

Child Abuse Pediatrics Fellowship Program

Child Protection Program
Indiana University School of Medicine
Riley Hospital for Children

About Us

The Child Abuse Pediatrics Fellowship at Indiana University and Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis, Indiana is a 3 year ACGME accredited program. Our fellowship program offers extensive clinical subspecialty training in child abuse pediatrics at Indiana's only Level I Pediatric Trauma Center. Our 4 faculty physicians are all board certified child abuse pediatricians. Fellows will also have opportunities to work closely with a wide variety of subspecialists and community partners.

The IU Child Protection Program (CPP) was founded in 1985 and provides consultation services to children, families and professionals involved with child maltreatment. The CPP mission is to improve care, evaluation and coordination of services to children who are suspected victims of child abuse or neglect. Collaboration with professionals from other disciplines that work in this field and work with multidisciplinary teams is an important component of the CPP work. We offer:

- Comprehensive medical evaluation for children about whom abuse or neglect is suspected,
- Crisis counseling services for families,
- Professional consultation for health care providers, child protection services (CPS), law enforcement officers or other professionals,
- Expert testimony in legal settings,
- Professional education,
- Parent education,
- Prevention efforts, and
- Leadership in identifying and solving community issues dealing with child abuse.

Our Services

The *Child Abuse Consultation Service* provides comprehensive medical evaluations for children alleged to have been physically abused or neglected. For the year ending June 30, 2014 our program received a total of 4,307 consultations. Included in these were a total of 593 patient examinations (264 for physical abuse, 329 for sexual abuse) performed by our physicians at Riley Hospital for Children. In addition, CPP physicians, social workers and nurses regularly receive telephone calls and requests for consultation from CPS, law enforcement, attorneys and other professionals seeking guidance on cases they are handling. This includes the PEDS Program described below.

PEDS Program (Pediatric Evaluation and Diagnostic Services): Since 2008 in collaboration with the Indiana Department of Child Services (which houses CPS), CPP physicians have provided formal consultation for case managers for cases reported to the agency for

suspected abusive head trauma. In 2013 this program was expanded to include cases involving fractures and burns in children less than 3 years of age. The goal of the PEDS Program is to provide expert knowledge from child abuse pediatricians in order to assist case managers in differentiating abusive injuries, accidental injuries and medical conditions.

The *Pediatric Center of Hope* (child sexual abuse clinic) provides comprehensive medical evaluation for children alleged to have been sexually abused. Services are provided by pediatricians with expertise in child abuse, pediatric sexual abuse nurse examiners and pediatric social workers. Children are referred primarily by CPS, law enforcement, and health care providers. Both scheduled and acute examinations (many of the latter involving forensic evidence collection) are performed by the physicians.

Crisis Counseling Services are an extension of the Pediatric Center of Hope and bridge the gap from the time a child is referred through the typical several weeks until formal ongoing counseling is available. This program serves children and families in person and over the phone. Follow up is provided for children examined in the Pediatric Center of Hope. Consultation is also provided for children and families not actually seen in our programs at the medical center, as well as to community professionals. This program has served a tremendous need in providing support to families in the early stages of an allegation and investigation when there is much turmoil and families are not sure where to turn. Over 1500 families have received these services annually.

The *Liaison Child Abuse Forum* is a community coordination effort founded and directed by the Child Protection Program. This forum brings together Marion County CPS, law enforcement, prosecutor, and public school system representatives on a monthly basis to solve community problems in the identification, evaluation and handling of child abuse cases. This group has been responsible for developing community protocols on handling child abuse cases in schools, developing hospital guidelines for handling cases of suspected child abuse/neglect, initiating a battered women's domestic violence training protocol, and developing a protocol to address the problem of educational neglect in the community.

