



Special Infant Care Fellowship

Program Director:

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Description of fellowship:

This Special Infant Care Fellowship is an ICGME certified fellowship designed for the general pediatrician, and will consist of a one-year curriculum (with optional second year) for post-residency training in Pediatrics. It will focus on the unique medical and developmental needs of prematurely born and other high-risk infants and toddlers after discharge and during the first couple of years of life. Fellows who complete this training will then be able to bring their specialized knowledge and expertise into careers in pediatric academic positions (hospitalist, NICU follow-up, Level 2 nursery) and general pediatric clinical practices across the country.

The fellow will be an important member of our Transitional Medical Home Program in which we partner with well-child care providers to coordinate care for our most medically fragile NICU graduates. He/she will be trained in best practice for providing convalescent care, discharge planning and comprehensive post-discharge care for premature and critically ill term or near-term infants. Fellows will become experienced in dealing with post-discharge problems such as chronic lung disease, gastroesophageal reflux, brain injury, growth, nutrition and feeding difficulties, early motor and other developmental problems and psychosocial problems common in parents of high-risk infants. The fellow will also become familiar with expected outcomes of various neonatal conditions and the early precursors of cerebral palsy and other developmental disorders. He/she will learn to differentiate between the transient neurologic abnormalities commonly seen in premature and other sick newborn infants and the true red flags that predict later neurologic and developmental problems. This knowledge and these skills should prove to be extremely valuable to the fellow when practicing general pediatrics in the future.

Fellowship curriculum:

The curriculum of the Special Infant Care Fellowship will include:

1. Up to three months of clinical service in a transitional or special care nursery setting (depending on the future goals of the fellow), with particular emphasis on nutrition, convalescent care, and discharge planning of premature and other high-risk infants. If interested, fellow may be able to serve as acting attending in our TCN during the second half of year.

2. Participation two times per week in the multi-disciplinary Special Infant Care Clinic, Duke University Medical Center's medical and neurodevelopmental follow-up clinic for high-risk infants. This requirement will include following of a designated cohort of infants (both extremely low birth weight prematurely-born infants and critically ill full-term infants) recently discharged from the Intensive Care Nursery.
3. Participation about once a month in the multi-disciplinary Duke Pediatric Cardiac Neurodevelopmental Clinic, Duke University Medical and neurodevelopmental follow-up clinic for high risk children with complex congenital heart disease.
4. Participation in weekly Convalescent/Chronic Care rounds for the Intensive Care Nursery/Transitional Care Nursery during which developmental and psychosocial issues are discussed and discharge plans are made for medically fragile.
5. Consultation on the pediatric floor for NICU graduates readmitted after discharge for exacerbation of neonatal problems such as chronic lung disease, gastroesophageal reflux, apnea and bradycardia, failure to thrive and brain injury. Infants with complex congenital heart disease who have been cared for in the PCICU will also receive a pre-discharge consult in preparation for being followed in our Special Infant Care Clinic.
6. Elective weeks in the following areas, which will include both didactic teaching and clinical training:
 - a. Feeding/Speech Disorders
 - b. Physical/Occupational Therapy
 - c. Neuroimaging
 - d. Neonatal Neurology
 - e. Rehabilitation/Cerebral Palsy clinic
 - f. Palliative Care
7. Participation in ongoing neurodevelopmental follow-up studies under the program director's supervision.
8. Fellow will be on pager call during the day on alternate weeks, one night per week, and one weekend a month to answer calls for out Transitional Medical Home Program patients. He/she will also round with the TCN one weekend per month to become familiar with future medical home patients.

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for the Special Infant Care Fellowship, applicants must:

- have completed a pediatric residency program approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education,
- be board-eligible or board-certified in general pediatrics, and
- be planning to practice general pediatrics either in an academic or private setting, wish to pursue a Neonatology or other fellowship, or provide Level 2 nursery and/or NICU follow-up care after completion of the fellowship year.