

Post-Graduate Medical Training in Singapore

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Singapore is an emerging center of world class education in Asia. Its health facilities are comparable to those of international medical centers. In Pakistan the specialities are not uniformly developed and the training of Resident Medical Officers invariably does not progress to specialist level. Singapore provides ample opportunities and has capabilities for Registrar level training and fellowships. Residents in Pakistan, in various specialities of medicine can consider Singapore for Post Graduate (PG) training, since the hospitals are well developed with state-of-the-art technology, having well qualified faculty and staff and availability of PG-training opportunities.

Singapore is a very beautiful, clean, safe and efficient city with a welcoming environment and most of the population speaks English. Singapore needs an inflow of human resource, which would bring in new ideas, work hard and with efficiency and stay in Singapore otily transiently (to prevent population overload). These objectives could be effectively met by Pakistanis. There are huge volumes of funding available for medical Fellowships in Singapore, funding being the major problem in Pakistan. The training fellowships are funded by the hospitals in Singapore and if one is awarded the fellowships, one would be paid S\$2000 per month for the duration of the fellowship.

One can start with searching the internet and visiting the web sites of the hospitals in Singapore. Use of a search engine like Yahoo (www.yahno.com) would be appropriate. On the web sites relevant details about the post-graduate programs the hospital offers, job opportunities at Registrar and Consultant level could be found. Lists and contact details (e-niails, fax and phone numbers) of each department would he available. From here one can gauge the size of the department, the availability of a particular speciality in that hospital and get the contact addresses as well.

An application should be sent to the Human Resource (HR) department of the hospital in which the field of choice is available. It is important to note that a number of hospitals may have a particular department but it may have assumed a decreased importance because of concentration of the field elsewhere. A typical example is Obstetrics and Gynecology (O&G). The once large departments at National tiniversity Hospital (NUFI) and Singapore General Hospital (SGH) have reduced in strength (patient load, exposure. finances, etc.) after the coming up of KK Women's and Children's Hospital as the main center For O&G and Pediatric services.

One should send in the Curriculum Vitae (CV) along with a covering letter stating the field one would like to rotate in and the purpose of training, as well as the benelits it affords to the applicant and the country of origin. Program details and application foniis should be requested for. All coniniunication should preferentially be done via e-mail since the postal system delays communication significantly to affect the processing of the application.

It is of extreme importance that the department should be contacted directly and a copy of the aforementioned details be sent to the Departmental Head simultaneously. The Human Resource department can help iii recruitment only in the programs made available by the department. It is possible that the department has enough finances and training capabilities to train the applicant in a specific area of choice. Besides this the decision to accept the applicant for a training program at the initial phase rests with the department (others follow - HR department of the hospitals, Ministries of I-lealth and Labour etc).

Following is a list of the web sites of hospitals in Singapore, along with a few program details.

Singapore General Hospital: www.sgh.gov.sg

The largest medical centre in Singapore. Well developed specialities include:

-Medicine: Endo, Gastro, Neuro, Pulmo, Renal Surgery: General, Colorectal, Vascular, Ortho, ENT
Neuro

Radiology

-Anesthesia

- Emergency Medicine

Independent hospitals within SGH campus:

National Cancer Center: www.nccs.com.sg (Medical, Surgical and Radiological Oncology)

National Heart Center: www.nhc.com.sg (Cardiology and Cardio-thoracic surgery)

Institute of Health: (Family Medicine)

National Dental Center

Singapore National Eye Center: sneessb@pacific.net.sg. <http://biomed.nus.edu.sg/snec>

At SGH the short courses and fellowship training is looked after by Post Graduate Medical Institute (PGMI).

Address: SGH-PGMI, Block 6 Level I, Outram Road, Singapore, 169608.

KK Women's and Children's Hospital: www.kkh.com.sg

Recently all O&G and Paediatric services in Singapore have been concentrated here.

- Obstetrics

- Gynecology

- Neonatology

- Paed's medicine

- Paed's surgery

Tan lock Seng Hospital: www.ttsh.gov.sg

Known well for its Rheumatology services. All twelve Rheumatologists of Singapore practice here,

National University Hospital: www.nuh.com.sg

Part of the campus of National University of Singapore. It competes with SGII in all fields and is equally well developed. Focus more on research than service.

Woodbridge Hospital

Largest hospital in Singapore and dedicated only to Psychiatric services.

Changi General Hospital: www.cgli.com.sg

Examples of a fellowship program is as follows:

Neurology at SGH

Duration: 1 year

Description: General clinical neurology fellowship

Qualification: Completion of Internal Medicine Residency

Program data: 1-2 places/year

Special interests: Stroke, Epilepsy, Clinical Neurophysiology, Neuro-Oncology, Sleep disorders.

Head: Dr. Wong Meng Cheong; Senior Consultant Team - 8 Consultants.

I collected information regarding possibilities of further training in Singapore after a Residency in Pakistan, during my medical electives at Singapore General Hospital. I have compiled a paper on these and have put up a web site (www.pgmed.itgo.com) for free and liberal access to all those in need of the information.

The web site contains links to Singapore hospitals' sites from where further information can be acquired. Alternatively this site could be used for the search as well. I hope Residents in Pakistan would avail opportunities for post-graduate training at Singapore and return to Pakistan with greater expertise for the benefit of our patients.