The *Marion County Child Fatality Review Team* was developed in 1994 under the leadership of the CPP. This team meets monthly and reviews child fatalities in Marion County to assess (1) the epidemiology of child deaths not due to natural causes, and (2) the potential to better understand child deaths and possibly their prevention. In addition to CPP physicians, social workers and other professionals, the team includes representatives from the county coroner's office, CPS, law enforcement, prosecutor's office, county health department, emergency medical services, mental health and the city's public school system.

Educational Efforts: Our team has 2 weekly multi-disciplinary case review and educational sessions. One is a review of acute sexual assault examinations and the other for review of inpatient and emergency department consultations (primarily physical abuse and neglect cases). Team members also participate in a monthly multi-disciplinary case review at the county children's advocacy center. There is ongoing education with team members and trainees (pediatrics and other residents, medical students) on a case by case basis. Team members are regularly asked to provide trainings for professionals in various disciplines. During the past year several secondary level pediatricians around the state have been identified to assist with the medical evaluations of children reported to CPS, and our weekly case review meetings opened to those physicians and nurses with the Indiana Department of Child Services who can join remotely via internet/telephone.

Goals and Objectives

The overall educational goals for the fellowship program are to provide fellows with the background knowledge, clinical and research experience necessary to allow them to deliver optimal care to the potentially abused child; and to qualify fellows for child abuse pediatrics subspecialty board certification by the American Board of Pediatrics.

General goals, each with specific objectives, are listed below according to the six ACGME core clinical competencies:

1. **Patient Care:** Fellows will become clinically proficient in the evaluation, care, and treatment of the child and adolescent victim of child abuse and neglect and will learn to function as a cooperative partner in a multidisciplinary team.
2. **Medical Knowledge:** Fellows must demonstrate broad general pediatric knowledge in addition to a comprehensive understanding of the state of the child abuse literature as it continually evolves.
3. **Interpersonal and Communication Skills:** Each fellow must be proficient in all their communications, written and verbal, for a wide variety of audiences including families, healthcare professionals, learners, investigatory professionals and those involved in legal proceedings such as attorneys, judges and jurors. Communication skills by necessity must be accurate, respectful, timely and at an appropriate level of understanding for the audience with which they are communicating.
4. **Professionalism:** Fellows must be committed to acting ethically, professionally and objectively in all their professional activities.
5. **Systems-Based Practice:** Fellows must be able to practice effectively within the larger system serving maltreated children through care coordination, advocacy for patients and their families, efforts in prevention and dissemination of knowledge to the public.
6. **Practice-Based Learning and Improvement:** Fellows will hone a personal commitment to lifelong learning and quality improvement through self-evaluation, evaluation of the evolving body of literature, peer review and quality improvement strategies.

Facilities and Resources

The IU CPP is the only program in the state of Indiana with board certified child abuse pediatricians.

Riley Hospital for Children is the only comprehensive children's hospital in the state of Indiana. Fellows benefit during their training from the following services offered at Riley Hospital: all pediatric subspecialties are represented, a Level I Pediatric Trauma Center, a pediatric burn unit, a sexual assault examination room with dedicated photo-videography equipment, a high clinical volume with exposure to a wide variety of conditions (including accidental injuries, inflicted injuries and mimics), and clinical rotations available in a wide variety of specialties and subspecialties.

During the 3 year fellowship, there are multiple opportunities for exposure to the medical-legal system. Fellows will testify in cases in which they provided medical care including juvenile hearings and criminal proceedings up to and including criminal trials. In addition, fellows will have the opportunity to provide medical-legal consultation along with a faculty member to other attorneys seeking an expert opinion, such as U.S. Attorneys, defendant's attorneys, and county prosecuting attorneys.

Fellows have learning opportunities with diverse child abuse pediatric groups. We routinely participate in teleconferences with child abuse pediatrics programs in other parts of the country. These conferences include journal clubs, fellow conferences and multi-center research studies.

Research opportunities include a wide variety of clinical and pediatric health services research in a university setting with an already existing infrastructure.

Graduate degree opportunities are available. Fellows may combine this core course work with additional courses to allow for the completion of a master's degree (examples include clinical research, public health and ethics).

