

Neurology

Why specialise in Neurology?

Neurology involves the diagnosis and management of patients with disorders of the brain and nervous system, including muscle. It provides a stimulating career with an enormous variety and the opportunity to make use of both the fundamentals of clinical skills in history and examination and the latest in technological advances in diagnostics and treatments to make a difference in people's lives. Neurology is a rapidly evolving field with a strong emphasis on basic and clinical research.

Career prospects

There is currently a shortage of neurologists in New Zealand with demand for neurological services increasing in New Zealand and internationally. Career prospects for trainees are excellent. Most neurologists in New Zealand have a specialist practice in general neurology. There is opportunity and encouragement for further subspecialty training also. Combined training with general medicine and neurology is possible and is a highly sought-after skill mix in Provincial centres. Neurology is desirable in General Medicine and Geriatric Medicine training also.

Medical kaimahi (staff) in our service

We have 8 Neurologists, 3 Registrars and 2 House Officers.

All about our service

We provide inpatient and outpatient Neurological services for people within the Canterbury District Health Board region and tertiary-level services for adjacent DHBs. Inpatient services are based in ward B8, which is shared with the Department of Neurosurgery. All out patients clinics run from the outpatient building. Neurophysiology (EEG, nerve conduction, EMG) is in the Neurology/Neurosurgery department, 3rd floor, Riverside Building.

Registrars appointed to the service rotate between the "acute" and "ward" and "consult" registrar positions. The acute registrar responds to new referrals from GPs, Emergency Department and attends the neurology rapid response clinics. The consult registrar performs inpatient ward consultations and sees new patients at the neurology outpatient clinics. The acute and consult registrars are supervised by the acute neurologist for the week. The ward registrar supervises the ward House Officers and the day-to-day care of neurology inpatients, and works closely with the neurology ward consultant.

Training in our service

Training is a fundamental part of our service. RMOs enjoy good access to consultant staff for supervision. We have a weekly department education meeting which

incorporates neurophysiology review sessions and monthly combined clinical education meeting with the neurosurgery service. There is a weekly neuroradiology review meeting also. Advanced trainees in neurology have the opportunity to perform nerve conduction studies / EMG and report EEG to meet their training requirements. We have an active acute stroke interventional service in Christchurch: trainees can get the opportunity to participate hand-on in interventional cases if they wish to pursue a stroke subspecialty pathway.

Research

The department is frequently involved in clinical research, for example in M.S., P.D. and Stroke. Registrars are encouraged to take part in research projects that will help them to fulfil their training requirements and/or lead to journal publications.

SMO / Kaimahi (staff)

Support Neurology SMOs are rostered to enable ease of access for supervision of junior staff. The acute neurologist is available immediately by cell-phone at all times, including after-hours. The ward neurologist performs two full ward-rounds each week and is available to review new admissions to the service and others as required every work day.

Advantages to training in Neurology, Canterbury District Health Board

Christchurch has one of the largest neurology services in New Zealand and provides an excellent living, working, and training environment. Advanced trainees in Neurology will have the opportunity to complement their Christchurch training with posts to other centres in NZ or Australia also, through the neurology “match” scheme.

Enquiries

Dr John N Fink

Clinical Director

Phone: (+64 3) 364 0940

Email: john.fink@cdhb.health.nz