The Neonatal Service at the Royal Hospital for Women is the largest neonatal tertiary unit in NSW with a total of 44 beds. RHW is a major teaching hospital of the Faculty of Medicine, the University of New South Wales. It is co-located with the Sydney Children’s Hospital and the Prince of Wales Hospital within the UNSW teaching hospital campus in Randwick. Other than providing tertiary care of the local regional referrals within the South Eastern Sydney Health District, the Hospital receives state-wide referrals for the management of perinatal and neonatal cases from other NSW health districts and from other tertiary neonatal services for the management of complex and surgical conditions.

The Newborn Care Centre has 16 intensive care beds providing predominantly for positive pressure support and acute management of serious conditions. The high dependency Level II area of 18 beds provides care to infants requiring parenteral nutrition, peri-operative care and conditions needing close monitoring. Most of these infants will be transferred back to their referring hospitals for convalescent care. The 10 bed transitional care area provides the convalescent care of infants born to our local residents.

The Training Program is designed to meet the needs of a variety of individuals seeking subspecialty training in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine. Both the neonatal registrar and fellow training positions are accredited by the Royal Australasian College of Physician for the subspecialty training. The neonatal fellow is based at the Royal Hospital for Women for the full 12 months with an option to extend for another year. The neonatal registrars while based at RHW may have rotation with the two tertiary neonatal units of the Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) and Royal North Shore (RNS) Hospitals. Experience with the NSW Neonatal and Paediatric Emergency Transport Service can be arranged on need basis.

Specialist care is provided by the 6 RHW neonatologists as well as paediatric subspecialty and surgical disciplines from the Sydney Children’s Hospital. RHW provides the trainee with experience in the management of a variety of complex surgical, cardiac, respiratory and other disorders as well as the common problems associated with prematurity. The Newborn Care Centre has the complement of senior nursing of clinical nurse consultant and nursing educators.

At RHW, under the supervision of the neonatologists, the neonatal fellow provides the clinical care in managing a wide range of complex medical and surgical illnesses as well as common neonatal conditions. The neonatal registrars on roster duties provide the day to day clinical care for all infants in the Newborn Care Centre in conjunction with the duty neonatal fellows.

All neonatal advanced trainees are given opportunity to learn and perform echocardiography guided by the cardiologists and other ultrasound investigations as part of their clinical care.
Neonatal fellows are generally expected to have completed a 12 month neonatal registrar experience. The duty fellow coordinates and supervises a team that includes the RHW neonatal registrars, and the paediatric registrars and residents on rotation from the Sydney Children Hospital Network. Afterhours, the neonatal fellow will also be co-rostered on-call with the supervising neonatologists at home in a roughly one-in-four basis with the other fellows. At the completion of the advanced year, the neonatal fellow is expected be capable to function as a subspecialty neonatologist and a contributing team member in a tertiary neonatal service.

The neonatal fellow and registrars will take part in antenatal consultation and in the delivery room management of high risk neonates, including the extremely preterm infants, multiple gestations and an increasing number of infants with antenatally diagnosed anomalies. RHW is the regional referral centres for high-risk pregnancies and designated as the NSW Fetal Centre by the Health Ministry. It offers state of the art antenatal diagnostic and therapeutic services. There is a weekly multidisciplinary Fetal Maternal clinic and meeting that the attendance and contribution of fellows are essential.

The Growth and Development and neonatal follow-up clinics monitor the neurodevelopmental outcome of high-risk infants, working with a multidisciplinary team and the latter provide post discharge care of neonates with a variety of medical conditions. These are an integral training component of fellow training program. The specialist follow up clinic of infants of perinatal drug use in pregnancy is based at the Sydney Children’s Hospital Outpatients. It is a joint clinic of the RHW neonatal service and the Health District Drug and Alcohol Service.

Trainees play an active role in the educational program of weekly Wednesday morning common teaching session and Thursday afternoon education sessions that includes in-depth discussions in clinical topics, mortality and morbidity discussions, research presentations, journal club and critical appraisal/clinical epidemiology. There are many opportunities to teach and supervise medical students, neonatal nurse as well as paediatric and obstetric residents in rotation.

Neonatal fellows take part in various departmental committees to gain experience in administration. Fellows are encouraged to take lead roles in infection control, resuscitation and quality and patient safety committees. Their contributions as team members in clinical, education and administrative responsibilities will be evaluated by all staff members and form part of their performance appraisal process conducted as regular feedback to the trainees. There is also a regular JMO forum for group feedback and issue discussion with senior medical and nursing staff.

We encourage fellows and registrars to develop their own research interests by gaining experience in research and audits under the supervision and support of the neonatologists. Each year, fellows are expected to submit and present their work at major perinatal-neonatal meetings such as the annual congress of the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand. Active participation and facilitation of department approved clinical trials and studies are expected. RHW provide opportunities to participate in clinical and basic research projects ranging from molecular and cell biology to population epidemiological research. Focus areas include developmental biology of the brain, lung inflammation, and clinical trials. Epidemiological research projects include case series in medical record audit, state and national neonatal data collection or health records and opportunity to be involved in international epidemiological research with overseas networks such as Canada, Japan, Sweden and other neonatal networks.

All applicants must be eligible for medical registration in NSW. For international medical graduate whose language of instruction at high school was not English, applicants are required to sit for the English language proficiency test of IELTS or equivalent.