



AT THE FOREFRONT  
**UChicago**  
**Medicine**



University of Chicago Medicine

Acute Care Occupational Therapy Fellowship Program

**Mission of Occupational Therapy Fellowship Program:**

The mission of University of Chicago Medical Center Occupational Therapy Fellowship program is to provide a professional development opportunity to prepare occupational therapists to become a board certified clinical specialist in the area of physical rehabilitation through didactic education, participation in research, professionally mentored patient care experiences and independent patient care. The programs will emphasize the development of advanced psychomotor skills, theoretical rationales, evidence based techniques, and complex clinical reasoning to enhance the fellow's ability to evaluate and treat patients with complex medical conditions in an acute care setting. The program graduate will be an occupational therapist clinical specialist who will be an ongoing resource for the University of Chicago Medical Center and the occupational therapy and medical community by promoting rehabilitation, health, and wellness, for the persons they serve.

**The Goals of the Occupational Therapy Fellowship Programs at UChicago Medicine are:**

To provide a post professional, specialty defined (physical disabilities) educational experience to occupational therapists who will be better able to:

1. Utilize current evidence- based Occupational Therapy information to make accurate Occupational Therapy plan of care
2. Apply advanced occupational therapy interventions for an occupational therapy episode of care for a variety of conditions treated in the acute care setting
3. Demonstrate the communication/collaboration skills with the members of the multidisciplinary team and the patient, needed to care for a person with disorders of body structure or function, activity limitations or participation restrictions
4. Provide health and wellness or injury prevention programs and/or educational presentations for persons in the community as it relates to movement, development, activities of daily living and other related Occupational Therapy topics
5. Participate in the development of new or innovative Occupational Therapy techniques and the collection of evidence to support the effectiveness of those techniques to enhance the practice of Occupational Therapy in the acute care environment

6. Contribute to the Occupational Therapy profession through, teaching, research, publication and presentations

### **Curriculum:**

Schedule for education curriculum

- 53 weeks/ fellowship year:
  - 5 weeks orientation
  - 2 weeks non education time at holidays
  - 46 weeks for education.

*Note the 6 weeks of non-education time are still included in fellowship hours, these weeks are 100% patient care and this time is calculated in total fellowship hours.*

Breakdown of teaching hours during the 46 education weeks:

Approximately: 14 hours education, 26 hours treating per week

- **Clinical Practice:** 40 hours per week during orientation and holidays, 26 hours per week during educational weeks = 1410 hours
- **Coursework Didactic Learning and Lab:** 3 hours a week x 46 weeks (lectures and labs) = 138 hours
- **Direct Patient Mentoring:** 4.5 hours a week x 46 weeks (one on one with faculty) = minimum 150 (target 207 hours)
- **Clinical Investigations:** 2 hours a week x 46 weeks (functional measures, tracking of patient scores, research, journal clubs, peer reviews, grand rounds, case reviews) = 115 hours
- **Specialty Practice Observation:** 4 hours/week (MD clinics/surgery) = 184 hours

Total hours for program: 1992 scheduled

### **Outline of Acute Care Fellowship Educational Modules:**

- Principles of Rehabilitation and Clinical Reasoning
- Evidenced Based Practice and Critical Appraisal of Clinical Research
- Orthopedic conditions
- Cardiothoracic Surgery
- General Medicine
- Burns, Plastic Surgery and ENT
- Critical Care
- Neuro/Neurosurgical conditions
- Hematology/Oncology
- Trauma
- General Surgery

**Hours:**

The majority of on-site fellowship activities occur Monday through Friday between the hours of 7AM and 6 PM. Fellows are considered to be exempt employees who are salaried. Their work schedule will be flexible and allow for patient care, training, mentoring, and study time and preparation. Schedules are coordinated by the fellowship program coordinator and shall not exceed expectation of more than 50 hours/week of direct program participation. There will be additional personal study time required.

**Weekend Coverage:**

Occupational Therapy Fellows will be scheduled to work weekends on a rotating basis, approximately one weekend/4 weeks. This time will be tracked as patient care hours.

**Professional Liability Insurance:**

As an employee of the UCMC, a fellow is covered by the organization's professional liability policy. This coverage extends only to those activities that are required by their participation in the program. All fellows are encouraged to carry their own personal professional liability coverage.

**Salary:**

As a fellow in the program, your salary for the year of the fellowship program is set according to the cost of maintaining the program. Currently the salary is \$54,000 (as of 2022 class).

Other than the \$300 continuing education benefit from the institution (available after probation), there are no additional monies allocated for outside continuing education, tuition reimbursement, travel or parking fees to any observations/ outside facilities, living expenses, licensure fees, or professional dues. Supplemental work opportunities, covering inpatient weekends are available with additional pay for any fellow whose fellowship expectations are being met. This opportunity is voluntary.

## **UChicago Medicine Occupational Therapy Fellowship**

### **Paid Time Off (PTO) Guidelines**

Occupational Therapy Fellows are full time employees of the University of Chicago Medical Center. They will be eligible to take 5 days of paid time off, with the approval of the fellowship program coordinator and the assistant director. 7 organizational holidays will also be paid; New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Because of the extensive education and curriculum pieces of the fellowship positions it is very challenging to provide the fellows with extended time (more than 1-2 consecutive work days) off throughout their program.

