INTRODUCING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

The Cardiac Imaging Fellowship Training Program at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute

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Abstract

The cardiac imaging fellowship training program at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI) is a comprehensive 2-3 year program designed to provide the knowledge and skills for clinical cardiology, multimodality cardiac imaging and clinical research. This well-organized program allows trainees to develop and acquire clinical and research expertise in multimodality cardiac imaging. You can actively participate in all facets in clinical research, including: research design, data acquisition, statistical analysis, manuscript preparation and presentations at national and international scientific meetings. Living in an attractive, safe and friendly city in Ottawa and working at the UOHI is a wonderful and an invaluable experience.

Keywords: Cardiac computed tomography, Cardiac imaging program, Cardiac magnetic resonance imaging, Nuclear cardiology, Positron emission tomography.

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If you are interested in studying multimodality cardiac imaging in North America, I would highly recommend cardiac imaging fellowship program at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI). I was a cardiac imaging fellow at the UOHI from July 2012 to January 2015. The program is well organized and structured that enables you to develop and acquire clinical and research expertise (level 3 training) in multiple cardiac imaging modalities in 2-3 years. All imaging fellows have the opportunity to participate in clinical, research and education aspects. Fellows will be assigned clinical duties in applicable imaging modalities (e.g. nuclear cardiology (NC), cardiac computed tomography (CT), cardiac positron emission tomography (PET), cardiac magnetic resonance imaging (CMR)) typically 2-4 days a week ensuring that all trainees have sufficient clinical exposure. On clinical days you work, under the supervision of attending physicians, and have a major responsibility for the supervision and management of clinical studies, image interpretation, reporting and education of junior residents. Although this might sound daunting, the first several months you will work with staff and senior fellows to hone your clinical skills.

All fellows are expected to participate in research. What better way to develop clinical skills than to be at the forefront of new techniques? You will discuss your research interests with your supervisor and will meet regularly to ensure your success. Supervising attending staff will work with you so that you will meet the expectation to author/co-author on 1-2 original research manuscripts/year of training as well as review

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articles and book chapters. You are also encouraged to submit your research to national and international scientific sessions/congresses. Irrespective, it is always the intention that your research is submitted and published in peer-reviewed journals. Fellows at the UOHI have had tremendous success and have published important papers in major and high-impact peer-reviewed journals such as Circulation and JACC (1-4).

Owing to this excellent learning and research environment, I have had numerous opportunities to present at scientific meetings, to complete and submit original research for publication and to write review articles (5-8). In addition the ties made in Ottawa have enabled me to continue to work collaboratively with the UOHI on research projects.

In regards to education, regular rounds occur and include: Heart Institute Research Rounds, Cardiac Imaging Case Review, CT and MRI Core Curriculum (Physics, Clinical Topics, Journal Club, case review) and Nuclear Cardiology/Cardiac PET Core Curriculum (Physics, Clinical Topics, Journal Club), Cardiology Grand Rounds. As part of your training, you will present clinical cases or research topics at these rounds. This functions to educate others but more importantly solidify you own knowledge. Occasionally, the venue for Journal Club is a nice local restaurant! Guests will be able to enjoy the time to learn but also socialize with colleagues and staff. If you are presenting, I would not recommend you that you have a drink prior to your presentation. Please do not ask me why.

After attaining experience and competence, you are encouraged to apply for a certification board examination in each of the modalities. Owing to the great program, teaching and mentorship, you will be able to take each board exam with confidence.

Natural environment, public safety and climate are very important components for you to start a new life, especially, if you have a family. Ottawa is an ideal city. Ottawa is the capital city of Canada and is located in the province of Ontario. The city has an approximate population of one million and is richly endowed with nature and public safety. It is a cozy city with places to visit such as: Rideau Canal, Parliament Hill, Canadian Museum of Nature, and the Ottawa River Parkway etc. My family and I enjoyed ice skating on the Rideau Canal, skiing at Mont Tremblant and watching the professional ice hockey team, the Ottawa Senators. Although, in the winter, Ottawa is one of the coldest capital cities in the world, the summers are hot and beautiful. Despite the cold winter weather, I can say that Canadian people make you feel warm in the heart. Living in Ottawa would be a unique and memorable experience you and your family.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no conflict of interest directly relevant to the content of this article.

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