

Clinical and Research Fellowship Training Program

Dystonia is a multifaceted neurological disorder. Despite advances in clinical management and research, the diagnosis of dystonia continues to be, far too often, delayed or missed. Although treatment options have expanded with the approval of botulinum toxins and the success of deep brain stimulation, patients with dystonia continue to report difficulties in locating physicians who know how to evaluate their individual needs and to develop an appropriate treatment plan. In addition, there is a great need for better understanding of the disorder in its various clinical manifestations and for the development of better treatments. This emphasizes the urgent need for training more experts in dystonia, which can be best achieved by additional fellowship training in movement disorders with special emphasis on dystonia.

Program Overview

The Dystonia Medical Research Foundation (DMRF) Canada is pleased to offer a two-year clinical and research fellowship to support the training of exceptionally qualified physicians in preparation for their career in movement disorders with a focus on dystonia and a special competence in use of botulinum toxins.

The goal of this program is to encourage growth and support of the field of movement disorders in Canada, with a focus on dystonia to support dystonia patients. Canadian citizenship is not a requirement; however, in the selection, preference will be given to candidates who express the intent to practice in Canada.

The fellowship should focus on training in both the clinical evaluation and care of patients with movement disorders as well as clinical research with a focus on dystonia. The training must be patient-oriented and include hands-on experience in clinics as well as participation in professional meetings and workshops. The fellowship will be held at an Institution where the applicant is registered in a postgraduate training program, and where the proposed supervisor holds a faculty appointment.

Eligibility

Applicants must be involved with institutions that have established training programs with appropriate resources to provide both clinical and research training in dystonia, including the use of botulinum toxin type A or type B approved for use in Canada.

The applicant must have a mentor at the institution with clinical expertise in dystonia, who will develop a mentorship plan for the fellow. To become eligible, an institution must provide information on the training environment, program curriculum, available resources and the expected amount of exposure to patients with dystonia.

Review and Selection:

All applications would be reviewed by members of the DMRF Canada Clinical and Research Fellowship Review Committee. Selection criteria will include the following:

- Qualifications of the applicant.
- Qualifications of the applicant's mentor.
- Quality of the mentorship plan.
- Relevance to the field of movement disorders with a specific focus on dystonia.
- The applicant's ability and intention to practice in Canada after the Fellowship period, especially in the underrepresented areas within Canada.
- Other considerations aligned with DMRF Canada's mission and goals.

Applications for the fellowship, which will start on or after July 1, 2025, **should be submitted electronically to DMRF Canada by February 20, 2025.**

The selected Fellow will receive a stipend in the amount of \$65,000 CAD per year. No institutional indirect cost is allowed. The fellowship is NOW offered for 1 year or 2 years.

Reporting Requirement:

The selected recipient of this Clinical and Research Fellowship will be required to provide a written report that details the key learnings and observations obtained in the first year of the fellowship. **This report will be due on July 1, 2026. A final report will be due three months after the finalization (June 30) of the Fellowship.**

For additional information or questions, please contact Archana Castelino, National Director at archanacastelino@dystoniacanada.org