



## THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

### Fellowship in Clinical Hematology

The Department of Hematology and Oncology has over the years established its position as the leading cancer care service provider in the region. Realizing the need for a training program of recognized caliber in the field of Clinical Hematology, the University launched a competency-based training program in Adult Clinical Hematology which started in January 2023.

This highly competitive program is the first of its kind in East Africa specific to clinical hematology with a focus on both benign as well as malignant hematology and exposure to hematopathology and blood banking. A 3-month rotation to a partner institution is envisioned as part of the curriculum, as is dedicated training in clinical trials. The fellowship aims to train qualified physicians to become academic clinical hematologists who are highly skilled, knowledgeable, and groomed to become the next generation of top-notch educational leaders.

The department of hematology-oncology includes multi-disciplinary faculty in the field of hematology, medical oncology, radiation oncology, and supportive/palliative care. A dedicated service for the treatment of acute leukemias and autologous bone marrow transplanting is slated to begin in 2023. The training program will focus on competencies necessary for data-driven best practices in the delivery of compassionate care to cancer patients. The fellowship will also include training in research and teaching both UGME and PGME students.

#### Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of this program is to provide the trainee with a broad understanding of clinical and academic principles in the practice of clinical hematology. Fellows will have direct hands-on experiences in all aspects of their training, guided by our competency-based curriculum. Fellows enjoy the patient diversity of a tertiary care teaching hospital, with the facilities, amenities, and support of the only JCIA-accredited hospital in the region.

The Program intends to produce highly skilled physicians in the field of clinical hematology, who are fully capable of providing service for the country and the region, trained in clinical research, and contribute to meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals for sub-Saharan Africa

By the end of the training program, the fellow should be able to:

- Provide specialized clinical care in comprehensive benign as well as malignant hematology.
- Become knowledgeable in the art and science of stem cell transplantation within the context of the LMIC
- Carry out independent clinical research
- Provide training and mentorship to other healthcare workers
- Lead and manage clinical hematologic services and training programs
- Contribute to population-based cancer policies and practices relevant to blood disorders

- Develop professionalism and ethics of hematology practice
- Understand and Practice the global standards of care in the local context and provide patient-centered, passionate personal care to every individual patient being taken care of.

The program will be based specifically at the flagship Aga Khan University hospital in Nairobi which houses the core facilities and personnel necessary for such a training program. In addition, while the medical oncology fellowship does cover hematologic malignancies to some degree, the clinical adult hematology fellowship will be specifically directed at training in adult hematologic malignancies (leukemia/lymphoma/Myeloma/Myeloproliferative disorders and the broader spectrum of non-malignant adult hematologic disorders ranging from anemias, immune cytopenia, bleeding and clotting disorders as well as disorders of the hematopoietic system resulting from hereditary disorders (sickle cell disease, thalassemia). Thus, the curriculum design is geared to include training in clinical hematology as well as developing competence in diagnostic hematology and hematopathology, blood banking and blood transfusion, and coagulation. Part of the impetus to train our own cadre of hematologists is the need to develop and establish our Bone Marrow Transplant and Stem Cell Program since currently there is no such service available in the entire SSA region. As part of the proposed fellowship, the trainee will rotate for 3 months in the bone marrow transplant unit at Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi. There are formative and summative assessments throughout the program.

### **Scope after Graduation from the Program**

The intensive core curriculum of the fellowship with its internal and external rotations and competency assessment-based evaluation guarantees that fellows are trained to a comprehensive international standard of training in clinical hematology. As per the track record of the Aga Khan University's training programs, our fellows are expected to be highly sought-after physicians upon completion of training.

### **Administrative Set-up**

The program will be directed by an experienced senior faculty member, who will have sufficient administrative and academic staff support. Duration and Outline of Training the Clinical Hematology fellowship training is a three-year program. It is comprised of core training in both inpatient and outpatient hematology, with rotations in pediatric hematology, medical oncology, radiation oncology, supportive and palliative care as well as electives within and/or outside the country.

### **On-call and other duties**

The Fellowship will include on-call responsibilities attending oncology emergencies and will include participation in academic activities, including tumor boards and journal clubs.

### **Evaluation and Assessments Process**

The fellow will sit an interim exam after the first year and an exit exam at the end of the third and final year, with successful qualification leading to the Award of “Clinical Fellow in Clinical Hematology” from the Aga Khan University.

### **Research**

Research is an integral component of the fellowship program. Fellows will have the opportunity to rotate in the Cancer Research Unit (CRU), led by high-profile researchers and involved in multiple-level clinical trials. The fellow is also required to have published at least two peer-reviewed research papers during the training program to qualify.

## **Desirable Personal Attributes**

- Demonstrated competency and dexterity with all equipment utilized in the hospital environment
- Good communication skills
- A good team player
- A keen learner with good study habits
- Demonstrated honesty, integrity, compassion, and respect for diversity, and applies ethical principles appropriately
- Seeks and accepts advice and adheres to deadlines
- Punctual and respects commitments made

## **Eligibility for application**

Applicants for the fellowship must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements:

- i. Be a holder of a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) or equivalent at the undergraduate level
- ii. Hold a master's degree in medicine or an equivalent postgraduate qualification
- iii. Be registered by the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Council in Kenya, or equivalent registration in the home country
- iv. Have at least 4 years of post-internship experience

## **How to Apply**

Applications should include a cover letter, statement of motivation, detailed current Curriculum Vitae including names, postal and e-mail addresses, telephone numbers of two professional referees, and testimonials. Short-listed candidates will be contacted and invited to interview. The application should be sent by email to:

The Program Coordinator

Clinical Hematology; Department of Hematology-Oncology

Aga Khan University

Email: [mc.ea@aku.edu](mailto:mc.ea@aku.edu)

**The closing date for applications is November 8, 2024**