Pediatric Infectious Diseases Fellowship Program
Boston Children’s Hospital

Sick Call Policy

This policy for Sick Call provides guidelines for service coverage in the event an illness or emergency prevents a fellow from coming to work while on clinical service. This coverage should RARELY be necessary. For planned absences such as in-training exams, etc. coverage should be pre-arranged with a co-fellow well beforehand and the sick call system may not be used for this purpose.

General Guidelines
The Sick Call policy is intended for short-term, acute events that prevent a fellow from coming to work. In the event of a planned or extended leave, the division Family and Medical Leave policy will supersede this policy.

Telephone/pager tree of people to call:

• The first person to be called would be the first year fellow on a lighter rotation:
  o E.g. BIDMC fellow followed by Micro fellow
• If there is no available first year fellow on BIDMC or Micro, then the next upper year fellow on the sick call tree would be called (sick call order is assigned with call schedules by senior fellows). This order will need to be adjusted when fellows are on leave for extended periods (e.g. international work, parental/family leave, long vacations, etc).
• If an upper year fellow were called in to cover, that person would then be put at the end of the list.
• For upper year fellows, the call tree will apply for 2-day increments to best maintain patient and team continuity. If additional sick call coverage is needed after 2 days, the next fellow on the list will be called.
• First year fellows on BIDMC may be called to cover for a maximum of 7 days, after which a first year fellow on Micro or an upper year fellow will be called to cover.
• First year fellows on Micro may be called to cover for a maximum of 3 days, after which the next upper year fellow on the list will be called in 2-day increments.
• Every attempt will be made to proportionately reduce future call scheduling for upper year fellows who are called for sick call coverage.
• Fellows must provide optimal ways of reaching them so that there is minimal effort involved in locating someone to work (e.g. cell phone number, pager on).
• If a fellow is going to be unavailable to cover for a month or more, then this should be accommodated into the call order/sick call planning.
• For upper year fellows: An important aspect of this system is that, if called, a fellow must work unless he/she is out of town. We realize that this may pose an inconvenience, but as a fellow this is a responsibility that you have during your training.
• For on-service fellows: This system will work optimally if an on-service fellow anticipating the need for sick call coverage could send out an email to their attending, co-fellows, and Tanvi as early and preliminarily as possible to give advance notice.

Other Considerations:
• Tanvi will ask attendings to provide more help during sick call coverage, including assisting with writing notes, streamlining seeing old versus new patients, etc.
• If a fellow will need to be out for an extended period of time (more than 7 days), Tanvi will help to facilitate block switches rather than utilizing the sick call system.