

Program Highlight: The Oregon Health and Sciences University Critical Care Medicine Fellowship



Nuts and bolts

Do you participate in The Match? If not, what is the best way for applicants to contact you?

Yes, we have participated in the match since its inception. I think it's a much more honest and fair method for the applicants than the old way – we will never go back.

Do you offer a one-year fellowship to prospective fellows who have already completed an ACGME-accredited internal medicine subspecialty?

Yes, we have offered this one-year track since even before the match and have trained a small sized cohort of overachievers. Due to the unique demands of this track, we can only accept one prospective fellow in the one-year track per year at present.

What department houses your fellowship? Is cardiology represented in the program leadership?

Pulmonary CCM houses the Critical Care Medicine Fellowship but its leadership has excellent representation outside of PCCM. Miranda Merrill, APD, is cardiology-CCM. Ran Ran, PD, is EM-CCM. The core faculty also hails from a smattering of different backgrounds.

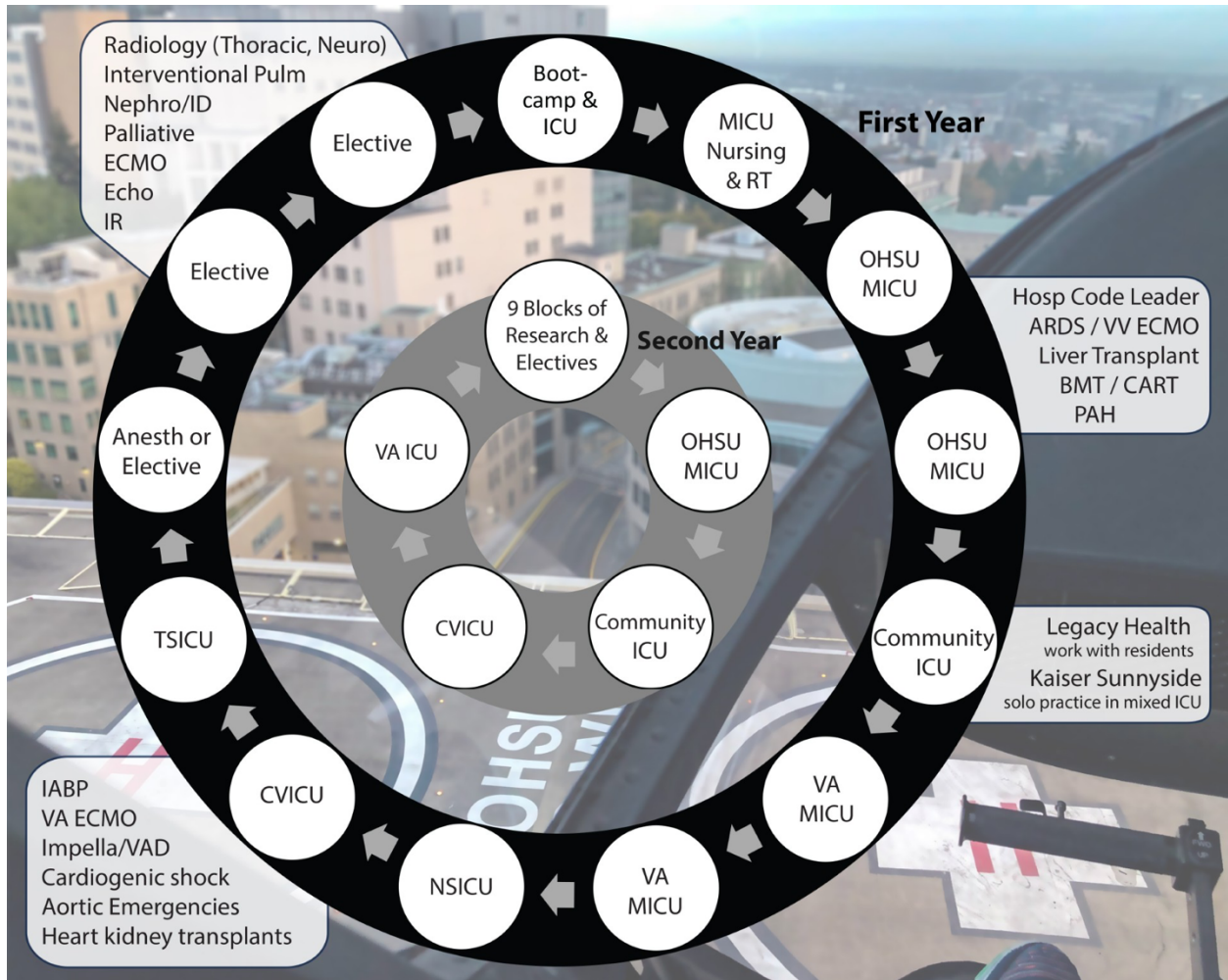
What is the typical training background of your CCM fellows (E.g. EM, anesthesia, IM, and IM subspecialties)? Have you trained cardiologists in the past?

