



**Division of Palliative Care  
Department of Medicine**

**Palliative Medicine 2-year Subspecialty Residency Program**

**Background:**

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) recently recognized Palliative Medicine as a two-year subspecialty residency training program and is now accepting applications to have accredited programs in Palliative Medicine.

**Accredited Programs:**

At the moment, no university has an officially accredited subspecialty program in Palliative Medicine, but several universities have begun the application process and the RCPSC will review these applications in the fall. Some universities have not begun this process but plan to in the near future. Note that a program does not have to be accredited in order to accept applicants, or to begin training residents, but a program does need to be accredited within 11 months of the start of training in order for that training to be recognized for subspecialty certification.

For trainees who would begin subspecialty training on July 1, 2017 (applying for programs in Fall 2016), there will be four universities accepting applications (as per the program directors).

- University of British Columbia (1 position)
  - o Program Director: Dr. Charlie Chen ([Charlie.chen@ubc.com](mailto:Charlie.chen@ubc.com))
- University of Manitoba (1 position)
  - o PD: Dr. Christian LaRiviere ([clariviere@wrha.mb.ca](mailto:clariviere@wrha.mb.ca))
- University of Ottawa (1 position)
  - o PD: Dr. Chris Barnes ([CBarnes@bruyere.org](mailto:CBarnes@bruyere.org))
- Queen's University (1 position)
  - o PD: Dr. Ingrid Harle ([harlei@kgh.kari.net](mailto:harlei@kgh.kari.net))
- University of Toronto (2 positions)
  - o PD: Dr. James Downar ([james.downar@utoronto.ca](mailto:james.downar@utoronto.ca))

**Eligibility:** (from the RCPSC website)

Royal College Certification in Internal Medicine, Anesthesiology, or Neurology, or enrolment in a Royal College accredited residency program in these disciplines (see requirements for these qualifications).



Entry from other specialties may occur but must follow completion of the primary specialty training and must include the prerequisites of:

Twelve (12) months of clinical medicine-based rotations with a minimum of 6 months at a senior level designed to allow achievement of competencies in the consultation and care of complex medical patients, interprofessional care, and effective communication skills.

All candidates must be certified in their primary specialty in order to be eligible to write the Royal College certification examination in adult Palliative Medicine (which is still to be developed).

### **Eligibility Criteria:**

For funding purposes, each province has criteria that must be met by applicants apply for positions within that province. Please carefully review the British Columbia criteria when preparing to apply to the University of British Columbia's Palliative Medicine program. Please visit the CaRMS website for details regarding [provincial criteria](#).

### **The Program at UBC:**

The two-year training experience at UBC will be distributed amongst major hospitals, clinics, and services in Vancouver, the Lower Mainland, and Victoria. All facets and modes of delivery of palliative care will be explored, along with opportunities for longitudinal care of patients and families in a palliative care service and in non-malignant diseases.

Rotations may take place in any of the following institutions/services:

Vancouver General Hospital  
St. Paul's Hospital  
Surrey Memorial Hospital  
Burnaby Hospital  
Abbotsford Regional Hospital  
Cancer Agency – Vancouver (BCCA), Surrey (FVCC), Abbotsford sites  
Richmond Hospital  
Royal Jubilee Hospital  
Victoria Hospice  
Fraser Health Palliative Care Program  
Canuck Place  
Laurel Place Hospice  
Vancouver Home Hospice Palliative Care Service



The rotation schedule may look something like this:

Program Year	Content and Sequence of Rotations												
	Months or 4-Week Blocks												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
First	PCU	PCU	IPC	Med onc	Rad onc	Geri	Flex/research	Peds PC	Hospice	Med sel	Med sel	Amb PC	Amb PC
Second	PCU	IPC	Med sel	Med sel	Med sel	Selective	Selective	PCU	Home PC	Home PC	PC selective	Research	Selective

Key: PCU = Palliative Care Unit (Tertiary or Complex Care unit or equivalent)  
 IPC = In-patient Consult service (palliative care)  
 Med onc = Medical Oncology  
 Rad onc = Radiation Oncology  
 Flex = Flexible block  
 Med sel = Medical selective  
 Chosen from:  
 cardiology, critical care, gastroenterology, infectious diseases, nephrology, neurology, or  
 respirology  
 Ped PC = Pediatric palliative care  
 Amb PC = Ambulatory palliative care clinic  
 Home PC = Home palliative care  
 PC = Palliative Care

**Application Process:**

For this year, the application process will take place outside of the CaRMS Medicine Subspecialty Match (MSM). In order to simplify the application process and to avoid any issue of CaRMS-related commitments, the four universities that are accepting applicants have chosen to harmonize their application processes and timelines, with the aim of making offers and confirming successful applicants prior to the residents’ Rank Order List (ROL) submission deadline of October 27th (which is the last day that a resident can withdraw from CaRMS). This way, no applicant should have to make the difficult decision of whether to withdraw their CaRMS application without first being certain that he/she has been accepted into a Palliative



Medicine residency position.

