

# Learner to Learner Mistreatment



## Who is a Medical learner?

All registered home and visiting medical students, residents, and clinical fellows.



## Who is mistreated?

Mistreatment is prevalent:

- 25% of medical students and 39% of residents reported experiencing or witnessing mistreatment.
- 71% of mistreatment incidents occur in an academic setting.



## Why are learners mistreated by other learners?

- Stereotypes and implicit bias.
- Hidden curriculum.
- Previous personal experience of mistreatment (victim of bullying).
- Stress, fatigue, burnout.
- Lack of appreciation or insight.
- Systems of oppression based on race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious identification, and other social identities along with their intersections.

## Witnessed or Experienced it?

If you witnessed or personally experienced mistreatment, *talk to us*. It is normal to feel overwhelmed, uncertain, or unsettled by a negative incident. Experiencing or witnessing mistreatment can be traumatic. You are not alone, and we are here for you. There are many available resources and ways to support as an ally, or be supported directly, during this time. Below are some options to help you decide what works best for you. If you are uncertain about next steps, please reach out and talk to us. We are here to support all learners (contact information below).

## What to do

### Process the incident

**Assess your safety and comfort. Is this an emergency situation where you are concerned about harm to yourself or others?**

- If yes, seek immediate assistance from authorities.
- Otherwise, take a moment to process the event and assess your visceral reaction.
- Determine whether to respond or pursue other courses of action, including accessing available supports and resources (see below).

### Document the incident

- Record the incident for yourself in case it might be useful in the future. With time details can be forgotten. These details are vital in acknowledging and addressing system-wide issues. You can record in real time but decide what to do in the future.
- You can either document your experiences using your preferred method (e.g. sending an email to yourself). Alternatively, you can download a copy of our interactive PDF ([MD Program](#) or [PGME](#)) to help document but not officially report or disclose the incident until you feel ready to come forward (see below).

## Discussing

Discussing is when you meet with any designated MD or PGME program leader to talk about, debrief, or unpack an incident or experience. Any Designated MD Program or PGME leader can be reached through email or the [Online Disclosure Form](#)

- **Designated MD Program leaders include:** Director of Learner Experience, Academy Directors, and Associate Dean of OHPSA
- **Designated PGME leaders include:** Director of Learner Experience, Associate Dean of PGME
- **Unsure?** Contact Dr. Reena Pattani if any questions or review *Contact Us* on our webpages
- The Learner Experience Office strives to use trauma-informed, EDI-informed, and anti-oppressive practices.

## Disclosing

*Would you like to anonymously disclose the incident?*

Disclosing is when you convey information about the conduct of an individual to the university to seek information about your options, including for safety, support, or accommodations.

- This alerts the university to your concerns without you being specifically named. If you feel comfortable, it is always better to come forward in an identified manner so that we can ensure you have supports, ask follow-up questions as needed, and close the loop with you after an issue has been reviewed and resolved. We can still try to keep you de-identified if you choose to report.
- Fill out the [Online Disclosure Form](#) and select the *Remain Anonymous* option if you still prefer to remain anonymous. We may be limited in our ability to act on anonymous concerns but will review all concerns carefully.

## Reporting

*Would you like the administration to consider taking action for the mistreatment you experienced or witnessed?*

Reporting is when information about an individual's conduct is conveyed with the intent that the university formally reviews and potentially acts upon the information.

- Contact the Director of Learner Experience (Dr. Reena Pattani) or any of the Designated program leads via email or the [Online Disclosure Form](#)
- The Office of Learner Experience endorses the importance of an educational approach and mediated resolution to the majority of learner to learner mistreatment situations. In those rare cases where mistreatment is found to be egregious in nature or the result of a pattern of behaviour, formal remedial and/or disciplinary action may be pursued by the learner(s)' educational program.

## Seek Support

*Would you like to speak to someone for wellness support?*

- Medical students can request an appointment with an [OHPSA Personal Counsellor](#)
- PGME learners can request an appointment with [PGME Wellness](#)
- Medical students can also access University of Toronto [Health & Wellness Services](#)
- 24/7 U of T [My Student Support Program](#) helpline (1-844-451-9700)

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## Other Resources

- PGME learners can access [PARO 1-866-HELP-DOC \(1-866-435-7362\)](#) or or [416-979-1182](#)
- [Temerty Faculty of Medicine Office of Inclusion and Diversity](#)
- [The Gerstein Crisis Centre 416-929-5200](#)
- [Distress Centres of Greater Toronto 416-408-4357](#)
- [Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office \(ARCD O\), Sexual and Gender Diversity Office, Accessibility services, or Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre](#)
- [The Office of Indigenous Medical Education](#)

Did you know that you can bring a support person with you to any meeting to discuss learner mistreatment?

All information about Faculty of Medicine guidelines included in this document can be found on our webpages for the [MD program](#) and [PGME](#).