Application and funding

Application process

- Candidates should meet with the Associate Chair of Research (Dr. Mohit Bhandari) and the SSP Director (Dr. Sheila Singh) prior to submitting an application
- Candidates should discuss their research plan with their Division Head, Program Director and with the proposed research program supervisor.
- Trainees are encouraged to apply at least 1 year in advance of entry into the research program. This allows for applications to be made for postgraduate research fellowship awards.

Funding

- Each Surgeon Scientist receives a stipend based on the MOH-funded residency year salary, at the same level he/she would have received in the clinical stream at the point of entry into SSP (ie as outlined in PAIRO-OCOTH Agreement)
- Funding is available from several sources:
  - The Ministry of Health (ie 6th year)
  - Peer-reviewed granting agencies as well as post graduate awards through the university and Post Graduate Medical Education (PGME) office. If residents obtain awards larger than their salary level, this money would be absorbed into a centralized pot that funds all trainees.
  - The division in which the resident trains is ultimately responsible for funding each trainee.
  - The PGME, through CIP, contributes to half of the graduate student fees and travel allowance.
- Administration of SSP funds and salaries is coordinated through the Department of Surgery Offices

Contact Us

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SSP Residents:

2015
- Dr. Nazari Dvirnik, PGY2 Cardiac Surgery, HRM Program at McMaster University
- Dr. Michelle Kameda-Smith, PGY2 Neurosurgery, Biochemistry Graduate Studies Program at McMaster University

2013
- Dr. Harman Chaudhry, PGY2 Orthopaedic Surgery, HRM Program at McMaster University
- Dr. Nathan Evaniew, PGY3 Orthopaedic Surgery, HRM Program at McMaster University
- Dr. Iqbal Jaffer, PGY2 Cardiac Surgery, Basic Science, McMaster University
- Dr. Raman Mundi, PGY2 Orthopaedic Surgery, HRM Program at McMaster University
Overview

Objective
The purpose of a Surgeon Scientist Program (SSP) at the Department of surgery is to provide access to excellent research training for surgical residents, and to encourage the pursuit of careers in academic surgery.

- The McMaster Surgeon Scientist Program (SSP) operates as part of McMaster's pre-established Clinical Investigator Program (CIP), a Royal College accredited postgraduate research training program.

- A new program within the Department of Surgery, the McMaster SSP provides excellent research training for surgical residents while encouraging the pursuit of careers in academic surgery.

- Research training opportunities for surgical residents are made available through McMaster's medical, biochemical and world-renowned clinical epidemiology research programs. Also, SSP provides a framework for the pursuits of graduate studies within the course of residency, as well as, secure funding at the PGY level of entry into the program.

Areas of Research
Research may be pursued in four main areas:

- Basic Sciences
- Clinical Epidemiology/ Health Research Methodology
- Medical Education/ Medical Administration/ Health Services Research
- Biotechnology/ Innovation

Admissions
Eligibility
Candidates are eligible if:

- accepted into any of the McMaster Residency programs in the Department of Surgery.
- accepted into a graduate program leading to a MSc/MEd or PhD, having applied through the Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Graduate Studies at McMaster. The applicant must enroll as a graduate student in the department with which their prospective research supervisor is affiliated (Biochemistry/Biomedical Sciences or Medical Sciences including clinical epidemiology), and are encouraged to meet with the coordinator of graduate studies in that department.

Note: a minimum of 2 years of formal research training is recommended to achieve meaningful research and adequate experience to function as an independent researcher in the future.

Relationship to Clinical Investigator Program (CIP)
The SSP operates as part of the already-established McMaster CIP, a Royal-College accredited research training program which offers:

1. Tuition support and a travel allowance through PGME
2. Alignment with research supervisors and other research trainees
3. Royal College accreditation
4. Some further funding opportunities and means to seek both internal and external funding
5. Lecture series relevant to all trainees (how to write grants, how to be a junior PI, how to design good research experiments or trials, etc)

Clinical Training
Clinical Training
- During the period of SSP research training, trainees will not have regular clinical responsibilities and are essentially free from the duties of the clinical stream of residency for 2 to 4 years.
- Students maintain a degree of contact through occasional call coverage, attendance at clinical rounds, teaching sessions and specialty clinics which provide exposure in the area of the trainee’s research.
- Protection of the trainee from clinical service duties is mandated at a departmental level, and requires the support and approval of all program directors.
- Careful evaluation of service needs are performed by each program director to ensure that SSP trainees can be allowed out of the clinical stream during the time of their graduate studies.

Research Supervisors
- The McMaster SSP assists in identifying faculty members within the Faculty of Health Sciences who serve as research supervisors, all of whom have sufficient space and funds to support the SSP trainee.
- Each trainee has a graduate student committee formed in accordance with the rules of the graduate program. The supervisor serves as chair, and the committee meets roughly twice a year. The minutes for each meeting are forwarded to the division chair, program director and Associate Chair of Research.
- In-Training Evaluation Reports are completed through CIP.