The components and timeline for the application process will be similar to that for the CaRMS MSM:

1. **Application Submission & Deadline:** Applicants must submit completed applications no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on Friday, September 9, 2016 to the applicable residency programs:

- University of British Columbia: Dr. Charlie Chen ([charliechen@ubc.com](mailto:charliechen@ubc.com))
- University of Manitoba: Dr. Christian LaRiviere ([clariviere@wrha.mb.ca](mailto:clariviere@wrha.mb.ca))
- University of Ottawa: Dr. Chris Barnes ([CBarnes@bruyere.org](mailto:CBarnes@bruyere.org))
- Queen's University: Dr. Ingrid Harle ([harlei@kgh.kari.net](mailto:harlei@kgh.kari.net))
- University of Toronto: Dr. James Downar ([james.downar@utoronto.ca](mailto:james.downar@utoronto.ca))

Applications and supporting documents submitted after September 9, 2016 will not be considered or reviewed. Any applications missing the required documents listed below will be considered incomplete.

- **Curriculum vitae**
- **Canadian Citizenship** – submit one of the following documents to verify your citizenship
  - Canadian Birth Certificate or Act of Birth
  - Certificate of Canadian Citizenship
  - Confirmation of Permanent Residence in Canada
  - Passport page showing Canadian Citizenship
  - Canadian Permanent Resident Card (both sides)
- **Personal Statement**
- **3 reference letters (may include up to 5)**
  - One letter must come from your current program director, and we require at least one letter to come from teaching faculty with clinical exposure to the applicant. Please give some thought to your selection of referees. They should know you well and be in a position to comment on your clinical skills, knowledge and interpersonal skills. They should be able to compare your performance to the expected standard of your level, or other residents they have worked with. Letters in excess of 5 will not be reviewed; with the committee reviewing only the first 5 sequential letters in the applicant's file.



### Additional required IMG documents

- MCCEE – Statement of Results
- MCCEE – Supplemental Feedback Report
  
- Language Proficiency: Submit one of the following documents to verify your language proficiency.
  - IELTS
  - Letter of language proficiency
  - TOEFL - IBT
- Must provide proof of English or French language proficiency through ONE of the following:

Any candidate for licensure in British Columbia must have the ability to speak, read and write English to the satisfaction of the Registration Committee. (From College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC.)

Candidates are considered to have met the proficiency requirements if

1. the language of instruction at medical school was English, **and**
2. the primary language of patient care was English, **and**
3. the first and native language of the country where the candidate was granted their medical degree is English.

**Countries recognized as having English as the first and native language:**

Ascension	Pitcairn	Bahamas
Australia	Singapore	Barbados
Bermuda	South Africa	British Virgin Islands
British Antarctic Territory (BAT)	South Georgia and the South	Cayman Islands
British Indian Ocean Territory (BOIT)	Sandwich Islands	Dominica
Canada	Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia	Grenada
Falkland Islands	on Cyprus (CBA's)	Grenadines
Gibraltar	St Helena	Jamaica
Guernsey	United Kingdom	Montserrat
Guyana	United States of America	St. Kitts and Nevis
Ireland	US Virgin Islands	St. Lucia
Isle of Man	The following Caribbean Islands:	St. Vincent
Jersey	Anguilla	Trinidad and Tobago
New Zealand	Antigua and Barbuda	Turks and Caicos Islands

**Note:** Candidates who attended medical school in Quebec or the University of Ottawa where the language of instruction or the primary language of patient care was not English, must meet the current English language proficiency requirements listed below.

**Candidates who have not met the above requirements will require either a TOEFL iBT (internet-based test) or an Academic IELTS examination. Please see next page for details.**



**TOEFL iBT (internet-based test)**

- A minimum score of 24 in each of the four sections.
- To send your TOEFL score report:
  - Log into your TOEFL iBT account at [www.ets.org/toefl](http://www.ets.org/toefl)
  - Choose "Register for Test/Order Score Report" > TOEFL Services > Additional Score Report
  - Enter College's recipient code 6533, and search and select College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC
- **Note:** The College can only view this information if you authorize the College to do so using the method described above.
- A TOEFL score is valid for a period of two years from the date taken.

**OR**

**Academic IELTS examination**

- Minimum score of 7 in each component.
- Forward your Test Report Form (TRF) by including the College as one of the five institutions on your application form or order additional copies from the testing centre where the test was taken. Alternatively, you may forward your TRF number to the College, and the College can view your score through the Academic IELTS verification service.
- A TRF is valid for a period of two years from the date taken.

