

Psychiatry Services

Haere mai, welcome

Canterbury District is a great place to further your interest in psychiatry, whether you are looking for a junior post to further your skills and knowledge of mental health, aiming for Fellowship of the RANZCP and work as a Consultant Psychiatrist, or wanting to pursue sub-specialty training as a more senior RMO.

Why specialise in Psychiatry?

Psychiatry suits people who are genuinely curious about what makes people “tick”, who prefer to use themselves as the primary therapeutic tool rather than rely on medical technologies, and who enjoy complex problem-solving. Maintaining a holistic view of health and illness is important in all of medicine but particularly important in psychiatry.

Psychotherapeutic interactions are just as important as understanding psychopharmacology - and social systems are as important as biology. Although effectively working in a clinical team is a key value in medicine, it is absolutely critical in psychiatry. It is important to develop and hold on to excellent general medical skills, but psychiatrists must routinely use a range of other skills as well, in a wide variety of inpatient and outpatient settings. So, if you are interested in a specialty where taking time to hear the patient’s story and thinking deeply about what is really going on is not only encouraged but expected, then psychiatry may be for you.

Career prospects

New Zealand has a shortage of psychiatrists and job availability in this country is likely to remain high for years to come. Many psychiatric sub-specialties are also going to be looking for skilled consultants for the foreseeable future. Other specialties value doctors with psychiatric experience because mental illnesses are common in the community.

Medical staff in our service

Training positions include:

12 H/O positions for PGY1 or 2 (4 are suitable for PGY1, all are suitable for PGY2). Up to 26 training positions for registrars are currently available. These are all College-accredited positions and include Advanced Trainee positions in the RANZCP’s Advanced Training Certificates (sub-specialties). An additional non-training relief position is also available to enable further experience of working in psychiatry, principally our inpatient adult psychiatric unit. More positions can sometimes be made available as required. Satellite training positions are also available in Nelson by negotiation.

All about our service

Most psychiatry services are provided by the Specialist Mental Health Services and specialist psychiatry services to older people are provided by Older Persons Health.

RMOs are team-based, with designated Consultant supervisors at H/O and Registrar levels. Some of the strengths of CDHB training are the provision of teaching and expert supervision to all levels of RMOs and the wide variety of sub-specialty rotations available, especially to registrars. Our services are some of the largest and busiest in the country and include some tertiary referral services for the South Island.

Training in our service

Although our House Officer positions do include more medically oriented duties, most of the rotations include a psychiatric case management role with our patients and individual clinical supervision provided to support this. Our Hillmorton H/Os also receive group supervision, and psychiatry tutorial teaching sessions are offered at Hillmorton and in Psychiatry of Old Age.

Registrars are all involved in a half day per week release training programme with a dedicated Training Programme - the “Walshe Centre”. College training and professional development is personally managed by a Director of Training.

In addition, ‘grand round’ and Academic Department meetings are also available.

SMO / Kaimahi (staff) support

Our Directors of Training, consultants, teams and trainees are very supportive. After hours support is also readily available from registrars and consultants.

Research

The training programme is closely linked with the University of Otago, Christchurch. The university Department of Psychological Medicine has a high research ranking and jointly runs a clinical research unit with the Canterbury District. In addition, the Canterbury District operates a Psychiatry of Old Age Academic Unit, and Consultants and teams are also involved in other independent research and audit projects.

Registrars are encouraged to take part!

Advantages to training in psychiatry at Health NZ Canterbury Waitaha

- The Canterbury district is very supportive of psychiatry training at all RMO levels.
- Training is closely linked in with the university’s Department of Psychological Medicine, which is internationally recognised as a strong research department.
- The programme is large enough to cover a wide range of interesting rotations.
- However, the programme is also small enough that trainees can form a supportive cohesive group and get to know the Consultant body.

- Exam pass rates for formal College training are good.
- Training is well supported by a dedicated training unit - the Walshe Centre.

Enquiries

Take the time to look at our

website: www.otago.ac.nz/christchurch/departments/psychmed/registrartesting

Please direct any enquiries to:

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