

Roles & Responsibilities of Neonatal-Perinatal Fellows, Mentors, and the Scholarly Oversight Committee (SOC)

A scholarly work product is required to be eligible for Neonatal-Perinatal board certification. Fellows must pursue Scholarly Activity under the guidance of the program director and a Scholarship Oversight Committee (SOC) to:

- Acquire critical analysis skills
- Assimilate new knowledge, concepts, and techniques related to the field of one's practice
- Formulate clear and testable questions to be prepared to advance research in pediatrics
- Translate ideas into written and oral forms as teachers
- Serve as consultants for colleagues in other medical or scientific specialties
- Develop as leaders in their fields

With these objectives in mind, we have expectations for the roles and responsibilities of the fellow, the mentor, and the scholarship oversight committee.

Fellows will meet regularly with mentors: At least monthly either in person, by Zoom, or by phone. Summary notes from these meetings will be kept by fellows with an action plan of work/updates of activity; these will facilitate submission of updates to the SOC.

Timeline: The fellow will develop a monthly timeline for his/her research work which will be agreed upon by both the fellow and the mentor within the first month of the relationship. Scholarly activity goals (i.e. submit IRB, finish preparatory coursework, enroll patients, learn requisite skills, write manuscript, submit abstracts, etc.) should be included in this timeline. This timeline should be kept on file by both the mentor and fellow, updated as necessary and shared with the Program Director and Scholarly Oversight Committee for review.

Expectations for the Work Product: There are broad options for the scholarly work product; there is flexibility in the type of activities, allowing trainees to choose a project that best fits interests and the resources available at the program. The project is expected to be of sufficient academic rigor, and fellows are expected to engage in projects in which they develop hypotheses or in projects of substantive scholarly exploration and analysis that require critical thinking. Areas in which scholarly activity may be pursued include, but are not limited to: basic, clinical, or translational biomedicine; health services; quality improvement; bioethics; education; and public policy.

In addition to biomedical research, examples of acceptable activities might include a critical meta-analysis of the literature, a systematic review of clinical practice with the scope and rigor of a Cochrane review, a critical analysis of public policy relevant to the subspecialty, or a curriculum development project with an assessment component. Abstracts, case reports, and general review articles may not meet the requirement for sufficient rigor. These activities require active participation by the fellow and must be mentored. The mentor(s) will be responsible for providing the ongoing feedback essential to the trainee's development. Involvement in scholarly activities must result in the generation of a specific written "work product."

Examples of work products include, but are not limited to:

- A peer-reviewed publication in which a fellow played a substantial role
- An in-depth manuscript describing a completed project
- A thesis or dissertation written in connection with the pursuit of an advanced degree
- An extramural grant application that has either been accepted or favorably reviewed
- A progress report for projects of exceptional complexity, such as a multi-year clinical trial

Scholarship Oversight Committee (SOC): will advise, guide and assess the trainee's pursuit of scholarly activity. An SOC must be in place for each fellow and will meet with the fellow once during the first year and twice during the second and third years, according to ACGME requirements. The SOC must consist of **at least three members**, with at least one member of the SOC from outside the division of Neonatology.

An SOC member may serve on the SOC for more than one fellow. The fellowship program director may serve as a trainee's mentor and participate in the activities of the oversight committee, but should not be a standing (i.e., voting) member. It is acceptable for an SOC member to be outside of the trainee's institution, if he/she demonstrates sufficient engagement with the trainee and the other members and there is ample communication throughout the period of scholarly oversight.

The SOC Should:

1. Determine whether a specific activity is appropriate to meet the ABP's guidelines for scholarly activity
2. Determine a course of preparation beyond the core fellowship curriculum to ensure successful completion of the project
3. Evaluate the fellow's progress and inform the program director on the fellow's progress
4. Require the fellow to present/defend the project
5. Assess whether the fellow has satisfactorily met the requirement for active participation in scholarly activities.

SOC Meetings: The fellow will prepare a brief summary of the project (including an updated copy of their timeline) prior to the meeting, which will be distributed to the SOC in advance. A copy of all final IRB and grant applications involving fellows should be submitted to the Program Coordinator as well.

