Cancer Control Research Training

Overview and Program Focus

The Cancer Control Research Training Curriculum (CCRTC) of the University of Rochester is recruiting outstanding young Ph.D. and M.D. investigators to pursue careers in transdisciplinary research in cancer control and prevention, and assume academic positions in the field.

Cancer control and prevention research has become an integral part of oncology investigation. Currently, there is a critical shortage of investigators with formal didactic and mentored research training in cancer control. We believe this lack of qualified investigators is impeding progress in research on the total care of the cancer patient.

The program is designed with a variety of options selected to encompass diverse research interests within a structured preparation for a research career as an independent investigator.

Unique Program Aspects

Unique elements of our program include:

- A choice of two advanced degrees (Master of Public Health with a focus on Clinical Investigation or Master of Science in Medical Statistics)
- An emphasis on transdisciplinary research conducted in multiple institutions to take advantage of opportunities provided by the peer-reviewed funding of each mentor as well as the Community Clinical Oncology Program Research Base funded by NCI exclusively for cancer control intervention research
- Appointment as a Research Assistant Professor
- Special courses and seminars developed for cancer control issues
- Opportunities for scientific and professional networking at national scientific meetings, cooperative oncology group meetings and during mini-sabbatical times

Guiding Principles of the Training Program

The PI and program faculty share the following five interrelated beliefs about research training. The beliefs have guided the development of the training curriculum and will continue to guide its implementation.

1. **Successful cancer control research requires individuals with specific training in how to successfully collaborate in a diversified, transdisciplinary approach to research**

2. **Cancer control scientists must be provided with the skills to actively design and collaborate in the execution of cancer research protocols with basic scientists and clinical scientists**.

3. **Successful cancer control clinical research requires a wide variety of practical skills including how to present and publish research results, how to relate to industry, how to use research informatics and, importantly, how to generate research proposals with a high probability of being funded.**

4. **Interaction between a well-prepared trainee and an experienced, skillful and committed mentor is an essential ingredient of successful research training**.

5. **A strong, growing need for trained clinical investigators across a spectrum of cancer control areas of interest has not been matched by the supply of trainees with the necessary didactic knowledge, practical skills, and mentored research experience to network with basic, clinical, behavioral and population scientists**

To contribute meaningfully to cancer control research, a Ph.D.- or M.D.-prepared investigator must have their perspective extended beyond the narrow focus of their primary professional discipline to include an understanding of how the synergy of multiple disciplines and institutions benefits research with cancer patients. Training for this sort of investigator must include exposure to a number of other disciplines, methodologies and approaches involved in cancer control, including areas not generally included in the professional preparation of either M.D. or Ph.D. clinical researchers. These areas include:

1. Economical, political, and sociological issues in health services research

2. Professional and specialty issues that, if not addressed, can impede transdisciplinary, multi-institutional research

3. Design and critical evaluation of research protocols

4. Biostatistical and epidemiological principles as they apply to cancer control investigations

5. Preparation of abstracts, posters and manuscripts

6. How to get your research ideas and your research career funded.