

HONG KONG COLLEGE OF PAEDIATRICIANS

13. Guidelines on the Criteria for the Accreditation of a Paediatric Subspecialty Training Programme

13.1 The Subspecialty Programme must fulfill the Guidelines for Recognition of Academy College of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine.

13.1.1 The subspecialty exists only within the Paediatric specialty

13.1.2 The subspecialty must share with the specialty of paediatrics a significant part of training and assessment, including basic training and entry assessment

13.1.3 The subspecialty should satisfy the following criteria according to the guidelines of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine:

- (i) the subspecialty is needed in Hong Kong
- (ii) the subspecialty is new and different from existing subspecialties
- (iii) the knowledge, skills and practice required by that subspecialty are identifiably distinct and are deemed appropriate and compatible with the practice of paediatrics
- (iv) the subspecialty exists in other countries
- (v) the subspecialty is recognised at the institutional level; with the appointment of academic staff for that subspecialty at the Associate Professor level in a university in Hong Kong or the appointment of a Consultant for that subspecialty in one of the Hospital Authority Hospitals or the Department of Health
- (vi) the subspecialty has the administrative support of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians.

13.2 The subspecialty is supervised by a Subspecialty Board and is represented by the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians at the Academy.

13.2.1 The Subspecialty Boards are under the supervision of the Director of Subspecialty Boards of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians. The operations of the Subspecialty Boards are subjected to the approval by Council. The post of Director of Subspecialty Boards will need to be endorsed by Council and put into the Bye-law of the College.

13.2.2 The Subspecialty Board is responsible for

- (i) setting the accreditation guidelines for the training programme in a subspecialty
- (ii) accreditation of the subspecialty programme
- (iii) setting the criteria for accreditation of training modules* within the training programme
- (iv) accreditation of an institution for the duration and type of training allowed by the Subspecialty Board
- (v) accreditation of Subspecialty Training Programme Directors and Subspecialty Trainers

- (vi) ensuring a high standard of practice in that subspecialty comparable to that in centres overseas by arranging peer review of proposed Subspecialty Training Programme
- (vii) appointment of examiners and organization of subspecialty board examinations
- (viii) the administration, organisation and validation of continuing medical education / continuing professional development (CME/CPD) which must be fulfilled by all Fellows in that subspecialty within the CME requirement for paediatrics of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians.

* One module is defined as a 6-month period within the training programme.

- 13.2.3 The composition of the Subspecialty Board should include 6 Fellows of the College:
- (i) five Fellows in that subspecialty should be appointed preferably from the University, Hospital Authority, Department of Health and the private sector.
 - (ii) one Fellow (not in that subspecialty) appointed by Council
 - (iii) the Chairman of the Subspecialty Board will be elected by the Subspecialty Board members and appointed by Council.

13.3 The Subspecialty Training Programme should fulfill the following criteria:

- 13.3.1 Service need of the subspecialty in Hong Kong must be clearly demonstrated and a sound service infrastructure must be well established in the training institutions.
- 13.3.2 The duration of subspecialty training shall be at least 3 years and should normally follow the Higher Training Programme in Paediatrics with only up to one year of overlap allowed between the two programmes. (Basic Training Programme 3 years + Higher Training in General Paediatrics 2 years + Higher Training in a paediatric subspecialty 1 year + Subspecialty Training Programme 2 years)
- 13.3.3 The duration of clinical training should be 24 to 36 months
- 13.3.4 Research activities (which could be clinical, laboratory or epidemiological research or other relevant academic activities) are mandatory as evidenced by the submission of dissertations for the Subspecialty Board examinations or by publication.
- 13.3.5 The maximum duration of retrospective or prospective recognition for a relevant full-time research postgraduate degree should be 6 months after assessment by the Subspecialty Board.
- 13.3.6 Teaching and administrative duties in the subspecialty should ordinarily be required as part of the training programme
- 13.3.7 Acquisition of higher qualifications and overseas training is encouraged as evidence of personal professional development
- 13.3.8 The programme must satisfy all the subspecialty training requirements determined by the Subspecialty Board