The fellow and mentor will choose an SOC Chair (who cannot be the mentor) to facilitate the meetings and submit a report. The SOC Chair will submit a report of the progress of the fellow's scholarly activity after every scholarly oversight committee meeting. Please use this [template](#). These documents should be signed by all SOC members and submitted to the Program Coordinator and Director.

At each meeting the fellow will present the scholarly activity to the group. Mentors are to be present during the portion of the scholarly oversight committee meeting when their mentee's progress is being discussed. The SOC committee will also meet with the mentor and mentee individually during the SOC meeting to assess the mentor-mentee relationship.

Near the end of training the fellow will submit the scholarly work product to the SOC at least 30-45 days prior to graduation and the SOC will convene at least 30 days prior to graduation to decide if the final work product meets the requirement for scholarly activity. The final month of fellowship, the fellow will present the completed project to all Neonatology faculty.

Opportunities to present scholarly work:

All Neonatal-Perinatal fellows will submit abstracts for:

[WSPR conference](#) during their 2nd year of fellowship

Abstracts due September, conference usually the last week of January

[VON](#) and/or [PAS](#) conferences during their 3rd year of fellowship

For VON, QI abstracts due May, conference usually September

For PAS, abstracts due November/December, conference in May

Other opportunities include:

California Association of Neonatologists, Cool Topics (abstracts due mid-January, conference March)

[AAP District VIII Section on Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine Meeting](#) (abstracts due March, conference last weekend Thursday-Sunday June)

[CHNC Annual Quality, Research & Educational Symposium](#) (abstracts due March, conference November)

AAP Section on Neonatal Perinatal Medicine (SONPM) sponsored fellows research conferences:

Regional Western Conference on Perinatal Research in Indian Wells, CA (abstracts due December, conference 1st Wednesday-Friday in January). Any number of fellows may apply from each fellowship program. The regional conference provides an opportunity for fellow attendees to give a platform presentation of their research.

National Fellows Seminar on Perinatal Pediatrics Conferences- Scottsdale, AZ (November) and Santa Fe, NM (June)

National Perinatal & Developmental Medicine Fellows Symposium Bonita Springs, FL (conference November)

National Perinatal & Developmental Medicine Fellows Symposium Snowmass, CO (conference June, abstracts due March-April)

Program Directors and Division Chiefs receive invitations for their fellows to participate three to four months before the meetings. See link to [Perinatal Section News](#). The national conferences held in Santa Fe, NM and Scottsdale, AZ are clinically oriented; those in Snowmass, CO and Bonita Springs, FL, fellows present their research in either a 10-minute platform presentation or a poster. Both the Perinatal & Developmental Medicine Symposia and the Regional Conferences on Perinatal Research require an abstract with the application and attendees are selected by the co-chairs based on abstract quality. For the national conferences, the Program Director selects one fellow to apply. For additional information, contact: Ann Stark (astark@bidmc.harvard.edu), Chair, Fellow Education Committee, AAP SONPM

Funding for research in fellowship:

Internal Funding:

Division of Neonatology Fund: NICU Fellows can request up to a maximum of \$10,000 to support their research. The fellow and mentor are expected to develop the [application](#) together. Funds are not automatic, will remain in the Division of Neonatology, and approved expenditures will be paid from divisional funds.

Rady Physician Development Fund for Fellow Conference Attendance:

Established in 2009 to provide strong, ongoing support for the professional development of Rady physicians and fellows. A focus is to support for fellows to attend virtually and in-person conferences when they are presenting

Applications are reviewed and approved by the PDF Committee, chaired by Dr. Steinhorn. Application at: <http://intranet.rchsd.org/categories/departments/rcssd/physician-development-fund>

Email Dr. Steinhorn at rsteinhorn@rchsd.org with any questions about the process

External Funding:

[Marshall Klaus Research Award](#) \$5,000 grants are available to qualifying trainees. January deadline

[The Gerber Foundation Research Award](#) limited to no more than \$20,000 in total

[The Little Giraffe Foundation Neonatal Research Initiative](#) \$5,000 - \$10,000

[The Thrasher Research Fund](#) maximum of \$25,000 in direct costs for the entire grant

Please contact us for any questions:

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