



## Fellowship Training Program Accreditation Requirements

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### Background

As the leading Society advancing surgical care in transplantation, the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS) and Transplant Accreditation & Certification Council (TACC) are committed to defining and promoting training and the career-long education of transplant surgeons. One of the primary avenues by which TACC defines and promotes training is through its accreditation of abdominal fellowship training programs throughout the United States and Canada.

### Objective

The objective of a Transplant Surgery Fellowship Training Program approved by the Transplant Accreditation & Certification Council is to develop proficiency in the surgical and medical management of patients with end-stage organ diseases amenable to transplantation. This objective should be achieved through a 24-month structured supplemental program for the study and treatment of these diseases in an accredited and properly supervised transplant surgery fellowship. Candidates for such training must have satisfactorily completed a residency which satisfies the educational requirements for certification by the American Board of Surgery or the American Board of Urology or foreign equivalency.

The TACC is the recognized accrediting and certifying body in the field of transplant surgery fellowship training and aims to ensure future generations of transplant surgeons get the training that provides the skills, knowledge and professionalism needed to perform in the complex environment of solid organ and cellular transplantation. The TACC will:

- Provide structural requirements in a manner consistent with other accrediting bodies
- Establish guidelines and requirements for program, program directors and faculty for maintain an educational environment
- Define program director responsibility
- Mandate program annual case volume minimums with annual volume review
- Ensure programs and transplant centers are recognized as compliant by outside regulatory bodies such as CMS and OPTN.

### Accreditation Process

#### *Initial Accreditation Process*

- New programs must submit an online Fellowship Training Program Accreditation Application by the Accreditation Application deadline.
- New programs must host two members of the Fellowship Training Committee for a one-day site visit in order to evaluate the institution's educational and surgical training environment.
  - Programs will be responsible for any fees associated with the site visit.
- New programs must submit an accreditation fee in order to obtain fellowship training program accreditation.



- Program submits a signed application acknowledging the Structure of an Accredited Training Program, Accreditation and Classification Volume Requirements, Accreditation Requirements, FTPD Job Description, Managed Time Policy, Parallel Tracks Position Statement, and Living Donor Nephrectomy Requirements.

#### *Reaccreditation Process*

- Accredited programs submit a reaccreditation application every three years. Applications must be submitted on time.
  - \*This cycle may change if a program undergoes any major institutional changes.
- Programs must submit a reaccreditation fee in order to maintain accreditation.
- Program submits a signed application acknowledging the Structure of an Accredited Training Program, Accreditation and Classification Volume Requirements, Accreditation Requirements, FTPD Job Description, Managed Time Policy, Parallel Tracks Position Statement, and Living Donor Nephrectomy Requirements.

#### *Organ Specific Program Accreditation*

- Programs can be accredited in the following training tracks:
  - Kidney (BTF)
  - Liver (BTF)
  - Pancreas (STF)
  - Intestine (STF)
  - HPB/HB (STF)
- Programs will be identified as Basic Training Categories (BTF) in Kidney, Liver or Kidney and Liver. As of 2016, Living Donor Nephrectomy (LDN) was added as a modified part of the BTF – Kidney and BTF – Kidney/Liver programs. Programs will be required to meet the LDN volume criteria to maintain accreditation.
- In addition, programs can apply for additional accreditation in Specialized Training Categories (STF) in Pancreas, Intestine, Hepatobiliary and Hepato-pancreato-biliary.
- Programs must specify to the ASTS and TACC which organ track(s) for which they are requesting accreditation to train.
- Programs can choose to decrease the number of fellows trained outside of the three-year review cycle without going through the Reaccreditation Process as outlined above.
  - Program must notify current and incoming fellows of changes.
- Programs requesting to change their accreditation in BTF or STF or want to increase the number of fellows trained annually outside the three-year review cycle must participate in the Reaccreditation Process as outlined above. This includes timely submission of a reaccreditation fee.

#### *Duration of Training*

- Fellowship Training Program must outline and detail the structure of the fellowship training program within the Fellowship Training Program Accreditation and Reaccreditation Application.
- Program must conform to a uniform duration of fellowship training as outlined by the ASTS and TACC.
- Single organ training programs must include a minimum of twenty-four months of training:
  - The twenty-four months must include a minimum of 18 months of clinical training.



- The remaining 6 months can be either additional clinical training or non-clinical duties.
- Multi-organ training programs must include a minimum of twenty-four months of training:
  - The twenty-four months must include a minimum of 18 months of clinical training.
  - The remaining 6 months can be either additional clinical training or non-clinical duties.

