



UNIVERSITY OF SIERRA LEONE
TEACHING HOSPITALS COMPLEX (USLTHC)
FREETOWN
SIERRA LEONE

HANDBOOK OF INFORMATION

for

Residency Training Programme in
Medical Specialties

@2025



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Message from the Chairperson, Board of Administration

As Chairperson of the Board of Administration of the University of Sierra Leone Teaching Hospitals Complex (USLTHC), it gives me great pleasure to send this message of appreciation to the Postgraduate Committee for producing the first Postgraduate Residency Training Handbook.

When I became Chairperson of the Board in July 2019, there was very little information on the operations of the first Board, particularly in relation to the procedure for admission of the 15 pioneer residents. I discovered that there were no formal rules about admission requirements, repetition etc. I therefore contacted three Chief Medical Directors (CMD) in Nigeria who explained the procedure and even sent me copies of their handbooks to help me understand how the process works.

With the arrival of the Deputy CMD who is also the Chairman of the Medical Advisory Council (CMAC), MAC was re-established and various committees, including the Residency Training committee were formed. This committee of 12 members is chaired by Dr. Joshua Coker, who despite their busy schedules worked tirelessly to produce this handbook.

This easy-to-read and understand book is divided into three sections:

- Section one outlines the functions of the Postgraduate Committee
- Section two deals with the requirements and procedure for admission
- Section three spells out clearly, the 11 regulations governing the Sierra Leone residency training programme in medical specialties.

This handbook is timely, useful and recommended for intending residents and those who are already at various levels of their training as they navigate their way through the six years of residency.

Dr. Sonia Melisa Spencer
Chairperson,
Board of Administration
University of Sierra Leone Teaching Hospitals Complex
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Foreword by the Chief Medical Director

Residency training is no small feat. It is rigorous, time-demanding, and quite different from the undergraduate medical experience. Resident doctors are expected to combine service delivery, hands-on skill acquisition, and academic development within the same 24 hours. In our own setting here in Sierra Leone, this already challenging journey is further complicated by the lack of readily available guidance materials. Most residents are left to rely on verbal instructions or informal stories passed down by senior colleagues, which are not always reliable or consistent.

When I assumed duty as the Acting Chief Medical Director, one of my early concerns was how to provide a structured guide to help our residents navigate their training more effectively. That concern gave birth to this handbook.

This document draws from the official guidelines of the two active postgraduate medical colleges in Sierra Leone and also incorporates tried-and-tested templates from Nigeria and Ghana. It is designed to be broad enough to cover the basics and, at the same time, tailored to reflect the peculiarities of residency training in our country.

Importantly, this initiative aligns with the strategic objectives of the Ministry of Health to strengthen human resources for health, and build a resilient, self-sustaining healthcare system. By equipping our resident doctors with structured guidance, we move closer to the national goal of reducing dependence on foreign training and increasing local capacity for specialist care.

I want to sincerely thank Dr. Joshua Coker and the entire committee for the excellent work they have done in putting this resource together. It is well-thought-out, practical, and timely.

This handbook will be made available to all resident doctors and also uploaded on our website for easy access. My hope is that it will make the residency journey smoother and ultimately help us build a pool of highly trained specialists, thereby reducing our dependence on external support for secondary and tertiary healthcare.

Prof Kehinde Sunday Oluwadiya
Chief Medical Director
University of Sierra Leone Teaching Hospitals Complex
Freetown, Sierra Leone

Preface by the Chairman, Postgraduate Training Committee

Few years ago, it was deemed impossible to pursue postgraduate training in medical specialties (also called residency training) in Sierra Leone. However, as at the time of writing, we have obtained accreditation from the West African College of Physicians (WACP) for residency training in over six departments of the University of Sierra Leone Teaching Hospitals Complex (USLTHC) and more than one hundred (100) doctors are currently pursuing their training in Sierra Leone.

With the rising number of residents in the various departments, a postgraduate training committee was formed. This committee involved the residency coordinators in all the departments where training is being done, as well as representatives from Sierra Leone Council for Postgraduate Colleges of Health Specialties (SLCPCHS), Nursing and Pharmacy. This book outlines the functions of the postgraduate training committee and clearly states the admission requirements and procedures. It also includes basic regulations of residency training. It serves as a manual of instruction, information and education. It should be regarded as a “must read” before starting residency training and a reference guide when key decisions are made. It therefore provides quick answers and essential general knowledge relating to residency training.

To all residents in medical specialties, I wish you all the best in your proposed field of study. Remember, a thousand miles journey begins with a first step. This book will give you the right bearing in this marathon journey. Enjoy your training with all levels of excitement and remember this “to be trained is to be relevant”. The last verse of a school anthem reads: “Long may be the tilling and the sowing late but the fruit will ripen if we toil and wait.” Congratulations on this first step and I wish you fruitful years ahead.