Our CCM Fellows are typically from IM and EM backgrounds. Sometimes one in the cohort will be from an IM subspecialty like Cards or ID. We have trained five cardiology intensivists in my recent memory.

ICU-specifics

What does a typical year in your fellowship look like?

A picture is worth a thousand words:



Each block is 4 weeks long.

What are the unique aspects of the ICU training at OHSU?

1. Diversity of training experiences
2. Invested faculty
3. Flexibility to find and pursue your own niche
4. Robust simulation curriculum for rare and high-risk procedures
5. Focus on academic success and success outside of medicine

What characteristics are you looking for when selecting fellows?

To be fully transparent, this is almost verbatim from our evaluation forms.

1. Personable. Someone who connects with patients and the rest of the team. Someone who takes feedback well. Someone we will want to stop and chat with in the hallways. Someone who enriches the culture of this place.
2. Driven. A prospective fellow who is always looking for ways to push themselves clinically and in scholarship
3. Grit. ICU can be fatiguing with long hours, difficult cases, and nonstop learning. Despite these challenges, we hope to recruit an applicant who will be happy whilst facing these challenges – happy to be in critical care, in OHSU, in Portland.

What dedicated conferences are fellows encouraged to attend or present at?

There are no mandatory national conferences though we highly encourage conference participation. Some conferences that our Fellows recently attended:

ATS, OTS, SCCM, OCCM, Chest, ELSO, EuroELSO, ACEP

We have a robust schedule of internal conferences that fellows are given protected time to attend including case conferences, critical care bootcamp, critical care didactic, simulation, POCUS, scholarly skills, chest radiology, critical care M&M, etc

Cardiology-specific training

Are there any cardiac critical care-directed rotations in your fellowship (for example, V-A ECMO, CTICU, or cardiac anesthesia rotations)?

Yes. All of our fellows do 2 months of CVICU. Most will elect to do 1-2 additional months. We also have an OHSU ECMO elective which is extremely popular that manages all ECMO patients and ECMO transports in the region. We just established a Legacy ECMO rotation, which is a community site who also performs ECMO transport as well as E-CPR.

We are establishing a community anesthesia rotation that will have cardiac anesthesia cases. Many cardiac anesthesiologists at OHSU are also intensivists and have happily enriched our fellows' education by bringing them to the OR and participating in simulation/didactics.

Can you describe the balance between medical and surgical cardiac critical care exposure?

CVICU, NSICU, and TSICU are heavily surgical. These rotations make up for half of our fellow's ICU experience. The OHSU MICU and the VA MICU are primarily medical and our community ICU rotations are mixed ICUs where fellows get exposure to both medical and surgical critical care.

Our CVICU is home to cardiology, advanced HF, cardiac surgery and vascular surgery patients. The ICU fellows co-manage with the surgical or cardiology subspecialists.

Do fellows participate in the management of patients on advanced mechanical support devices?

The ECMO service is an intensivist run *consult* service. The primary ICU team will continue to manage all MCS patients and thereby gain familiarity and exposure. We have a separate ECMO elective where Fellows focus on ECMO consult, initiation, management, and weaning in a 1:1 apprenticeship model with an ECMO intensivist. They also cannulate and sometimes perform ECMO transport. Other MCS devices are managed on the CVICU rotation with either a critical care cardiologist or advanced HF specialist.

Wellness

How does your program support fellows' job search during a busy clinical year?

1. Career Week – protected time for finding mentorship and scholarly projects.
2. Connecting fellows with the right people at national conferences/providing fellows regional contacts.
3. CV creation and review.
4. Career day.
5. The schedule is purposefully front loaded so that Fellows can have an easier time scheduling interviews and second looks in their second year.

There can be a tension between ample ICU exposure and wellness. What does your program do to promote wellness?

We put significant thought and effort into crafting each fellow's schedule – making sure that vacation/career week/elective time breaks up back-to-back-to-back ICU blocks. OHSU also gives trainees several wellness half days – these are opportunities for healthcare appts, etc. We have monthly check-ins with the entire fellowship program and biannual 1:1 meetings with fellows.

What else would you like to share about your program with potential applicants?

We pride ourselves on being a fellowship that helps you achieve your personal goals. We are here to guide you and provide you with advice and recommendations, but this training program is for you.

For those pursuing cardiology critical care training, we have 4 (soon to be 5) dual-board critical care cardiologists who you will work closely with during CVICU rotations and are eager to provide you mentorship.

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact us!

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