**Accreditation Requirements**

*Volume*

- Programs must maintain a minimum case volume (as detailed below) for organ specific accreditation in order to train fellows.
- Transplant case volume will be verified by both the institution and UNOS.
- New programs must demonstrate a minimum of 3 consecutive years of adequate volume in order to be considered for accreditation. Programs applying for reaccreditation must demonstrate a minimum of 2 consecutive years of adequate volume OR average over 3 years.
- Programs must meet or exceed a Total Transplant Volume (TTV) and a Deceased Donor Procurement (DCP) volume in order to be considered eligible for accreditation:
  - TTV- 75 total organ transplants (non-organ specific) per academic year
  - DCP- 25 total deceased donor procurements per academic year
- Programs must meet or exceed the following volumes in order to gain or maintain accreditation in each, specific organ:

BTF	
Kidney	60 or more per academic year 18 Living Donor Nephrectomy cases per academic year
Liver	50 or more per academic year
STF	
Pancreas	10 or more per academic year
Intestine	10 or more per academic year
Hepatobiliary	35 or more major hepatic and gall bladder procedures per academic year 15 or more complex biliary procedures per academic year
Hepatopancreatobiliary	35 or more major hepatic and gall bladder procedures per academic year 15 or more complex biliary procedures per academic year 25 or more major non-transplant related pancreatic procedures per academic year
Multi-organ Procurements	25 or more per academic year

- Programs must exceed the volume requirements list above for BTF to be accredited for more than one fellow every year.
- Program participates in the Annual Volume Review Process, as determined by the Fellowship Training Committee and the Transplant Accreditation & Certification Council.

### *Non-Volume Metrics*

- Program must identify an active Fellowship Training Program Director
  - Program Director must be an ASTS member in good standing
- Program Director will be the primary contact to ASTS regarding fellowship training and will assume all responsibility for necessary communications.
  - Program Director will be responsible for notifying the ASTS of the following:
    - Name(s) and email(s) of participating fellows
    - Name(s) and email(s) of anticipated fellows
    - The anticipated start date and end date of all fellows
    - Change in Fellowship Training Program Director and Administrative Coordinator
    - Any major structural or institutional changes outline below
- Program director will participate in the annual Program Director's meeting (or will send a proxy from the program)
- Program Director will assume primary responsibility for fellow's training and certify competency
- Program Director will take responsibility for recommending the organs to be listed on the fellows' Certificate of Completion.
- Program must submit a signed Fellowship Completion form to the ASTS within 60 days of when the fellowship is completed.
- Program must submit a list of active fellows in training to the ASTS annually by June 30 of each year.
- Programs must notify the ASTS of any major structural and institutional changes that will affect the fellows' education and training experience.
  - This would include (but is not limited to):
    - 50% or more change in surgical faculty and administrative staff
    - CMS or UNOS actions that potentially affect program volume
    - Change in Fellowship Training Program Director
    - Voluntary closures of organ transplant programs by transplant center
  - Changes reported will be brought to the attention of the Fellowship Training Committee for review. The Committee will determine the necessary actions as appropriate and may request a reaccreditation application be submitted for formal review. The Fellowship Training Committee will present their recommendations to the Transplant Accreditation & Certification Council
  - If the committee feels additional actions are necessary, including a site visit, recommendations will be made to the Transplant Accreditation & Certification Council for approval to perform such actions.
  - Necessary fees may be applicable.

### *Fellowship Training Program Fees*

- Programs must submit the Accreditation fee and associated site visit expenses by the deadline provided on their accreditation letter.

- Programs must submit the Reaccreditation fee by the deadline provided on their reaccreditation letter.
- Program must submit the Annual Program Fee by June 30 of each year.
- Program must submit an Annual Program Fee based on the number of fellows trained each academic year.
- Programs that fail submit the Annual Program Fee within 90 days of the due date may undergo a probationary period as determined by the Transplant Accreditation & Certification Council.
- Programs that fail to submit the Annual Program Fee within 90 days of the due date will result in a 30-day probationary status during which time if payment is not received the fellowship program would be subject to the loss of accreditation.
- Reaccreditation would entail submission of a new program accreditation application.

#### *Match Process*

- Program participates fully, in good faith, in the annual match administered through the SF Match.
- Program will direct all interested applicants to the SF Match to register for the annual match.
- Program must report all results, including filled and unfilled positions, to the ASTS when the match concludes in June of each year.
- Programs that do match their open position can fill the slot outside of the SF Match.
- The TACC will not recognize fellows that are taken outside the match if a program voluntarily chooses not to participate in the annual match process or is shown not to participate in good faith.
- If a program fails to participate in the match for three consecutive years, the program will be placed on a probationary status for one year.
  - Repeated failure to initiate training of a fellow by the completion of the probationary period will result in loss of accreditation
  - Reaccreditation would entail submission of a complete new program application

#### *Managed Time Policy*

- Programs must adhere to the Fellows Managed Time Policy.
- If a program fails to adhere to the managed time policy or is delinquent in the submission of requested documentation, the program will receive a warning and will be expected to submit written verification of changes in order to bring the program to compliance.
- If a program does not respond to written warnings or does not produce requested documentation, a site visit may be necessary. Sanctions for non-compliance range from written warnings, probation, and loss of accreditation.
- Reaccreditation would entail submission of a new program application.

#### *Fellow Assessment Operative Milestones*

- Programs must submit the Fellow Assessment Operative Milestones every 6 months of the fellows training.



- Forms must be submitted, online, within one month of their required due date.
- Failure to adhere to this deadline on 3 separate occasions will result in a one-year probationary status.
- Subsequent additional tardiness will result in loss of program accreditation.
- Reaccreditation would entail submission of a complete new program application.

*Knowledge of Fellow (Job and Location) Post Fellowship Training*

- Programs must submit a yearly list with the knowledge of fellows at the completion of their training
- Failure to submit this list will result in a one-year probation period during which the program must provide this information.
- Failure to submit this form during the probation period will result in the loss of program accreditation.
- Reaccreditation would entail submission of a new accreditation application.