



Nuts and bolts:

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

Yes, we participate in the Match. Of note, all our positions are offered through the Match (i.e. we are “all-in”).

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

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

The fellowship is housed in the Department of Critical Care Medicine. Established in 2001, it is the first academic CCM Department in the world. The program leadership (PD and APD) represent Internal Medicine and Emergency Medicine background training. Our program enjoys a close relationship with Cardiology, with some CCM faculty who are dual trained in Cardiology and fellows that rotate through the other program’s rotations as electives.

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?

The training background of fellows in the IM/CCM fellowship include IM, EM, and IM subspecialties. The IM/CCM program is part of a broader multidisciplinary critical care training program (MCCTP) that includes our Anesthesiology/Critical Care, Surgery/Critical Care, and NeuroCritical Care fellowships. All these fellowships are ACGME accredited and are 100% integrated with each other. Fellows from all programs work together, learn together, and socialize together. We have trained several Cardiology fellows over the past 10 years.

ICU-specifics:

What does a typical year in your fellowship look like?

We value broad training in Critical Care, and yet we also understand that Cardiology-trained fellows may want additional training with the critically ill cardiac or cardiac surgery population. Our year is broken up into thirteen 4-week blocks. Fellows have 3-4 blocks of MICU time, 1 block in our Surgical/Trauma ICU, 5-7 blocks in our specialty ICUs, and 2-3 blocks of clinical elective time. Our specialty ICUs are med/surg ICUs that focus on a particular patient population. They include our Cardiothoracic ICU, Neurovascular ICU, Abdominal transplant ICU, and Veterans Administration ICU. All fellows are required to rotate at least once through each of these units. Cardiology-trained fellows are allowed to request focused time in the CTICU if they wish – typically 3-4 blocks total for the year.

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

One of the most important distinguishing features of our program is its multidisciplinary nature. Our fellows work and learn with fellows from a broad range of training backgrounds. This affords them the opportunity to both learn and teach best practices pertaining to critically ill patients. Another feature is a seminar course that we give to all fellows called the “CCM Leadership and Professionalism course”. This course is designed to essentially be faculty development for fellows. During the course, faculty and fellowship graduates discuss non-clinical topics that are vital to career development and assist our fellows with the transition from fellow to attending. Finally, I think it is important to highlight the amount of research going on in our department for those who are interested. As of last year, our department had over \$30 million in external research grant funding, with over 15 active R01-level grants.

What characteristics are you looking for when selecting fellows?

Fellows that fit our program best are typically those that reflect our program mission. Briefly, fellows that embrace the concept of multidisciplinary training, who have some degree of leadership interest/experience, and who have other professional interests that align with our opportunities at UPMC are the characteristics we look at most.

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

The program encourages our fellows to present at any of the CCM-related national meetings including SCCM, CHEST, and ISICEM (International Symposium on Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine) in Brussels. We also recognize that one year is a short time to complete a scholarly project, so attending other conferences (e.g. ACC) to present scholarly work completed previously is also encouraged and supported.

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. Our program has a required CTICU rotation and Cardiology-trained fellows are allowed flexibility to rotate several times through this ICU as described above. Our primary hospital site has a robust ECMO program. Since the CTICU is where ECMO patients are cared for, our fellows have ample exposure ECMO patients and training in mechanical circulatory support. Electives afford opportunities to observe cardiac surgeries if fellows are interested.

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

Together, our CTICU, VA-ICU, and MICU rotations create robust exposure to both medical and surgical cardiac critical care. This includes the cardiac surgery, advanced heart failure, and post-STEMI and NSTEMI populations, many of whom require mechanical circulatory support.

Do fellows participate in the management of patients on advanced mechanical support devices? Yes. Particularly in the CTICU, fellows are part of a multidisciplinary team of intensivists, cardiologists, and cardiac surgeons that discuss, plan, and implement management of mechanical circulatory support devices.

Wellness:

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

The CCM Leadership and Professionalism course discusses job search topics such as how to find a job; CV, cover letter, and executive summary development; negotiation strategies; and contracts. In addition, our formidable faculty and alumni network has broad national and international reach. Program leadership and other faculty often reach out to this network as needed to assist with job search. The program is typically flexible with being able to provide time for fellows to attend job interviews while still maintaining an adequate work force to care for our patients.

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

The fellowship has a wellness curriculum designed to train the next generation of intensivists to have skills in recognizing & treating the individual & organizational contributors to physician well-being. Our Wellness Officer for the fellowship (typically a 2nd year fellow in the 2-year program) develops and implements wellness activities for the fellows including social gatherings supported by program leadership and wellness training

experiences for which time from the lecture series is dedicated. Thursday afternoon core lectures are protected for fellows, during which time attendings, advanced practice providers, and other team members assume care of each ICU service. Also, there are several programs aiding physician wellness that are offered through our institution's Department of Graduate Medical Education.

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

Please visit our website at www.ccm.pitt.edu to learn more about our department and our Internal Medicine/Critical Care fellowship. The website contains detailed information about our ICUs, training experiences, ongoing research, and life in Pittsburgh. Also, please follow our Pittsburgh CCM Fellowship Instagram (@pittsburghccm) for photos and videos from our fellows!

For more information, please contact our program coordinator, Trish Field (fieldtl@upmc.edu)