

Office of Surgical Fellowship

Department of Surgery

Surgical Fellows Financial Arrangement

Overview

The Office of Surgical Fellowship (OSF), in collaboration with your Fellowship Program Director (FPD) and program stakeholders, has established a comprehensive financial framework to support surgical fellows with their education and fellowship program. The framework is primarily based on a surgical assist model. Some fellows will also be able to participate in acute care coverage (on call) through an extender program for additional reimbursement. Programs may also have alternate and external funding such as scholarships, grants, and self-funding which can be tied to the established fellowship project accounts. Surgical assist fees can be combined in these situations, if appropriate to achieve minimum salary requirements and support of the fellowship program.

These financial models and framework are established to ensure our surgical fellows reach a minimum PGY 3 level annual minimum salary established by the most up to date provincial Resident Physician Agreement. Any shortfalls in the minimum requirement will need careful review, safeguarding and action by responsible stakeholders of the fellowship program including FPD, OSF director, OSE director, section and department heads, PGME fellowship representatives, and PGME Associate Dean.

We have partnered with University of Calgary Medical Group (UCMG), an internal billing provider and accounting service, to work directly with program stakeholders including the OSF, surgical fellows and FPDs to ensure organized billing services and reconciliations. This arrangement offers many advantages for all stakeholders including process regularity, accuracy, transparency, accountability and resources for academic advancement of fellowships, sections and the department.

Financial Structure and Guidelines

Base Compensation

- The fellowship program will guarantee a minimum remuneration commensurate to a PGY3 annual salary (currently \$78,488) benchmarked in accordance with the collective PARA Resident Physician Agreement

Billing Process

- Incoming fellows must obtain a surgical assist CPSA license, register within the DoS, OSF, PGME and achieve Calgary zone privileging for a surgical fellow (not staff surgeon).
- Incoming Fellows must register as UCMG members under the UCMG Fellow Members Agreement
- Fellows will be responsible for submitting their own billings to UCMG in a timely manner
- Fellows are expected to submit billing and reconciliation documentation monthly
- All Fellows, FPD and OSF/DoS will receive a monthly 'Members Statement of Account' from UCMG

Recovery Structure

Recoveries will be based on paid claims and will support approved educational, research and academic activities.

- 20% of the initial \$100,000 in billings
- 50% thereafter (with no ceiling)

Note: For 2-year fellowship programs, the recovery structure will reset to 20% at the start of the second year

Supplemental Income

- Extender stipends for acute care on-call provisions may supplement income and contribute to the minimum PGY3 threshold when these calls are within the framework of the training program.
- Moon lighting and working independently without faculty supervision and/or endorsement during the course of the surgical fellowship is not permitted.

Minimum Salary Requirement

- Fellows are considered independent contractors and not employees of either the University or the Department of Surgery. There are no provided benefits including, but not limited to, health benefits or disability insurance.
- It is imperative that our surgical fellows reach a minimum PGY 3 level.
- The minimum salary is based on a complete academic year (July 1 - June 30) and otherwise would be prorated to time on active service.
- The OSF will safeguard this process with support from leadership within the OSE, DoS, and PGME. If minimum requirements are not achievable and/or sustainable, termination of the surgical fellowship program may be necessary. Below are measures that FPDs and program stakeholders should consider ensuring our fellows are not providing service without appropriate, fair and reasonable compensation.
 1. Optimize surgical activity and surgical assist fees
 - If necessary, develop and strengthen teaching faculty to support the fellowship program
 - Avoid competing subspecialty fellowships within sections (faculty and program team building)
 2. Reasonably enable extender and general on call opportunities
 3. External funding sources – scholarships, bursaries, grants, donations, industry sponsorship
 4. Allow other appropriate billable and surgical assisting opportunities within the sections beyond the subspecialty fellowship obligations (engage key stakeholder approval including OSF, OSE, SH and DH)
- If there is a persistent shortfall in minimum salary, program and section funds should be considered as well, where available. The OSF general operating funds generated from the collective effort of all the surgical fellowship program dues (\$6k per fellow per year) may be utilized as a final measure, but only when other funding sources are not available and in discussion with the Department Chair, Vice-Chair Education and the Director OSF; this approach will only be used for one year to safeguard the active fellow, and the program may not be renewed until the financial sustainability of the program is strengthened.

Tax Considerations

- Fellows are solely and personally responsible for their own taxation obligations and must report 100% of their revenue to Canada Revenue Agency.



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