

University of Alberta Advanced Head & Neck Oncologic and Microvascular Reconstructive Surgery Fellowship.

**Number of Fellowships:** 1

**Duration (in years) / Type:** 1-2 years /

**Faculty:**

Daniel A. O'Connell M.D. M.S.c

Hadi Seikaly M.D. M.A.L

Jeffrey R. Harris, M.D. M.H.A.

Vincent Biron, M.D. PhD

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Mike Allegretto, M.D.

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Naresh Jha, M.D.

John Walker M.D.

Rufus Scrimger, M.D.

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Martin Osswald DDS

Suresh Nayer DDS

Erin Wright, M.D.

Fellowship Director: Dr. Dan O'Connell – [dan.oconnell@ualberta.ca](mailto:dan.oconnell@ualberta.ca)

Program Co-ordinator: Ms. Jessica Phair – [Jessica.phair@ahs.ca](mailto:Jessica.phair@ahs.ca)

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

**Overview:** The Fundamental Components of the Fellowship are as follows:

1. The fellow will participate in the evaluation, management and care of a minimum of 400 head and neck neoplasm cases (benign or malignant, including endocrine and salivary gland).
2. Participation in a minimum of 300 surgical procedures, representing the full scope of head and neck surgical oncology.
3. Participation in approximately 30-40 transoral robotic surgical (TORS) procedures on oropharyngeal malignancies.
4. Intensive exposure to the interdisciplinary management of head and neck oncologic patients (regular tumor board participation).
5. Participation in the development and implementation of head and neck oncologic research.

**Objectives:** The goal of this Fellowship is to provide comprehensive, multidisciplinary training to individuals who are committed to a career in head and neck surgical oncology. The fellowship training will provide a broad exposure to the full range of clinical problems encountered in a tertiary head and neck oncology practice. Upon completion of a one-year fellowship, the surgeon will possess the following characteristics:

1. Expertise in the multidisciplinary management of patients with head and neck cancer
2. Knowledge and skills in skull base surgery.
3. Knowledge and skills in microvascular free flap reconstruction.
4. Board-based knowledge and comprehension of principles of: radiation oncology, medical oncology, maxillofacial prosthetics, oncologic nutrition, head and neck pathology, diagnostic radiology/nuclear medicine and rehabilitation of speech and swallowing.
5. Expertise in conservation and surgical procedures.
6. Judgment and ability to perform complex tumor resections and an understanding of the technical limitations of the procedures.
7. Comprehension of head and neck cancer biology.
8. Appreciation of scientific methodology, study design, clinical trials and data analysis.
9. Ability to practice effectively in an academic, tertiary care setting and to participate in medical education and translational research.

**Strengths:** The Advanced Head and Neck Oncology and Microvascular Reconstruction Fellowship at the University of Alberta provides a high volume experience in the treatment of patients. In addition to resections, the fellow can expect to perform a minimum of 100 microvascular reconstructions in their one-year fellowship. The fellow will also be exposed to a wide variety of transoral surgical approaches to oropharyngeal cancers including transoral robotics (TORS). Research opportunities are available and encouraged. Involvement in our prospective functional outcomes lab is expected and will provide an excellent opportunity to learn an appropriate and comprehensive approach to treating patients in a manner to provide optimal function and survival.

**Fellows' Duties/Responsibilities:** Completion of an Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, General Surgery, or General Plastic Surgery residency training program. Documented experience and ability in the management of head and neck cancer patients, through letters of reference and the applicants' personal statement, are required. Successful completion of an interview with the Fellowship Director is also required. Ideally, this will include a one or two week elective at the University of Alberta hospital. This will allow the candidate an opportunity to evaluate the program as well as allowing the faculty an opportunity to evaluate the candidate.

**Research Opportunities:** It is expected that all fellows will be involved in clinical research projects and participate in the presentation/publication of the results. It is recommended that fellows in 24-month programs should have dedicated (protected or block) time available for laboratory research.

There is a strong expectation for research productivity from the Head and Neck Oncology Fellow. At the very least, we expect publication of one paper and a presentation at our Canadian Society of Otolaryngology meeting. Our preference is to have multiple publications as well as several presentations over the course of the

year. There is dedicated research time for the fellow, giving them a minimum ½ day a week available for academic and research activities.

## **PAST FELLOWS**

The Advanced Head and Neck Oncology and Microvascular Reconstruction Fellowship's goal is to train surgeons for academic careers in Head and Neck Oncology. All of our fellows have gone on to careers in academic medicine. Contact information for prior fellows is available through the program director and we encourage candidates to contact our fellows to discuss the fellowship experience.