Medical Research Fellowship Program

PROGRAM OVERVIEW
The Medical Research Fellowship Program is offered by the Office of International Medicine Programs (IMP), School of Medicine and Health Sciences in affiliation with the Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) at The George Washington University. This program provides international medical graduates (IMGs) with the skills necessary to enhance their research careers and pursue graduate medical education in the U.S. Medical, basic sciences, and public health research is available in the following (but not limited) specialties: anesthesiology, emergency medicine, general and neurosurgery, gastroenterology, genomic medicine, healthcare leadership, health systems and operations, hematology, internal medicine and its sub-specialties, neurology, obstetrics and gynecology, ophthalmology, pathology, pediatrics, pharmacology, psychiatry, and urology.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
This 12 month program supports IMGs who plan to enhance their careers in the health sector by participating in U.S. research activities relevant to their area of expertise. Applicants might be interested in pursuing residency programs in the U.S or increasing their knowledge in specific health related topics, such as health policy, health administration, basic sciences, etc. Its goals are to expose the fellow to the American medical system and practice, provide the fellow with the research skills and activities that may lead to publication(s) in peer-reviewed journals or abstracts, offer one-on-one mentorship and career guidance, and provide professional development and leadership skills through workshops specifically catered to the cohort. The curriculum includes the following components:

1. **Mentorship in a Research Project**: Each fellow will have a one-on-one GW medical faculty mentor who will advise him/her in research projects that may cover a broad variety of medical disciplines at GW. This mentorship will include regular meetings with the mentor (at least once per week). These activities may result in one or more peer-reviewed publications co-published or presented by the fellow. Successful fellows may also receive personal recommendations and networking opportunities as determined by the GW medical faculty member.

2. **Research Courses**: To build a strong foundation in clinical research, fellows will take Epidemiology in the fall semester and Biostatistics in the spring semester. These courses will be three credits each, and are eligible for transfer depending on the other institution’s
guidelines. Fellows will be graded on attendance, participation and online and written assignment performance. Specific workshops, such as training in statistical software packages can be offered as necessary.

3. **Observation/Shadowing:** Fellows will participate as an observer with their faculty mentor or other physicians within their specialty of interest. This experience will provide an understanding of the American healthcare setting and delivery of medical care and health services. No patient contact will be allowed under these observations as dictated in the J-1 visiting scholar guidelines. For fellows who are focused on non-clinical medical research, they will have the opportunity to interact with experts through shadowing in different departments, collaborating on various projects, participating in conferences, and networking at events on and off campus.

4. **Grand Rounds and Lectures:** Each fellow will attend regular grand rounds and lectures in the specialty of their mentor along with the clinical department’s residents. They should anticipate becoming a key member of the team, and fully participate in department activities, including research meetings.

5. **Professional Development and Skill-Building Workshops:** A variety of workshops will be designed to meet the fellow’s needs. Topics can range from residency application preparation, library research, healthcare leadership, accent modification, English writing, and other skills. These workshops and lectures will be conducted by specialized faculty and personnel. Access to other cross-cultural activities and resources will be offered to interested fellows to enhance their understanding of American culture.

6. **Individual Career Guidance:** Advising on residency application and long-term professional goals will be provided by the mentors and the Program Medical Director. Throughout the year, IMP staff will also be available to support fellows with scheduling mock interviews, offering online resources, CV and personal statement review, and advising on any other issues that may arise.

7. **Evaluation:** Mentors and Program Medical Director will evaluate each fellow on a quarterly basis. Course instructors will provide feedback each semester. Written evaluations and progress reports will be generated for the fellow’s file and shared with the sponsor. Fellows are also given the opportunity to provide feedback on the fellowship throughout the year. Data from all forms of evaluation will be used to improve the program to fit the fellows’ goals. At the end of the year, a certificate of completion will be awarded to all fellows who complete the program.

**FELLOWSHIP LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

At the end of the program, the fellows will be equipped with the following skills, abilities, and documents to help them compete for a U.S. residency position:

- Develop practical medical/health research and inquiry skills utilizing the latest approaches in American health care/health services, and medical research
• Develop critical thinking and analytical skills necessary for clinical medical care/services and research
• Develop a foundation for putting evidence-based medicine into practice and research
• Develop personal and group leadership skills necessary for advancement in clinical practice and research
• Develop a longstanding relationship with a medical faculty member who will serve as a mentor to provide guidance on the process for applying to accredited US residency training programs and career development
• Develop strategies for communicating clinical research and medical information in spoken and written English
• Gain first-hand knowledge of the American healthcare system and medical higher education institution
• Letters of recommendation from GW medical faculty when appropriate
• Potential publications, abstract, and research posters
• Potential presentation and conference experience
• Competitive credentials for U.S. residency programs
• Create a network of professional contacts for future support in international medicine

FINANCIAL BENEFITS TO FELLOWS
The George Washington University does not provide salary or benefits for any fellows accepted under this Program.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND SELECTION CRITERIA
The following documents should be submitted in one PDF packet and electronically mailed to impinfo@gwu.edu. Applications must be submitted by January 15 in order to be considered for the May 1 start date of the program. Late materials may hinder the visa application process and your admittance into the fellowship.

1. A photo
2. Curriculum vitae
3. A copy of medical degree *
4. ECFMG certification**
   USMLE I and II scores of ≥ 220; OR pass the USMLE Step 1 with a score of ≥ 220 AND one of the following:
   - Pass the USMLE Clinical Skills or
   - TOEFL score of ≥ 100 or
   - IELTS overall band score ≥ 7 (with no individual score below 6)
5. Medical school transcripts
6. Three letters of recommendation
7. A one-page objective statement (12-point font Times New Roman, single-spaced) detailing the applicant’s goals and objectives of the Fellowship
8. A financial guarantee or a sponsorship letter from a sponsoring institution that complies with the dates and duration of the program.

* Equivalent graduate degree is acceptable for those applicants not seeing U.S. residency
** USMLE scores can be waived for those applicants not seeking U.S. residency
GENERAL TERMS

1. Once the applicant has been approved and a faculty member identified as a mentor, an Acceptance Letter will be issued by the Office of International Medicine Programs and sent to the applicant.

2. For the duration of the program, the sponsoring institution must provide each fellow with a comprehensive health insurance, a health benefits plan offered by an insurance company, or managed care organization authorized to do business in the District of Columbia, which also complies with the J-1 visa requirements.

3. The fellowship starts on May 1 and ends on April 30. Fellows are required to attend Orientation one week prior to the start of the program. All activities and evaluation methods listed in the curriculum are mandatory unless otherwise noted.

4. GW will provide the necessary paperwork to apply for a J-1 visa if eligible. Fellows must follow all J-1 visa guidelines while in the program. They should not travel abroad during the fellowship, unless they receive approval from IMP and their sponsor. Any changes to their residence and program details must be communicated to IMP and their sponsor.

5. Patient contact is prohibited as an observer in this program.

6. Participating in or completing the Medical Research Fellowship Program does not constitute acceptance of Medical Research Fellows into GW residency programs or into any other GW programs.

Any questions related to this program can be directed to the Office of International Medicine Programs.

Office of International Medicine Programs
School of Medicine and Health Sciences
2030 M Street, NW, Suite 4063
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202-994-2796
Fax: 202-994-0071
E-Mail: impinfo@gwu.edu