

These training requirements apply to those who begin training on or after July 1, 2023.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS TO BEGIN TRAINING

Royal College certification in a Royal College specialty

OR

Eligibility for the Royal College examination in any specialty

OR

Registration in a Royal College-accredited residency. (See requirements for these qualifications.)

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ATTESTATION

All candidates must be Royal College certified in their primary specialty in order to be eligible to receive the Attestation of Completion of the Clinician Investigator Program (CIP).

The following training experiences are required or recommended, as indicated.

REQUIRED TRAINING EXPERIENCES

1. All necessary coursework (if not already completed prior to entering CIP) for a thesis-based graduate degree (Master's or PhD) or equivalent fellowship
2. Mentored research training
3. Training in:
 - 3.1. Research ethics
 - 3.2. Application for Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) (or similar) funding
4. Academic activities of the Clinician Investigator Program, which may include seminars, lectures, rounds, journal club, or other formal teaching sessions
5. Contribution to and mentorship in research activities leading to:
 - 5.1. The presentation of findings of research activities at a local, national, or international venue ideally based on a peer-reviewed abstract
 - 5.2. Submission of at least one article for peer-reviewed publication

6. Course work related to research ethics, teaching skills, communication skills, and research methodology
7. Course work on incorporating issues related to age, gender, culture, and ethnicity in research protocols, and data presentation and discussion.

RECOMMENDED TRAINING EXPERIENCES

1. Participate in a knowledge synthesis activity, such as the preparation of a review article or a literature review for guideline development
2. Participate in the writing of a grant or other funding proposal
3. Participate in the creation of an operating budget for administering fellowship funds or for any research grant
4. Attend national or international scientific meetings relevant to the field of study
5. Participate in peer review of research
6. Participate in the academic activities of the entry discipline

REQUIREMENTS FOR ATTESTATION

Royal College attestation for the Clinician Investigator Program requires all of the following:

1. Royal College certification in a primary specialty
2. Successful completion of a thesis-based graduate degree (Master's or PhD) or an equivalent research fellowship
3. Present findings of research activities at a local, national, or international venue, ideally based on a peer-reviewed abstract
4. Submit at least one article for peer-reviewed publication
5. Successful completion of a Royal College accredited Clinician Investigator Program

NOTES:

Completion of the Clinician Investigator Program can occur via one of two streams and via one of three pathways (see notes):

STREAMS

Graduate degree stream

This requires completion of a thesis- or thesis equivalent-based graduate degree, including all necessary coursework and mentored research training. The expected duration of training is 2-3 years (Master's) or 3-5 years (PhD).

Research fellowship stream

This stream is open to residents who already possess a relevant thesis- or thesis equivalent-based graduate degree and requires completion of mentored research training. The expected duration of training is 2-3 years. The local CIP residency program committee is responsible to decide on a case-by-case basis whether an additional graduate degree is required to meet program and resident goals.

PATHWAYS FOR TRAINING

One of three research pathways, as follows:

CONTINUOUS TRAINING PATHWAY (CT)

1. A minimum of 24 months of continuous, intensive research training which can be undertaken at any point in residency

FRACTIONATED TRAINING PATHWAY (FT)

2. A minimum 24 months of research distributed throughout training as follows:
 - 2.1. Twelve (12) months of research training completed in periods of 3 months or longer blocks
 - 2.2. Twelve (12) months of continuous research training

DISTRIBUTIVE CURRICULUM TRAINING (DCT)

3. A minimum of 27 months of research training completed concurrently with Royal College specialty training program with three sequential years organized as follows:
 - 3.1. Three (3) months of clinical training
 - 3.2. Nine (9) months of research

Completion of a graduate degree is a mandatory requirement for residents unless they already hold a graduate degree. For residents pursuing graduate studies, the individual is registered for an advanced degree in a university graduate school and must meet all its requirements. In such cases, the CIP program director will act as the liaison with the graduate school and must approve and monitor the individual program outlined.

For the research fellowship stream, a program of individualized research training is to be undertaken, with appropriate rigor for a resident who already holds a graduate degree. The postdoctoral training plans require the approval of the faculty CIP committee.

The Continuous Training (CT) pathway involves continuous, intensive research training which can be undertaken at different points in residency. The planning for the CIP entry in the CT pathway should begin as soon as possible after an interest in the CIP is identified, particularly if all residency training is undertaken at one centre.

The Fractionated Training (FT) pathway is for individuals who wish to pursue research that requires several years to plan a research project, obtain research ethics board approval, and complete the project, which may involve patient recruitment to a study. This pathway is particularly suitable for clinical epidemiology research, where intensive research activities will be separated by long waiting periods.

CLINICIAN INVESTIGATOR PROGRAM TRAINING EXPERIENCES 2023

The Distributive Curriculum Training (DCT) pathway is intended for outstanding residents who have research experience prior to entering a residency program. In the DCT pathway, there is coordinated entry into the PGY1 year for both CIP and the specialty program. One year of postgraduate clinical training in the DCT pathway is distributed over the three years, each with three months of clinical training and nine months of research. It is preferred that the research block be sequential.

Residents must register in the CIP and begin their CIP research before or immediately upon completion of their Royal College-accredited clinical program or other postgraduate clinical training (e.g., a non-accredited fellowship). Residents moving to a different institution to pursue clinician investigator training upon completion of their Royal College-accredited clinical program, must register in the CIP within six months of starting this research to be eligible. CIP registration for individuals who completed their Royal College-accredited training more than six months before starting clinician investigator research training will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and requires approval by the CIP Advisory Committee of the Royal College.

Up to one of the research years may also be credited to fulfil the individual's Royal College-accredited clinical program requirements, in keeping with the requirements of the discipline involved, with joint approval of the faculty CIP director and the program director in the Royal College-accredited clinical discipline.

Retroactive recognition of research credits obtained prior to acceptance into a CIP will not be allowed.

For newly accredited CIP programs, credit may be given to residents who completed up to one year of the research experience immediately prior to the initial accreditation of a CIP provided at least one year is spent in the program after it has been accredited, and on condition that the resident's experience prior to accreditation fulfils the CIP requirements.

The CIP outlined above is to be regarded as the minimum training requirement. Additional research training in all CIP pathways can be extended to allow completion of a PhD or other research experiences. Individuals who complete the program will have a solid grounding in research but may still require additional research training to embark on a career as an independent researcher.

This document is to be reviewed by the Clinician Investigator Program Advisory Committee by JANUARY 31, 2026.

*Created – Clinician Investigator Program Advisory Committee – November 2022
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