**Dr. Joshua Coker M.B Ch.B; MSc; FWACP; FCPS(SL); PGDRM
Consultant Physician and Nephrologist, Connaught Hospital, USLTHC
Chairman, Postgraduate training Committee, USLTHC.**

SECTION ONE

FUNCTIONS OF THE POSTGRADUATE TRAINING COMMITTEE

1. To advise the Management on the admission requirements for the various disciplines available under the programme.
2. To advise the Management on the minimum requirements for training in the various disciplines under the programme.
3. To evaluate established programmes, facilitate, and advise the Management from time to time on future development of the Residency programme.
4. To submit annual reports of performance in recognized examinations to the Management.
5. To regulate the appointment of Supernumerary Residents.

SECTION TWO

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURE

Admission Requirements:

The following requirements must be met by those seeking admissions into the USLTHC Residency Training Programme in Medical Specialties:

Applicants shall possess:

1. A Basic Medical Degree: MBBS, MBChB, BDS, or its equivalent.
2. Full registration with the Medical and Dental Council of Sierra Leone (MDCSL).
3. Current annual practicing license of the MDCSL.
4. Evidence of passing the Primary Examination of the Sierra Leone College of Physicians and Surgeons or its equivalent, unless otherwise specified.

Admission Procedure:

1. The Department makes the selection and recommends to the Management of the University of Sierra Leone Teaching Hospitals Complex to interview the selected applicants.
2. The Management determines its own Guidelines for the conduct of the interviews provided:
 - (A) The Head of the Department or his/her representative is a member of the panel conducting the interview for the applicants.
 - (B) Three (3) Referee Reports are available to the Committee.
3. Applicants shall be required to pass a medical examination of fitness.

SECTION THREE (3)

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE SIERRA LEONE RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMME IN MEDICAL SPECIALTIES

1. General guidelines:

- A) All training guidelines should be in accordance with the recommendation of the Postgraduate Colleges: Sierra Leone College of Physicians and Surgeons, West African College of Physicians, and West African College of Surgeons.
- B) The retention of Resident shall be subject to his/her satisfactory clinical performance and good conduct. (please see section 11: Annual Assessment Report)
- C) The Medical Residency Programme shall be in two continuous phases namely:
 - i. Junior Residency (Registrar)
 - ii. Senior Residency (Senior Registrar)

2. Specific Regulations for Junior Residency

A). Tenure of Junior Residency: The duration of Junior Residency Training shall be as stipulated by the relevant Postgraduate Medical Colleges.

Regardless of the foregoing, a resident's advancement in the program will be determined by the following:

- i. A Resident shall be removed from the programme if he/she fails the Part 1/Membership Examination after three (3) attempts or fails to sit for the Exam more than twelve (12) months after the date of eligibility to sit for the Examination.

- ii. A Resident will proceed to Senior Residency if he/she passes the Part 1/Membership Examination or its equivalent (please see footnote).
- iii. A Candidate may opt out of the Residency Programme after passing Part 1/Membership Examination or defer commencement of his/her Part 11/Fellowship Programme.

Footnote: Ideally, Transition/Promotion/advancement shall be a seamless continuation for those successful at the Part 1/Membership Examination within the standardized period in line with the career progression for resident doctors.

3. Specific regulation for Senior Residency:

- A) Residents must have passed the Part 1/ Membership Examination or its equivalent.
- B) The duration of Senior Residency Training shall be as stipulated by the relevant Postgraduate Medical Colleges.
 - i. A Senior Resident shall be removed from the programme if he/she fails the Part II/Fellowship Examination after three (3) attempts or fails to sit for the Examination more than 18 months after the date of his eligibility to first sit for the Part II/Fellowship Residency Examination.
 - ii. A Senior Resident shall withdraw from the programme six (6) months after the Resident passed the Part II/Fellowship Examination of any of the Postgraduate Medical Colleges. The admission of the Resident with USLTHC terminates with this withdrawal.
 - iii. A Senior Resident shall be withdrawn from the programme if he/she fails to meet the terms and conditions as contained in his/her letter of admission.
 - iv. Extension beyond the stipulated period may be recommended by the USLTHC Postgraduate Training Committee as initiated by the Head of Department.

- v. A copy of the draft research proposal by Senior Residents should be submitted to the USLTHC Postgraduate Training Committee not later than 6 months after passing the Part 1/Membership Examination or commencement of the Fellowship Training.

4. Examinations:

- A) A Resident shall present himself/herself for the relevant examination when due.
- B) A Resident shall be deemed to have failed if he/she misses an examination for which he/she has registered without a reason acceptable to the USLTHC Postgraduate Training Committee.

