

USAF DENTAL RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITIES

The Air Force's Postgraduate Dental Education flagship in San Antonio began dental continuing education training programs in 1954. Located at Wilford Hall Medical Center (WHMC), graduate level residency training programs opened in 1956 and, as of 2006, these programs have graduated over 1000 specialty trained dental officers. A rotating Dental Internship Program was begun in 1957, the early precursor of today's comprehensive Advanced Education in General Dentistry and General Practice Residency programs. Today's mission for the dental staff at Wilford Hall involves maintaining the health of all military personnel to ensure battle readiness, providing postgraduate instruction through residency and fellowship programs to officers in the Federal Services, conducting short term clinical courses and continuing education programs for officers of the Dental Corps of the US Air Force as well as advanced technical courses for selected enlisted personnel. Patient care to achieve dental readiness remains its primary mission, while at the same time WHMC provides approximately 85% of the postgraduate dental training offered by the Air Force. The Dental Specialty consultants and teaching staff members provide significant support via consultation and on-site instructional visits to the various GPR and AEGD-1 residency programs located throughout the nation.

The specialty residencies are housed in three clinical locations on Lackland AFB. The hospital-based dental training programs are located in the medical treatment facility. These include the four-year Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Residency, as well as the two-year Hospital Dentistry Fellowship. MacKown Dental Clinic, immediately adjacent to the hospital complex, houses the specialty training programs in Endodontics, Periodontics, and Prosthodontics. Also located in this clinic is the second Fellowship program at WHMC, Maxillofacial Prosthetics. This one-year fellowship was established in 1984 and trains prosthodontic graduates in the fabrication and delivery of cleft palate obturators, as well as facial reconstructive prosthetic ears, eyes, and noses. The largest USAF dental facility, Dunn Dental Clinic, houses the final two residency programs; the 2-year General Dentistry Residency, and the Tri-Service Orthodontic Residency.

Training includes support from the 59th MDW Clinical Research Facility, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology Service, and Dental Radiology Services located at the USAF Processing Center – all located on Lackland AFB. Selected courses of study offer residents the opportunity to complete the requirements for a Master of Science Degree in Biomedical Science while simultaneously completing their specialty certificate programs. This is accomplished through affiliation with the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio. Through the support of central funding from Air Education and Training Command, the postgraduate education programs conduct 12 advanced programs for dental officers and 8 courses for enlisted personnel designed to help the Dental Corps provide currency and quality in dentistry.

The specialty training programs offered are as follows:

- Two-year residencies in Comprehensive Dentistry, Orthodontics, and Endodontics
- Three-year residencies in Periodontics and Prosthodontics
- A four-year residency in Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- A one-year fellowship in Maxillofacial Prosthetics
- A two-year fellowship in Hospital Dentistry

Comprehensive Dentistry (AEGD-2)

The Two-Year Advanced Education in General Dentistry Residency is designed to prepare selected Air Force dental officers to provide leadership in the clinical, instructional, investigative, and managerial phases of the profession and to effectively meet the comprehensive dental needs and worldwide mission of the United States Air Force. The program consists of a 24 month comprehensive clinical and didactic curriculum and includes instruction/experiences in all dental disciplines. Each resident also conducts an original research project to include protocol development, investigation and report of results. Formal presentations, instruction, seminars, literature reviews, demonstrations, and first-hand clinical experience are provided to the residents. The program is located at Wilford Hall Medical Center (WHMC), Lackland AFB TX, and classes typically consist of 10 residents per year. Additionally, USAF dental officers can opt, on a limited basis, to attend the US Navy General Dentistry Residency at Bethesda, MD. A certificate attesting to successful completion of the residency is awarded upon satisfactory completion of the objectives of the curriculum, and a Master of Science degree is awarded to graduates who have successfully completed their research and thesis defense. Graduates are eligible to challenge the American Board of General Dentistry.

SUMMARY:

Length: 24 month

Location: Lackland AFB or Bethesda (Navy)

Number: 10 residents/year: Lackland

1 resident(on a limited basis): Bethesda (Navy)

Upon Completion: Certificate and Master of Science Degree

ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY (4 YEAR)

The Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery residency is a 48-month program based at David Grant USAF Medical Center, Travis AFB CA and Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB TX. This residency is structured to provide a progression of clinical and didactic experiences through rotations and participation in an active teaching program which will lead to certification by the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and meet the requirements of the USAF. Residents receive training in Oral Pathology, ambulatory general anesthesia and sedation, and major oral and maxillofacial surgery. Off-service time includes rotations through the Internal Medicine Department, the Anesthesia Service, and the General Surgery service. Third year residents also have rotations through the plastic, neurosurgery, and otolaryngology surgical services.

