



Alberta General Practitioner in Oncology Training Program

University of Calgary

Background

Family physicians play an important role in the care of cancer patients in Alberta. In addition to seeing cancer patients in their primary care clinics, some family physicians act as clinical associates in urban cancer centre clinics, supervise chemotherapy in community cancer centres, run supportive care survivorship clinics, and help care for cancer inpatients admitted to hospital. In the past, few general practitioners in oncology (GPO) have had formal training. The Alberta General Practitioner in Oncology Training Program started in 2019.

Program Objectives

The overall goal of this program is to improve the cancer-related education of family physicians and provide them with the necessary skills to proficiently function as members of the cancer care team. Such physicians may go on to work in an urban hospital setting or oncology clinic, or may provide cancer services to patients in rural communities which are areas that generally lack oncologists.

Program Outline

The duration of the program is six months. Training will include 2 weeks of didactic teaching (usually in August or September). The remaining time will be spent in clinical learning which will primarily occur at the new Arthur Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre (ACCC). This will mainly include outpatient clinics involved in the delivery of systemic therapy for common cancers, as well as an introduction to clinics in radiation oncology and pain and symptom management. Attendance at all educational and clinical tumour board rounds related to the clinical focus of each rotation is expected.

The rotation schedules will be customized and allow learners to focus their experience in a way that prepares them for work in a particular disease site or environment. There will also be an opportunity to complete a rotation at community cancer centres in Alberta.

The last 4 weeks of training will consist on a transition to practice period where the trainee will participate in the clinics in need of GPO support to facilitate their selection of the clinics they would like to join permanently.

Preference will be given to candidates able to pursue the program on a full-time basis (in a 6 months block), but candidates may also pursue the program on a part-time basis over no more than one year over the same 26 weeks (6 months) but in blocks of 2-3 weeks to permit other professional or personal responsibilities to be fulfilled. The time commitment during the weeks of training is Monday to Friday 8:30 to 16 hs approx. There is no training over the weekends or call schedule. We would welcome applications from both family medicine residents about to complete their training as well as practicing family physicians.

Program Director

The Program Director, Dr. Gloria Roldan Urgoiti, will be accountable for all aspects of the conduct, supervision, and evaluation of the program and its participating learners. The Director will be advised by a Program Committee made up of one family physician and one medical oncologist.

Candidate Evaluations

A standardized in-training evaluation of the learner will be completed by the clinical supervisors. The Program Director and Program Committee will review the learner's evaluations and determine whether each learner has successfully completed the program. A certificate will be issued to each learner by Postgraduate Medical Education, University of Calgary upon successful completion of the program.

Faculty Evaluations

Confidential evaluations of each supervisor/rotation will be completed at the conclusion of each rotation by the learner.

Salary

Learners in this program will be paid the equivalent of a 0.5 PARA PGY-3 resident salary, which is \$3335.75 per month of training. No additional benefits will be paid. Funding will be provided through the Department of Oncology, University of Calgary and/or the Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP) where appropriate. Signing of a return of service agreement will be required. This implies starting to work as a GPO at ACCC for a year after completion of training (number of clinics to be covered will depend on need/availability at that time).

Application Process

Applicants must be registered and in good standing with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA). They must have successfully completed a two-year family medicine residency program and/or received their CCFP designation prior to commencing this program.

The date of training initiation will be discussed individually with each successful candidate.

A complete application will consist of the following:

- 1) Personal letter outlining learning and careers goals, as well as why the candidate is well suited for this GPO training program.
- 2) Current curriculum vitae.
- 3) Three signed professional letters of reference, written within three months of application.

Copy of the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) Certificate (practicing physicians) or a letter good standing from the Family Medicine Program Director (residents completing training in 2026)

Please send all application material to:

Jason Loughead

Arthur Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre

3395 Hospital Drive NW Calgary, AB, Canada T2N 5G2

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E-mail: Jason.Loughead@cancercarealberta.ca