Curriculum

The following is a guide to the curriculum is organized by months, which provides an approximate amount of time for each of the respective experiences. The notes which follow the outline provide further explanation.

Year 1

- Child Protection Team consult service – 6 months
- Elective – 1 month
- Community rotation – 1 month
- Research – 3 months
- Vacation – 1 month

Year 2

- Child Protection Team consult service – 5 months
- Elective – 1 month
- Community rotation – 1 month
- Research – 4 months
- Vacation – 1 month

Year 3

- Child Protection Team consult service – 4 months
- Elective – 1 month
- Community rotation – 1 month
- Research – 5 months
- Vacation – 1 month

Due to the volume of clinical consults and requests for case reviews from outside agencies, fellows typically do not spend more than 2-3 consecutive weeks at a time on the consult service. Elective and specialty clinic experiences are then scheduled during non-consult service weeks. In addition, some specialty clinics occur only once a week or once a month (e.g., metabolic bone disease / bone dysplasia clinic). Schedules will be devised such that the fellow will be able to attend these less frequent clinics multiple times over the course of their training. Therefore the fellow's schedule may not conform exactly to the classic month-long rotations.

Elective rotations may include any subspecialty, though medical toxicology is recommended for all fellows and involves a rotation with the hospital based toxicology team and time in the Poison Control Center.

Community rotations include experiences at the county child advocacy center (which houses CPS and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department's Child Abuse unit), forensic interview training, the county prosecutor's office, juvenile and criminal courts, and the local domestic violence shelter. A forensic pathology rotation, based at the local county coroner's office, is recommended for all fellows and includes experience observing autopsies, case conferences and death scene investigations.

Research months include required core graduate courses which cover clinical research methods, clinical trials, and biostatistics. These rotations also allow time for fellows to develop and complete the scholarly activity/research requirement of the American Board of Pediatrics common for all subspecialty fellows.

Finally, the following activities are ongoing throughout the fellow's training:

- Each fellow has his/her own sexual abuse clinic, one half day a week;
- Home call, once per week with one weekend a month;
- Weekly CPP case review meetings;
- Bi-monthly hospital based multidisciplinary team case review meetings;
- Monthly county child fatality review team meetings; and
- Responding to subpoenas and court appearances.

Research

There are many research opportunities at IU. The Department of Pediatrics is among the highest in NIH research funding. Our Children's Health Services Research section is one of the largest and most productive of its kind.

The clinical volume in our program also allows fellows to have ample clinical research opportunities. The IU CPP faculty physicians have co-authored more than a dozen articles published in the peer reviewed literature in the past 4 years. During this time we have also presented research abstracts at national meetings, including 2 by one of our fellows.

Our Faculty Team:

Roberta A. Hibbard, MD
Director, Section of Child Protection Programs
Professor of Pediatrics

Tara L. Harris, MD
Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics

Ralph A. Hicks, MD
Professor of Clinical Pediatrics
Fellowship Program Director

Shannon L. Thompson, MD

Assistant Professor of Clinical Pediatrics

How to Apply

Prerequisites for acceptance into the IU Child Abuse Pediatrics Fellowship Program are graduation from an accredited U.S. medical school (or for International Medical Graduates a valid unexpired ECFMG certificate) and successful completion of a 3 year accredited U.S. residency in general pediatrics. Applicants will be considered who are U.S. citizens, have permanent residence status (green card holder), or a J-1 visa.

Applications should be submitted through the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS). In addition to the MyERAS application, we require three letters of recommendation (one of which must be from the applicant's residency program director), personal statement, curriculum vitae, USMLE transcript (or COMLEX transcript for DO applicants), and ECFMG Status Report (International Medical Graduates only).

Our program participates in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) and therefore complies with the NRMP policies and rules.

Contact Us

For more information, you may call us at 317-274-2617 or email us at iucpp@iupui.edu.

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