- 13.3.8.1 The content of the training programme must be comparable to similar training programme in that subspecialty overseas; information on at least two overseas training programme in that subspecialty must be provided
- 13.3.8.2 The Subspecialty Training Programme must have
- a) a clearly defined set of educational and professional objectives in terms of acquisition of knowledge in basic and clinical science, skills and attitudes relevant to the subspecialty.
 - b) a detailed well-defined curriculum.
 - c) an appropriate administrative structure of programme director, trainers, continuous assessment of progress and annual report on individual subspecialty trainees.
 - d) an organized programme of clinical rotation and other educational experiences, both mandatory or elective, designed to provide each trainee with the opportunity to fulfill the comprehensive educational requirements and achieve competence in that subspecialty.
 - e) Portfolio assessment and successful attempt at the Subspecialty Board Examination is required for conferment of Fellowship in the Subspecialty of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians.
- 13.3.8.3 An individual trainee should be under the supervision of at least two accredited subspecialty trainers during the 3-year subspecialty training programme
- 13.3.8.4 A trainer can supervise no more than two trainees either in the Subspecialty Training Programme or in the Higher Training Programme in Paediatrics at any one time.
- 13.3.8.5 A subspecialty trainee can receive his/her supervised training in at least two but not more than four accredited institutions/departments in an accredited subspecialty training programme. There should be a significant period (to be defined by the Subspecialty Board) during the subspecialty training programme that the trainee has intensive and a substantial proportion of subspecialty exposure in one of the training centers.
- 13.3.8.6 The programme should be continuous.
- a) Any one period of interruption should not be more than 12 weeks.
 - b) Only one period of continuous or cumulative 12-week leave would be allowed (other than the entitled statutory leave, annual leave and casual leave) during the 3-year Subspecialty Training Programme. Trainees taking leave more than that would be required to extend his/her training period to make up for the interruption in excess of 12 weeks during the subspecialty training.
 - c) A declaration of any interruption of training should be made by the trainee on his/her application for Subspecialty Board Examination.

13.4 Accreditation of an institution providing training in a subspecialty training programme

- 13.4.1 The institution must provide an adequate clinical service in that subspecialty as required by the Subspecialty Board.
- 13.4.2 The institution must have adequate supportive and investigational facilities for the delivery of a subspecialty clinical service which is stipulated by the Subspecialty Board.
- 13.4.3 The Subspecialty Board will determine the duration of subspecialty training accredited in an institution which is dependent on the clinical activity load, the case mix, allied health and other support and the number of accredited subspecialty trainers working in that institution.
- 13.4.4 The training institution must provide in-service and continuing medical education / continuing professional development in that subspecialty in the form of regular journal club, grand rounds, seminars, X-ray meetings and case audit meetings in accordance with College / Academy Guidelines..
- 13.4.5 The institutions must perform and provide evidence of regular audit of clinical activities in the subspecialty.
- 13.4.6 The trainees must have access to subspecialty journals and reference textbooks as defined by the Subspecialty Board.

13.5 Accreditation of the Subspecialty Programme Director

The Subspecialty Programme Director should:

- 13.5.1 be a Fellow of the College in the subspecialty (either as a Fellow with accredited supervised subspecialty training or as a “First Fellow” who has fulfilled the Guidelines for Admission of First Fellows in a New Subspecialty of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine).
- 13.5.2 have 10 years of experience of good practice excluding the training period in the subspecialty in an accredited institution.
- 13.5.3 be actively involved in teaching as evidenced by teaching of postgraduates in the subspecialty.
- 13.5.4 be actively participating in clinical audit and establishment of management guidelines.
- 13.5.5 be active in research with track record in scientific publications.
- 13.5.6 participate and fulfill the continuing medical education / continuing professional development requirement of the subspecialty.
- 13.5.7 have local, regional or international standing in that subspecialty as evidenced by membership of learned societies, invitations for lectures and participation in regional and international meetings/organizations.
- 13.5.8 be in full-time employment in an accredited institution and spend more than 50% of his / her activity in the practice of the subspecialty.
- 13.5.9 may be required to provide a certificate of competency by the Subspecialty Board of the College if technically complex skills are required for the practice of the subspecialty.
- 13.5.10 be re-accredited once every 3 years.

13.6 Accreditation of Subspecialty Trainers

The Subspecialty Trainer should:

- 13.6.1 be a Fellow of the Subspecialty of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians (either as “First Fellow” or a Fellow with accredited training in the subspecialty).
- 13.6.2 have 5-year experience of good practice excluding the training period in the subspecialty in an accredited institution.
- 13.6.3 be actively involved in teaching, research and clinical service of that subspecialty.
- 13.6.4 be in full-time employment in an accredited institution and spend more than 50% of his / her activity in the practice of the subspecialty.
- 13.6.5 The accreditation of Subspecialty Trainers will be required once every 3 years.
- 13.6.6 participate and fulfill the continuing medical education / continuing professional development requirement of the subspecialty.