2. **Interview Invitations:** Programs will contact all applicants selected for an interview, via email, between Wednesday, September 14, 2016 and Friday, September 16, 2016 (inclusive).

3. **Interview Process:** Interviews will be conducted on Tuesday, October 11, 2016. In person will be preferred, but Skype or FaceTime interviews can be arranged.

4. **Rank Order List (ROL):** After interviews are conducted, both candidates and schools are to submit their ROL to Mary-Kay Whittaker [marykay.whittaker@utoronto.ca](mailto:marykay.whittaker@utoronto.ca) before 3:00 p.m. EST on Monday, October 17, 2016. Ms. Whittaker is an independent consultant who previously ran the Ontario IMG match. She is currently on contract with the University of Toronto, but will operate as a neutral third party.

5. **Match Results: Match results will be submitted to candidates and Program Directors at 12:00 p.m. EST on Tuesday, October 18, 2016.**

6. **Match Confirmation:** Candidates are to confirm their acceptances with their matched school Program Director by email as soon as reasonably possible. The deadline to confirm acceptance is 12:00 p.m. EST on Friday, October 21, 2016



### **Interview Details:**

Application files will be reviewed and scored by members of a file review committee on the basis of the personal statement, reference letters, interest in palliative medicine, interest in academic work, and the strength of the curriculum vitae/ transcript, and likelihood to continue to practice in BC after training completion. Applicants will be contacted for interviews once the files have been reviewed.

Each candidate will undergo an interview with a panel of 5 interviewers. The interview panel will include the Program Director and a current or past graduate from the conjointly accredited residency training program. Candidates will have an opportunity to ask questions about the program at the end of the interview.

Candidates who do not have an interview will not be considered for ranking.

### **Selection Criteria:**

Each school will rank its candidates using its own selection process. For UBC, A strong file, including:

- a) A well-written personal statement, outlining your reasons for applying to the subspecialty residency program.
- b) Evidence of clinical skill in palliative care from referees.
- c) Evidence of interest in palliative medicine, including at least one elective in palliative care.
- d) Evidence of interest in scholarly or academic activity in the form of current or previous projects. Note that these projects do not have to be directly relevant to palliative care; we understand that applicants may have only recently discovered a passion for Palliative Care. We are looking for interest and ability in scholarly or academic work in general.
- e) And demonstration of some commitment to continue to practice in British Columbia upon completion of the training.



Performance during the interview, including:

- a) Interpersonal and communication skill.
- b) Commitment to Palliative Medicine

The ideal candidate is a compassionate physician who has demonstrated strong clinical skills and commitment to palliative medicine, and who has shown an interest in pursuing scholarly or academic activity. If you have any questions about the application process or the residency training programs, please do not hesitate to contact one of the program directors listed above.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

***Q: What is the difference between this program and the 12-month training program that previous trainees have completed?***

**A:** The previous 12-month program (the “conjoint” program) was a training program that all final-year trainees or practicing physicians could apply to, which was conjointly accredited by the RCPSC and the CFPC. This program will no longer exist as of July 2017. This program was replaced by 2 separate programs- a 12-month certificate of added competency program accredited by the CCFP (which is intended for family medicine trainees and graduates only) and a 24-month subspecialty program accredited by the RCPSC (the program described on this web page) that allows multiple entry routes.

***Q: How do I know if I am eligible to apply for the subspecialty program?***

**A:** According to the RCPSC, trainees are eligible to apply if they have Royal College Certification in Internal Medicine, Anesthesiology, or Neurology, or enrolment in a Royal College accredited residency program in these disciplines (see requirements for these qualifications).

Entrance from other specialties may occur but must follow completion of the primary specialty training and must include twelve (12) months of clinical medicine-based rotations with a minimum of 6 months at a senior level (e.g. PGY-2 or if resident is regularly entrusted with responsibility for direct independent patient care under the supervision of and direct responsibility to a senior subspecialty resident or faculty member), designed to allow achievement of competencies in the consultation and care of complex medical patients, interprofessional care, and effective communication skills.





All candidates must be certified in their primary specialty in order to be eligible to write the Royal College certification examination in Adult Palliative Medicine.

If you are unsure whether or not your training would make you eligible to apply, do not hesitate to contact the program director.

***Q: This program has not yet been approved by the RCPSC. If there is any delay in the process and the program is not approved this fall, will I still be able to start my training in July 2017?***

**A:** A trainee can begin a training program even before the training program itself has been officially approved by the RCPSC. The program must receive approval within the first 11 months of the start of training (in this case, June 2018).

***Q: Do I need to do an elective at the host University in order to be accepted?***

**A:** We are looking for trainees who are skilled, dedicated and interested in a career in Palliative Care. This skill, dedication and interest can be demonstrated at any University. It is helpful to have completed an elective at any university where you are applying (for you as much as for the program), but this is not a requirement to be accepted into a program.