

Clinical Pharmacology

Why specialise in Clinical Pharmacology?

Christchurch is the leading site for Training in Clinical Pharmacology in New Zealand. Clinical Pharmacology is the medical specialty of use of medicines. Medicines are the main therapeutic tools of physicians and using medicines effectively is a core skill for all physicians. Formal training in clinical pharmacology encompasses all aspects of use of medicines from one individual patient, down to molecular level and up to populations and systems.

Clinical pharmacologists work toward optimal use of medicines in five domains:

1. Clinical medicine including: clinical consultation, clinical decision support, therapeutic drug monitoring, clinical toxicology.
2. Policy and governance: including medicines regulation, policy and guidelines, serving on national and local committees
3. Systems: what and how systems are used including clinical decision support; using data from past medicines use to inform future medicines use.
4. Research: both within the discipline and in supporting and advising other disciplines on research related to medicines
5. Education: undergraduate and post-graduate.

Advanced Training in Clinical Pharmacology is well suited to dual training. Research is integral to the discipline and a research degree is supported as part of Advanced Training in Clinical Pharmacology.

Career prospects

There are currently shortages of Clinical Pharmacologists worldwide, including Australia and NZ. Appointments are often joint appointments to Hospital and University. Clinical Pharmacologists are employed by other organisations such as Government and the pharmaceutical industry.

Medical kaimahi (staff) in our service

The service has four clinical pharmacologists: A/Prof Matt Doogue, Dr Paul Chin, Dr Richard McNeill and Prof Murray Barclay and up to two registrars.

All about our service

We are a multi-disciplinary department with specialist doctors and pharmacists. Services include Medicines Information, Medicines Utilisation, Clinical Decision Support, Therapeutic Drug Monitoring and Clinical Consultation. Locally, we have functional relationships with a range of clinical specialities and Business Intelligence and Data Analytics. We are responsible for a range of clinical resources for clinicians and patients. Staff have lead roles in medicines governance, including national roles. Currently, the implementation and ongoing development of electronic medicines systems and use of medicines data is a major focus of the department. These activities are transitioning from district to regional and national tasks as Health NZ moves to common systems and processes.

Within the University we coordinate and teach Clinical Pharmacology, mainly to 5th and 6th-year medical students. Staff are encouraged to undertake higher degrees (Masters, PhDs). The department is research active in several high-quality research collaborations.

The registrar participates in all department activities and the role is tailored to the needs of individual trainees.

Training in our service

The department is accredited for full-time core training in Clinical Pharmacology. Trainee activities are directly aligned to the RACP curriculum. There are educational, research and productivity-related meetings each week, in which all staff actively participate.

Research

Research is a high priority of the department, through our University alignment. It is focused on improving medicines use through individualising regimens (medicines, dosing, & monitoring). Particular areas of interest include clinical decision support, clinical informatics, therapeutic drug monitoring, and adverse drug reactions. The Department produces 10-15 publications per year. Registrars are expected to complete at least one research project per training year and are supported to present their research projects at national and international conferences and to publish in international journals.

SMO / Kaimahi (staff) support

Our registrars have their own workspaces and work closely with the SMOs. The position is training focused and registrars are encouraged and supported to attend Australasian training meetings as well as use local training opportunities. Trainee initiatives are supported and encouraged.

We are one of the leading Clinical Pharmacology Centres in Australasia.

Enquiries

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