13.7 Accreditation of Training of Subspecialty Trainees

- 13.7.1 All training must be approved by the Accreditation Committee, Programme Director in that subspecialty and the Subspecialty Board
- 13.7.2 Possession of certificate of Intermediate Examination or equivalent and application for subspecialty training should normally be submitted at the end of the first year of Higher Training in General Paediatrics
- 13.7.3 The trainee admitted into a subspecialty training programme must undergo full-time subspecialty training (more than 50% of the time must be spent in the activity related to the subspecialty) under the supervision of an accredited trainer in an accredited training institution
- 13.7.4 The trainee is required to keep a personal log book of educational activities and exposure to cases during the period of training; the log book must be endorsed regularly by his / her supervisor every 6 months during the training programme
- 13.7.5 Trainees must make at least 2 presentations in local or regional meetings
- 13.7.6 Subspecialty trainees should submit 2 dissertations for assessment of which at least one is accepted for publication in an international journal or local journal upon completion of subspecialty training
- 13.7.7 Trainees are encouraged to attend training courses in that subspecialty held locally or overseas

13.8 Trainer : Trainee Ratio

A trainer can supervise no more than two trainees either in the subspecialty training programme or in the Higher Training Programme in Paediatrics and no more than three trainees at any one time.

13.9 Accreditation of Subspecialty Training Programme undertaken by Trainees in Overseas Institutions

13.9.1 The training programme overseas must fulfill all the criteria of a Subspecialty Training Programme as stated in Section 13.3 and 13.4.

13.9.2 The application for retrospective accreditation of overseas training in a paediatric subspecialty must fulfill all the guidelines laid down in Section 12.

13.9.2.1 The training programme should be continuous unless approved by the Subspecialty Board.

Trainees applying for recognition of interrupted training should fulfill the following criteria :

- (i) the interruption should be less than one year
- (ii) the trainee should show his / her intention for further training
- (iii) there must be a justifiable reason for the interruption, either because of medical or other compassionate reason
- (iv) members entering into Subspecialty Training on or after a certain date (to be defined) who has cumulative or continuous interruption of training in excess of 12 weeks excluding entitled leave must make declaration when he/she applies for Subspecialty Board Examination
- (v) interruption of training more than 12 weeks during the 3-year Subspecialty Training Programme (trainees starting Subspecialty Training on or after a certain date (to be defined)) must be made up with additional training

13.9.3 Trainees who wish to undergo subspecialty training in overseas institutions should apply prospectively to the Subspecialty Board at least 3 months before the commencement of overseas training.

13.9.4 Trainees must supply the following documents and information to the Subspecialty Board for prospective approval 3 months before commencement of overseas training:

- (i) Application letter for prospective approval
- (ii) Period of overseas training and duration
- (iii) Subspecialty, Institution/Training Centre, Country
- (iv) Name of supervisor
- (v) Institution information: background of the institution and institution accreditation status (whether it is a locally accredited training centre for the paediatric subspecialty)
- (vi) Preliminary Training Programme (activities involved)
- (vii) Undertaking by applicant on the status of the institution that it is a locally accredited training centre for the paediatric subspecialty
- (viii) Acceptance letter from overseas training centre
- (ix) Recommendation letter by local training supervisor/COS

- 13.9.5 Applications will not be processed unless all required documents are submitted with preliminary approval by the COS/training supervisor. All overseas subspecialty training applications will be acknowledged and outstanding information will be requested. The Subspecialty Board accepts that all the necessary information and documentation required may not be available before commencement of overseas training. If the trainee responds by giving a valid reason why such documentation is not available and undertake to provide the outstanding information and documentation within 3 months upon return from training overseas, this would be acceptable for the Committee. A preliminary approval will be issued by the Chairman of the Subspecialty Board after the application has been approved by the Subspecialty Board.
- 13.9.6 Unless a valid reason is provided for a trainee's inability to provide the necessary documentation prior to commencement of overseas training, submission of the necessary documentation upon completion of overseas training for accreditation will be treated as retrospective accreditation subjected to an administrative charge of HK\$2,000. This regulation will be strictly enforced within one year of setting up of the Subspecialty Board.
- 13.9.7 The trainee should submit the following information within 3 months upon return from training to the Subspecialty Board for final approval of his subspecialty training in the overseas institution:
- (i) Application letter for final approval
 - (ii) Training report by the applicant, including the finalized full training programme and duty roster
 - (iii) Training summary and log sheet, duly signed by the overseas supervisor
 - (iv) Summary of project and/or publication achieved during the training period
 - (v) Declaration by trainee that the information submitted is true and accurate
 - (vi) Local supervisor's evaluation together with recommendations towards accreditation

The Subspecialty Board reserves the right to write to the supervisor abroad directly for additional information.

- 13.9.8 If all the criteria as required by the Subspecialty Board are satisfied, a letter of accreditation will be issued to the trainee as official approval of his subspecialty training in the overseas institution.
- 13.9.9 The final decision is at the discretion of the College Council.