burn care, microsurgery and soon to be, aesthetic surgery. While for the most part, the relationship between residents and fellows in the Division of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery is mutually beneficial and harmonious, but on occasion and more common to certain sites, there exists an underlying tension which can impact on the resident experience.

The following recommendations were established after a meeting of the Fellowship Council in November 2020.

It was felt that the answer to these issues was primarily: clear and consistent communication with delineation of expectations and responsibilities in a pro-active manner.

### **Opportunities exist as recommended:**

The division staff are expected to be the strongest possible advocates for both fellows and residents with regards to ensuring their educational experiences during their rotations.

Residents and fellows are expected to interact in a mutually cooperative and respectful manner.

Resident and fellow expectations are best managed by up-front communication with clear delineation of responsibilities (eg. the use of a white-board or a huddle in the OR prior to starting the day).

There are cases which are resident-specific, fellow-specific and staff-specific.

A feedback loop should be generated and employed such that issues are identified in a timely fashion instead of being relayed at the end of the rotation.

Fellows should be made to feel that they are here as part of the team and that they are expected to participate in all aspects of the functions of the team.

Resources for residents or fellows experiencing challenges include access to: Dr. Toni Zhong (Fellowship Director), Dr. Kyle Wanzel (PD) and the Chair as well as the Fellow-Resident Interaction document generated during the Resident-Fellow Interaction meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

This is a work in progress and the issue of resident-fellow interactions will continue to be monitored closely and is a priority at our institution.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Forrest", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christopher R. Forrest, MD, MSc, FRCSC, FACS  
Chair, The Division of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery