Program Goal

The goal of this 3-year fellowship program is to prepare post doctoral fellows in developmental and behavioral pediatrics for teaching, patient care, research, and community leadership roles.

Training Objectives

At the completion of three years of fellowship training, each fellow will:

- Demonstrate a broad and in-depth understanding of child development and children with special health care needs;
- Demonstrate knowledge of developmental milestones and instruments for assessing behavior, development, and functional status from early childhood to adolescence;
- Exhibit a working knowledge of federal, state and local community resources available to support families and foster the development of children;
- Demonstrate skills in the diagnosis and management of a wide range of behavioral and developmental problems experienced by children from birth through adolescence;
- Be experienced in participation in a wide variety of multidisciplinary teams (primary care, behavioral, developmental, child abuse, chronic illness, high risk neonatal follow-up);
- Demonstrate skills in teaching the concepts of behavioral and developmental pediatrics in multiple settings: 1-on-1, small group, parent group, or larger audiences of health, allied health, educational, or behavioral community professionals;
- Participate in meaningful research and become familiar with research methods used in developmental and behavioral pediatrics;
- Practice child advocacy at the community level;
- Complete a research project and present it at a scientific meeting and submit it to a peer reviewed journal for publication;
- Develop a strategy for ongoing research funding including writing a grant proposal.

Training Plan

Throughout the training program, each fellow’s schedule is modified each quarter to meet their personal learning objectives as well as DBP learning objectives. As fellows build their skills and confidence in DBP practice, they can expand their roles into related fields such as genetics, rehabilitation, and neurology.

The first year of DBP fellowship commences with an orientation month that includes observations of DBP programs for infants, preschoolers, school age children, and children with special needs, as well as an introduction to the allied fields of rehabilitation, neurology, psychiatry, psychology, and genetics. Fellows also are oriented to social resources for vulnerable children and families in the community through observation at partner programs, such as Child and Family Connections #10, the Erikson Institute, Beacon Therapeutic School, Illinois Center for Education and Rehabilitation, University of Chicago Early Intervention Program, and the Ounce of Prevention. Also during orientation, fellows work up two Comer Children’s Hospital patients seen in DBP consultations, two LaRabida inpatients with multiple disabilities, one child in the 0-3 Diagnostic Clinic, and one child seen in the Center for Healthy Families. In addition, they present a DBP topic of their choice to their fellow residents.

After orientation, fellows begin rotations in DBP outpatient clinics (0-3 Diagnostic Clinic, DBP Clinics at several locations, Center for Healthy Families for high-risk NICU follow-up, the Fussy Baby Program, and the Premier Premies and Failure to Thrive Programs at LaRabida Children’s Hospital) and inpatient consultation (Comer Children’s Hospital, LaRabida Children’s Hospital,
Illinois Center for Rehabilitation and Education). In addition, fellows participate in small group discussions with DBP faculty and residents on topics such as normal child development, language development, regulatory behaviors, developmental screening and testing, common childhood behavior problems, early indicators of autism, diagnostic evaluation of global developmental delay, multimodal diagnosis and management of attention and learning problems and family stressors, biopsychosocial management of developmental and behavioral concerns, and how to share impressions and assessment results with families. First year DBP fellows begin their teaching experience one session per week in our DBP consulting clinics and one session per week in a pediatric program serving vulnerable populations. They also attend the ongoing Pediatric Fellows’ Core Curriculum conferences as an introduction to research, and teaching practices, and academic planning. Toward the end of the first year or beginning of the second year, fellows also complete a month-long rotation on the chronic care team at LaRabida.

The second and third years of training require increasing levels of responsibility commensurate with each fellow’s skills and in accordance with hospital guidelines for trainees. Adequate time for research is built into the entire training period. The fellow is expected to have identified an area of research to pursue and appropriate faculty mentors by the end of their first year. They work with their mentors to design a project that can be completed by the end of the second year of training. To develop presentation skills and to obtain feedback to refine their research project, fellows present their research ideas and progress in weekly research conferences attended by faculty and other fellows. Fellows also present a topic of their choice during their second year to pediatric residents on their DBP rotation.

By the third year, fellows are expected to present their research as abstracts, posters, platform presentations, and/or publications. They also attend grant writing seminars and are expected to either write their own grant proposal or to participate with mentors in grant writing. During the final year, DBP faculty actively assist fellows in finding the best possible academic position to meet their personal academic goals.

**Application Procedures**

Typically, fellowships begin July 1 of each year. Candidates should have strong evidence of clinical competence and excellence, the ability to work well on a clinical team, the ability to communicate well with patients and families and provide them with support, and the ability and desire to teach students and residents. In addition, candidates should have a personal commitment to pursuing an independent investigative career. Candidates must have an M.D. degree and the qualifications to obtain a license to practice medicine in the State of Illinois. Candidates must be Residents in Pediatrics at the PL-2 level or higher at an ACGME accredited program or have completed this training.

To apply for the Fellowship Program, the following materials are required: 1) curriculum vitae; cover letter or personal statement describing the candidate’s clinical and research interests; three letters of recommendation from medical faculty who are familiar with the candidate’s work in pediatrics and/or research.

All materials should be submitted to the following address:
Peter J. Smith, MD, MA
Fellowship Program Director
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