5. Supernumerary Residents:

- A) Residents being considered for supernumerary training shall undergo admission procedures similar to non-supernumerary Residents, which include entry criteria to be determined by each Department and the relevant Postgraduate Medical College.
- B) The Hospital shall in no way have any financial obligation to the supernumerary Resident.
- C) The supernumerary Resident shall pay the USLTHC an annual sum to be determined by the Board from time to time to cover tuition and other training-related expenses.
- D) Salaries and allowances of supernumerary doctors may be paid to the hospital for monthly disbursements to the Residents only at the discretion of the sponsor.
- E) Accommodation of supernumerary Residents shall not be the responsibility of the Hospital Management.
- F) Residents from other hospitals or similar institutions who require short periods of rotation in the USLTHC to fulfil specific requirements of their

specialty training do not require formal interviews and may be permitted to proceed after due consultation with the appropriate Head of the Department.

G) Regarding item 5(F), the host department will determine the number of such Residents it can accommodate and the time of their rotations. Fees charged will depend on the duration of the attachment. Fees may be waived on the advice of the HOD concerned.

6. Sponsorship for Examinations:

A) A Resident may be sponsored for compulsory courses for Part 1/Membership and Part II/Fellowship for each College based on availability of funds.

B) A Resident may be sponsored for one Examination per College each in Part 1/Membership and one Examination per College in Part II/Fellowship based on availability of funds.

7. Change of Department:

A. With the exception of Residents in departments within the Division of Laboratory Medicine, any Resident who wishes to change Department/Discipline shall:

- i. Pass the required Primary Examination
- ii. Be acceptable to the new Department
- iii. Forward his/her request for a change of Department to the Chairman, USLTHC Postgraduate Training Committee through his/her Head of Department and Residency Coordinator in writing.

B. A Resident in any of the Departments within the Division of Laboratory Medicine shall

- i. Be allowed to submit requests for transfers within two 2 years (i.e.) during the period of rotation) of joining the Residency Training programme and shall be exempted from section 7 (A) (i) above.

Footnote: Once a Resident changes Department, all rotations in the previous Department are lost.

8. Annual Assessment Report:

An Annual Assessment report on every Resident shall be submitted through the Heads of Department to the Postgraduate Training Committee. This should be as objective as possible using the forms designated by the Postgraduate Medical Colleges for the purpose of clear determination of performance. Copies of these forms will be sent to the Heads of Departments in the last quarter of the year.

9. Annual Leave:

Thirty (30) working days (as applicable in the civil service Rules and Regulations).

10. General:

- A) All matters of patient confidentiality in clinical practice shall apply to Residents.
- B) All Residents are expected to show good comportment in dress and conduct at all times.
- C) Residents are expected to fill their logbooks and other documents as stipulated by the Postgraduate Medical Colleges and their Departments.
- D) Residents must maintain a cordial relationship with other staff and patient relatives.
- E) Attendance and punctuality at clinical meetings as well as ward rounds are mandatory.

11. Disciplinary Measures:

Investigation of violation of rules and proper conduct should reside in the individual Departments, which should make recommendations to the Management through the Postgraduate Training Committee for appropriate sanctions such as warning, suspension, extension of posting, report to the MDCSL or Civil Service Commission.

a) Examples of punishable offenses and the suggested penalties are as follows:
(graded according to seniority with the most senior bearing the brunt).

- I. **Professional Negligence** (e.g. leaving patient unattended, practicing beyond the level of competence, and failing to inform consultant).
- II. **Misdemeanour** (e.g. rudeness, uncivil behaviour).
- III. **Sexual Harassment** (e.g., of patients, other staff, and serious unethical behaviour including financial coercion).
- IV. **Poor Attitude to Work** (e.g., lateness, untidiness etc).
- V. **Culpable Mistake** (e.g., Insufficient care in drug dosing, administration, and failure to check for allergies).
- VI. **Criminal Behaviour** (e.g., assault, criminal negligence, forgery, etc).

POSTGRADUATE TRAINING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- 1. Dr. Joshua Coker : Chairman, Postgraduate Training Committee,
Internal Medicine**
- 2. Dr. Adekunle Kazeem : Member, Department of Family Medicine**
- 3. Dr. Eric Vreede : Member, Department of Anaesthesia**
- 4. Dr. Frances Nnaji : Member, Department of Psychiatry**
- 5. Dr. Nnaemeka Onyishi : Member, Department of Pathology**
- 6. Dr. Abdulai Jalloh : Member, Department of Surgery**
- 7. Dr. Freddie Coker : Member, Department of Paediatrics**
- 8. Dr. Gabriel Ganyaglo : Member, Department of Obstetrics &
Gynaecology**
- 9. Dr. Joseph Edan-Hotal : Member, Nursing and Midwifery**
- 10. Dr. Michael Lahai : Member, Pharmacy**
- 11. Mrs. Amelia Eva Gabba : Member, Nursing and Midwifery**
- 12. Prof. Kehinde Sunday Oluwadiya: Chief Medical Director (ad hoc)**