

## Medical Oncology

The medical oncology training program of McGill University meets the requirements of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, the Collège des médecins du Québec, and the American Board of Internal Medicine for Specialty Training in Medical Oncology.

The general objectives are to impart to the trainee an understanding of the basic scientific principles which relate to cancer and its treatment and to ensure that the trainee acquires clinical competence in the investigation and management of neoplastic diseases.

The specific learning objectives of the **two-year program** are:

- a) The epidemiology and natural history of cancer including causation risk factors, the biology of growth and spread and prognostic variables.
- b) Basic scientific knowledge including molecular biology, biochemistry, pathophysiology, pharmacology, growth kinetics, genetics, endocrinology and immunology as they relate to the understanding of cancer and its diagnosis and treatment.
- c) Assessment and investigations of patients with cancer, including the history, physical examination, laboratory and imaging techniques.
- d) Principles of cancer therapy and the indications for and complications of the various treatment modalities alone or in combination.
- e) Management of medical emergencies and complications which arise as a result of cancer or its treatment.
- f) The principles and practice of palliative symptomatic treatment of patients with cancer.
- g) Nutritional needs of cancer patients and the methods of management.
- h) Psychological and ethical aspects of treating patients with cancer and communicating with patients and their families and other members of the health care team.
- i) Epidemiology and biostatistics including the conduct and evaluation of clinical trials.
- j) Specific technical skills including aspiration of effusions, lumbar puncture, bone marrow aspiration and biopsy, maintenance of vascular access, examination techniques for specific systems (example: pharyngo-laryngeal area) and their interpretation.
- k) Comprehensive knowledge of site specific tumours, encompassing all the aspects enumerated above.

In order to achieve the above educational objectives, it is clear that at least two years of training in the medical oncology program are required.

It is expected that during the first year the trainees will develop competence in the investigation, diagnosis and management of the major types of neoplastic diseases and their complications. They will become familiar with the use of chemotherapy and the indications of other modalities of therapy in various tumours. They will acquire skills in the psychosocial management of cancer patients and in communication with patients and their families. They will acquire experience in working with other members of the interdisciplinary team in the management of cancer patients. Various technical skills will be

acquired. The trainees will have gained experience in functioning effectively as consultants in medical oncology. They will have participated in clinical trials and commenced work on designing a clinical trial, and begun a retrospective review or case studies of a particular cancer topic. The trainees will take and pass the end-of-year examination assessing their knowledge.

By the end of the second year of training, the expectations above should apply to all malignancies. The trainee will have acquired additional knowledge and will have matured further in his expertise and skills in all the areas enumerated above. The trainees will have developed a scholarly attitude towards self-education and critical judgement and will have participated in the teaching of students, residents and allied health care personnel. In addition, the trainees will have completed a particular review or case studies for presentations and/or publication. Again, the candidate will be expected to pass the end-of-year examination assessing his knowledge.

The two-year program will consist of at least 18 months of clinical training of which 13 months consist of general medical oncology; 2 months malignant hematology, 2 months radiation oncology and 1 month palliative care. The remaining 6 elective months will be spent in additional clinical training, and may include pediatric oncology, and/or an appropriate research project. Trainees contemplating a career in academic medicine are strongly advised to spend one or more additional years on a clinical or basic science research project which may be arranged with the appropriate supervisors.

The teaching hospitals involved in the training program are the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) – Glen Site (Cedars Cancer Centre), the Jewish General Hospital (Segal Cancer Centre) and St. Mary's Hospital Center.

Requests for further information and application forms should be directed to:

Dr. Scott Owen, Program Director  
MUHC – Glen Site  
Cedars Cancer Centre  
1001 Decarie Blvd  
Montreal, QC, H3G 1A4  
Tel: 514-934-1934, 45721 Fax: 514-843-1417

Program Coordinator: 514-398-2264; [oncologysec.med@mcgill.ca](mailto:oncologysec.med@mcgill.ca)