Critical Care Cardiology Fellowship

Introduction

Cardiac care units, staffed by cardiologist, have been in existence for over 50 years. Since their advent there has been a substantial fall in patient mortality. The coronary care unit patient population has also changed with a higher number of comorbidities and more patients requiring advanced life support therapies such as mechanical ventilation, inotropic infusions, and renal replacement therapies. Consequently, cardiac care units in many tertiary hospitals bear a striking similarity to intensive care units. Therefore, the traditional skill set of the cardiologist working in a coronary care unit has shifted to one requiring familiarity with a wide range of chronic diseases and acute non-cardiovascular complications.

The increase in demand for cardiac care units and the increasing complexity of the patient population has brought with it the need for more complex technologies and therapies. Patients and families who present with complex disease processes may also be at the end of their life and cardiologists need to be comfortable communicating with patients and families regarding end-of-life care.

The Canadian CICU director working group, the American Heart Association, and the European Society of Cardiology have all published a position papers advocating for dedicated critical care training for cardiologists attending in cardiac care units. They recognize the need for cardiologists to increase their skill set in order to provide quality care to this patient population.

Our program is unique as one of the first in Canada to offer this clinical fellowship in a world class faculty; including high level Critical Care Medicine, Cardiovascular Intensive Care, Solid Organ Transplant and Cardiology.

Fellowship Program

This program is a one-year fellowship in the Department of Critical Care Medicine in concert with the Division of Cardiology. The fellowship emphasizes the care of the cardiac intensive care unit patient - augmenting a cardiologist’s ability to care for the critically ill cardiac patient. Learning opportunities are focused in Critical Care Medicine, Cardiothoracic Intensive Care, and patient safety. The intent of this program is to train cardiologists to care for sicker patients in the coronary care unit.

The program is administered under the supervision of the Critical Care Medicine Residency Training Committee and Program Director. Trainees will be immersed in critical care training, education, and leadership similar to Royal College Critical Care Medicine residents.

Based on the recommendations from the Canadian CICU directors working group and the American Heart Association, the training includes six months of general intensive care divided between the University of Alberta Hospital and Royal Alexandra Hospital sites, two months of cardiovascular intensive care at the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute, one month coronary care unit rotation at the
University of Alberta Hospital, one month of anesthesia and three months of elective, clinical research, or quality improvement with an emphasis on patient safety and protocol development.

**Funding and Eligibility**

There is no fixed annual salary associated with the position for Canadian trainees. The program provides time away from critical care medicine training to work as an attending cardiologist on the cardiology ward service and call during community intensive care unit rotations is reimbursed. International trainees must have governmental/institutional funding secured. Further details about the funding arrangement are available on request.

Applicants must possess or be eligible for a specialist certificate in Cardiology, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada or equivalent, and be eligible for licensure with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA).

**How to apply**

To apply please forward the following to ccmedu@ualberta.ca:

1) Letter of intent
2) Curriculum Vitae
3) Three letters of reference including one from the applicant’s Cardiology Program Director
4) Funding commitment (international trainees only)
5) English language proficiency, if required (link)

The deadline for application is August 31 the year prior to program start date. The fellowship runs from July 1 to June 30 however off-cycle residents/fellows may be considered. For more information, please contact ccmedu@ualberta.ca (Program Administrator) and/or Dr. Wendy Sligl (Fellowship Director).

Details about the University of Alberta, the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry and the Department of Critical Care Medicine can be found on the Faculty’s Home Page at www.med.ualberta.ca. Details about the City of Edmonton can be found at www.edmonton.ca

We thank all applicants for their interest; only those selected for an interview will be contacted. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.

The University of Alberta and Alberta Health Services hire on the basis of merit. We are committed to the principle of equity in employment. We welcome diversity and encourage applications from all qualified women and men, including persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities and Indigenous persons.