

Clinical Oncology Specialty Training in Aberdeen

Aberdeen is a vibrant city in the North East of Scotland. This 'Silver City with Golden Sands' stands between a majestic coastline and the Grampian mountains, with Royal Deeside on its doorstep and Cairngorm National Park within a short driving distance.

Aberdeen has a cool, dry climate and with its ready access to hill, loch, river and sea, it is a superb base for all outdoor pursuits.

Schooling in Aberdeen ranks very highly within Scotland, and the city consistently comes near the top in UK quality of life surveys.

Aberdeen has good rail and air travel links with easy access to other UK cities and mainland Europe. For those who like to go more rural, daily sailings link Aberdeen to the Northern Isles.



Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

- The oncology facilities for NHS Grampian are based primarily at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, with modern inpatient facilities in the Emergency Care Centre and a newly built radiotherapy department housing 3 TrueBEAM linear accelerators and a High Dose Rate brachytherapy facility. Oncology services are provided to the population of Grampian, Orkney and Shetland, with systemic therapies also being delivered in the Northern Isles and in Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin.
- A state of the art cancer centre is scheduled to open in 2020, allowing all outpatient oncology facilities in Aberdeen to be co-located
- The oncology team comprises 12 consultant oncologists (8 Clinical Oncology, 4 Medical Oncology) with ongoing plans for expansion. There are currently 3 numbered posts in Clinical Oncology and 2 in Medical Oncology. There are close links with the Haematology department and the Palliative Medicine Service.
- The centre provides high quality modern radiotherapy with over 75% of 'non-breast' radical treatments delivered using VMAT, and with breast treatments currently delivered using forward planned IMRT. High dose rate brachytherapy is delivered for gynaecological cancer patients from Grampian, Highland and the Western and Northern Isles, and SABR (stereotactic ablative body radiotherapy) is available for suitable patients with lung cancer, with plans to expand the service to other tumour sites.
- There are close working relationships with the other northern Scottish centres in Inverness and Dundee, and close links with the University of Aberdeen.
- The Oncology Department is 'trials active', with opportunity for trainees to be involved in research. There is a comprehensive portfolio of both national and local clinical trials and translational work ongoing through links to the Institute of Medical Sciences (IMS) on the hospital site.
- The Oncology Department is heavily involved in delivering undergraduate teaching for the Medical School, and Oncology trainees are encouraged to contribute to this.

Oncology Training Scheme

- Trainees spend 4 years in Aberdeen and 1 year (usually in 2 or 3 4-6 months blocks) at other centres (typically but not exclusively in Scotland) to gain experience of different working environments, as well as to get exposure to a larger caseload of rarer tumours (paediatrics and sarcoma)

"on a day to day basis, you really feel the focus is on your training and development rather than service provision"

"consultants always let us know about interesting or unusual cases and opportunities for learning, maximising our training experience"

- Trainees attend the FRCR part I Scottish Oncology Course modules and are encouraged to attend UK part II training courses.

"incredibly supportive of our development and interests, for example, helping trainees to take out of programme research opportunities"

- Senior trainees have their own palliative radiotherapy planning list providing an excellent opportunity to develop radiotherapy planning skills and a degree of independence (while always having advice at hand if required)

"working environment is friendly and supportive and as a trainee you feel a valued member of the team"

"excellent access to learning opportunities with your consultant and other members of the MDT"