

Advanced Training in Old Age Psychiatry

Goals

The goals of this Training Programme are based on the Faculty goals for training in Psychiatry of Old Age, summarised as:

- To develop expertise in the assessment, diagnosis and management of the older person with mental illness, across all settings, to a standard of competence in accord with current best practice in Psychiatry of Old Age.
- To develop a knowledge and attitude base which will equip the trainee to understand and respond positively to the special needs of the elderly, especially in mental health.
- To develop skills in consultation/liaison, leadership and education/teaching which will enable excellent multi-disciplinary practice and ability to collaborate fruitfully with other health professionals and agencies in the field of mental health of the elderly.
- To acquire sufficient specialist skills in medicine of old age to practice efficiently and safely as an Old Age Psychiatrist.
- To acquire experience in the planning, organisation and integration of psychiatric services for the elderly.

Objectives

Objectives of the programme (attitudes, knowledge and skills) are as listed in the Faculty Curriculum. These baseline goals may be supplemented by individualised training goals depending on the individual trainee's particular educational development pathway. Trainees are required to complete all core training experiences as outlined in the RANZCP Training Regulations.

Trainees need to complete skills development in leadership and management, CME activities, cultural, social, biological and psychological aspects of management. A research paper is required as outlined by the Committee of Advanced Training in POA.

Form and Content

The programme involves a minimum of twenty-four months accredited training. Full-time pre-FRANZCP trainees will do clinical work within the Psychiatric Service for the Elderly (the largest single old age psychiatry service in New Zealand) for eight half-days per week. The remaining two-tenths will be devoted to reading, research, teaching and education – some but not all of this time is for dissertation-related work.

There is one POA higher training post in Christchurch at this time though there are Fellows (local and regional) who are also completing their Certificate in Psychiatry of Old Age utilizing the support of the Christchurch site. The Christchurch site also assists in the co-ordination of training of Advanced Trainees elsewhere in New Zealand.

Clinical Work

Clinical responsibilities will be determined with reference to trainee's individual educational requirements, ie in order to ensure as wide exposure as possible to the different facets of clinical psychogeriatrics, and to a variety of consultant supervisors. Attachments may involve a combination of duties rather than a single component of the Service. Attachments will generally be for six to eight months. Exposure to all of the following clinical components is regarded as necessary.

- Emergency psychogeriatrics
- Community assessment and follow-up (including rural outreach)
- Medicolegal report-writing and casework
- Outpatient clinics (in parallel with Consultant) including the Memory Assessment Clinic
- Inpatient Unit for "organic" cases
- Inpatient Unit for "functional" cases
- Psychogeriatric Day Hospitals
- Consultation/liaison work to Geriatric Medicine, to other hospital wards, to primary care, to the residential care sector (may include experience in our Delirium service)
- Administration of ECT to the elderly.

Alternative options, e.g. private practice training or a substantive research post may be considered from time to time if available and appropriate for particular trainees.

Supervision

At present five members are available for approved supervision with the Service (Drs Collins, Kirwan, Croucher, Reeves, Copeland). Trainees may have more than one supervisor simultaneously. Supervision will meet the requirements set out in the Faculty By-Laws. In addition to direct oversight and discussion of clinical work, some supervision time will be devoted to discussion of clinical work, some supervision time will be devoted to discussion of other relevant aspects of work in psychogeriatrics eg teamwork, organisational issues, ethical issues, and to ensuring that educational goals are met.

Supervision of the Faculty project is coordinated through the Psychiatry of Old Age Academic Unit based in the CDHB.

Formal Teaching

- This will be based around the Faculty Curriculum. Tutors will be drawn from the Department of Psychological Medicine, Department of Health Care of the Elderly, Clinical Senior Lecturers and other experienced health professionals involved in care of the elderly. The components of formal teaching are:
- Self-directed (but supervisor guided) learning and individual (or small group) tutorials will be a significant component. We have developed a two-year course of topics to be covered (halfday per month)
- Postgraduate papers in psychogeriatrics, geriatric medicine and gerontology
- Weekly meeting involving all PSE consultants, senior medical officers and registrars (currently 10 people). Educational content of this meeting may

include case presentations, journal article discussion, topic reviews, research discussion and conference/seminar feedback.

- Involvement in departmental in-service education, grand rounds, clinical audit and weekly neuro-radiology teaching sessions.
- Attendance at conferences and seminars relevant to old age psychiatry, including the expectation that trainees will attend Faculty and NZ Branch Scientific Meetings
- Internet-based tutorials and other educational material
- Key psychiatry, psychogeriatric, geriatric medicine and gerontology journal contents pages circulate through the Department, assisting up-to-date literature knowledge

Research Experience

Opportunities to pursue research exist, under the auspices of the University Departments of Psychological Medicine and Health Care of the Elderly. Dementia drug trials are carried out at the Canterbury Geriatric Medical Research Trust based at The Princess Margaret Hospital.

Medical Experiences

The Psychiatric Service for the Elderly is administratively combined with geriatric medicine services and is called Older Persons Health Specialists Service and occupies the same hospital site. Currently the Clinical Director for Older Persons Health Specialist Service is Dr J Kirwan (a Psychiatrist of Old Age). The working relationship with geriatric medicine is excellent, with a high frequency of cross-referral. Opportunities for improving trainees' skills in medicine of old age include:

- Weekly visits by a consultant geriatrician and a senior trainee geriatrician to the psychogeriatric inpatient units.
- Opportunity to attend ward rounds and team meetings on geriatric medicine wards, as part of consultation/liaison work.
- Opportunity to attend geriatric medicine outpatient clinics (or more intensive involvement in medical patient care if necessary).

Joint Departmental educational meetings, as above.