

Dalhousie University Neurosurgery

Resident Rotation Objectives: Radiation Oncology

Introduction and Core Objectives

Neurosurgery Residents rotating on the Radiation Oncology service should develop an introductory understanding of radiotherapy treatment planning.

1. Describe the general principles, physical, and biological basis of radiation therapy.
2. Describe the steps involved from radiotherapy simulation to treatment delivery.
3. Have a basic understanding of radiation physics and how treatment planning is performed.
4. Recognize common acute toxicities from radiation therapy.
5. Lists potential long-term toxicities based on the body site being treated and radiotherapy treatment modality used.

Medical Expert

The resident participates in patient management, and:

1. Has an appropriate knowledge base for current level of training.
2. Elicits a history relevant to patients with cancer.
3. Performs and appropriately interprets detailed and focused physical examinations.
4. Accurately assesses functional status.
5. Selects appropriate staging investigations for common cancers
6. Reviews and interprets basic findings from diagnostic imaging in oncology patients.
7. Reviews and interprets basic findings from pathology reports.
8. Understands the natural history and patterns of spread of cancers commonly encountered in Radiation Oncology practice.
9. Becomes familiar with long term follow-up guidelines for patients completing radiotherapy.
10. Recognizes and responds appropriately to oncologic emergencies (with supervision).
11. Recognizes patients who require admission to the Radiation Oncology inpatient service, and provides inpatient care with supervision.
12. Recognizes the limits of his or her own expertise, and seeks help when appropriate

Communicator

1. Develop rapport, trust, and ethical therapeutic relationships with patients with cancer and their families.
2. Gather relevant information in patients with cancer, including the perspectives of patients, families, colleagues, and other professionals.

3. Produce professional, clear, concise, and accurate clinical notes of patient encounters (including clinic notes, progress/consultation notes, discharge summaries, and radiotherapy completion notes).
4. Give accurate and well organized oral case presentations to supervising physicians.
5. Participate in gaining informed consent with patients undergoing radiotherapy.
6. Demonstrate an approach to addressing challenging communication issues with patients and families (including breaking bad news).
7. Participate in discussions regarding diagnosis, prognosis, and management plan with patients, families and other professionals, with supervision.

Collaborator

1. Work with others (allied health professionals, nurses, radiation therapists, medical physicists, and other physicians) on the team to prioritize tasks and ensure safe and effective delivery of care for patients with cancer and their families.
2. Demonstrate a respectful attitude towards other members of the interprofessional team.
3. Provide appropriate handover to others (including the on-call team, when call periods are completed, and at the end of the rotation).
4. Work with others to prevent and resolve conflict.
5. Attend interdisciplinary case conferences and quality assurance rounds, and is able to describe their impact on the care of individual patients.

Leader

1. Demonstrate an awareness of cost implications and resource allocations in the choice of investigations in an oncologic patient population.
2. Appreciate the scope of practice of a Radiation Oncologist.
3. Manage time effectively.

Health Advocate

1. Identify the economic and social consequences of a cancer diagnosis.
2. Advocate for an individualized care plan based on patient needs.
3. Understand what community resources are available for patients with cancer.
4. Identify relevant determinants of health and barriers to access to care in patients with cancer.

Scholar

1. Reflect on teaching and patient encounters to prompt further learning.
2. Identify appropriate learning questions based on patient encounters.

3. Identify important publications in oncology and can describe their potential impact on patient care.
4. Demonstrate an adequate understanding of the principles of research, with particular emphasis on the ethical principles involved in research on patients with cancer.

Professional

1. Exhibit appropriate professional behaviours, including: attending work on time, scheduling or reporting absences from work, dealing with on-call responsibilities, and attending rounds and other activities as required.
2. Exhibit honesty and confidentiality towards patients, families, and colleagues.
3. Identify ethical issues arising in Radiation Oncology practice.
4. Demonstrate a capacity for introspection and self-assessment.
5. Respond appropriately to constructive feedback.