#### **Paid Time Off:**

- Paid days off will be scheduled with the approval of the fellow's manager and the Occupational Therapy Fellowship Program Coordinator. Unscheduled days off (such as sick, emergency, etc.) must also be approved by the fellowship program coordinator and will be deducted from the PTO bank.
- Any unpaid time (beyond the 5 days) will be granted only for an approved emergency leave, by the Therapy Services Director.
- New employees of the Therapy Services Department are encouraged not to take paid days off during their first 6 months of employment. This is considered probationary time.
- All paid time off must be taken within the time frame of the fellowship program commitment.
- Time off from the fellowship may be allowed if:
  - Staffing allows adequate patient care coverage
  - Time is requested a minimum of 4 weeks ahead of scheduled day off
  - The fellow may need to work additional hours before and after a scheduled day off to assure that all educational pieces and patient care obligations are achieved.

#### **Sick Days:**

- All employees are asked to not put patients and co-workers at risk by attending work if they are ill.
- If a fellow is sick, they need to call the department 773-702-6891 and leave a voicemail message on the main number prior to 7AM of their scheduled day of work. If possible therapists are also asked to provide information to assist re-scheduling their patients.
- If sick time taken exceeds amount of PTO days (5) or if a pattern is noticed, time off will be discussed with the resident. A doctors' note may be required any time abuse of sick time is suspected

## How to Apply

### **Eligibility:**

Occupational Therapists licensed or eligible for licensure, in the state of Illinois, are encouraged to apply. **Only occupational therapists licensed in the state of Illinois will be hired.**

**The application must include a letter of intent, curriculum vitae, 3 letters of recommendation, and an online UChicago Medicine application.**

- The letter of intent must include the following: 1) goals/objectives for the fellowship program, 2) a summary of prior clinical and educational experience and 3) short and long term goals for an acute care specialty
- Please include current curriculum vitae or resume.
- The 3 letters of recommendation must include two of the following:
  - 1) Current or former supervisor, (if a recent graduate; from a current or former clinical instructor)
  - 2) Instructor/faculty member from an accredited occupational therapy program
  - 3) A health care provider with whom the occupational therapist has worked in the past year.

**Complete an OT fellow application online at:**

<http://www.uchospitals.edu/jobs/index.html>

You will be emailed a specific OT fellow job description.

### **Interviews:**

Top candidates will be interviewed initially via phone; second interviews will be completed on the University of Chicago Medical Campus in May of the application year. All interviews will include behavioral and clinical questions. Please be prepared to discuss research ideas and to demonstrate patient interactions and treatment plans.

The completed application should be forwarded electronically via email no later April 1<sup>st</sup> of the application year to:

**Cheryl Esbrook, OTR/L, BCPR  
UChicago Medicine  
5841 South Maryland Avenue, MC 1081  
Chicago, IL 60637  
Voicemail 773-795-7134  
Fax 773-702-5340  
E-mail: [cheryl.esbrook@uchospitals.edu](mailto:cheryl.esbrook@uchospitals.edu)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

**1. As a full time employee at the hospital, how is the fellow compensated? Is there a separate fellow rate during fellowship hours? Or is the fellow on a "normal" salary with additional years of commitment after the fellowship ends? Is there tuition involved or is it waived by being a full time employee?**

The fellowship position is a full time salaried position. The level of compensation is less than a full time treating therapist and the difference in pay is what it costs UCM to educate the fellow. There are not additional years of commitment from the fellow or the organization upon completion of the program. Health care benefits are provided during the year of training.

**2. How many fellows are accepted annually?**

2 fellows are accepted annually

**3. Are the 3 hours of didactic coursework each week in a classroom format? If so, is that during the working week or on the weekend?**

This is generally presented during the work week, occasionally on a weekend if faculty schedule requires however, this occurs rarely.

**4. Who are the faculty of this program and who are the mentors?**

Faculty and mentors are the same – most are employees of UCMC and for some sections we have additional faculty from outside clinics. Faculty involved in the program have extensive experience in acute care and specifically with the patient population involved in each module. During each section the faculty who is teaching is also mentoring the fellow for at least 4-5 hours/week

**5. As far as the letters of recommendation, are they to be sent to you directly by the writers or should it come with the rest of my application in the same packet?**

All materials are preferred to come electronically via email. The writers of the letters of recommendation must send the letter from their email.

**6. Do fellows work weekends?**

Yes, fellows work weekends which is usually one weekend every 4 weeks. Comp days are given for the weekend time and fellows are encouraged to take their comp time within the month.

**7. Does the University of Chicago affiliate with an Occupational Therapy School and require teaching in the University setting?**

The University of Chicago does not have an OT program which it is affiliated with for teaching. We do have a medical school at the University of Chicago and the occupational therapy fellows are involved in teaching medical fellows from various services as well as nurses and other health professionals. We also take a large number of OT students throughout the year for clinical rotations.

**8. Is the OT fellowship the same as the previous OT residency UCM offered?**

Yes, the content is the same however; AOTA has updated the terminology to fellowship. For more information <https://www.aota.org/Education-Careers/Advance-Career/fellowship.aspx>