SUMMARY:

Length: 4 year

Location: David Grant Medical Center Travis AFB CA

Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland AFB TX

Number: 3 residents/ year at WHMC, 2 residents/year at DGMC

Upon Completion: Certificate

ENDODONTICS

The USAF has two Endodontic Residency Programs, one at Wilford Hall Medical Center and one at Keesler Medical Center. Each is a 24 month clinical and didactic post-doctoral certificate program. Students spend the first year in residence at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA) or Louisiana State University in New Orleans. The first year includes didactic basic sciences, pertinent Endodontic seminars, literature review, and research. During the second year, residents are assigned to Wilford Hall Medical Center (WHMC) or Keesler Medical Center. WHMC and Keesler are the largest complete medical care facilities in the USAF.

SUMMARY:

Length: 24 month

Location: UTHSCSA/ WHMC or LSU/Keesler

Number: 2 residents/ year at each location

Upon Completion: Certificate

PERIODONTICS

The USAF Periodontic Residency is a 36-month clinical and didactic program. Students spend one year in residence at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA) Dental School, and two years in residence at Mackown Dental Clinic, Wilford Hall Medical Center (WHMC) at Lackland AFB. The first year is devoted to the development of a sound biologic and scientific basis for diagnosis and therapy. This curriculum includes microbiology, immunology, anatomy, histology, biochemistry, pathology, pharmacology, physiology, and biostatistics. Lectures and literature seminars pertaining to clinical periodontics are also started during this first year. A clinical investigation project is initiated during this year in partial fulfillment of a Master of Science degree and is completed during the second and third years. The second year is comprised of approximately 56% clinical, 33% didactic, and 9% research activities. formal instruction by the staff is provided for all aspects of periodontal care and therapeutic periodontal principles are stressed. Progressively more complex cases are assigned throughout the year including dental implant patients. The third year consists of approximately 56% clinical, 27% didactic, 11% research, and 6% teaching and readiness activities. the senior residents conduct a supervised comprehensive practice of clinical Periodontics. Each year residents will attend the Annual Scientific Session of the American Academy of Periodontology, and other courses as determined by the department chairman. Upon completion of their research projects each resident will comply with Master's thesis requirements and expected to subsequently publish their results.

SUMMARY:

Length: 36 month

Location: UTHSCSA/ WHMC

Number: 3 or 4 residents/ year

Upon Completion: Certificate and Master's Degree from UTHSCSA

PROSTHODONTICS

Introduction – The United States Air Force Prosthodontics Residency began in 1957. It is a 36 month program affiliated with The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSC-SA). The program is accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation, having received its most recent recertification in 2003. Curriculum emphasis includes comprehensive training in the diagnosis, treatment planning and prosthetic rehabilitation of patients with complex needs in the areas of fixed, removable and implant prosthodontics resulting from missing teeth, oral structures and/or severely worn or debilitated dentitions. Critical review of current and classic prosthodontics literature is fully integrated into the 3 year curriculum. Residents are scheduled for at least 1 TDY per year (i.e. professional meeting to supplement the in-house curriculum). Meetings commonly attended are the American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) Annual Scientific Session, ACP sponsored Board Review Course, and the American Association for Dental Research Annual Session. Completion of this residency will fully prepare the graduate to achieve specialty certification from the American Board of Prosthodontics (ABP). To date, 120 of the program's overall 153 graduates have achieved ABP certification for an unparalleled, cumulative 78% ABP certification rate. Additionally as part of the curriculum, residents who complete an approved, independent research project and satisfy requirements set by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at UTHSC-SA, earn a Masters of Science (MS) degree in Prosthodontics. Graduates of the program are assigned to Air Force installations worldwide in positions involving a combination of clinical, education, mentoring and laboratory activities in the field of prosthodontics.

First Year – The first year curriculum consists primarily of didactic courses taught at UTHSC-SA. In addition, an original research project is devised and data collection accomplished in support of the requirements for the MS degree in Prosthodontics. Residents also devote 1.5-2 days per week to a laboratory based course in Advanced Prosthodontic Principles at Lackland AFB during which diagnostic, treatment planning and clinical concepts are introduced. The core philosophy of critical, independent thinking with evidence based justification for all decisions are introduced. This philosophy is developed and enhanced throughout the course of the program. Residents are instructed in and demonstrate comprehensive laboratory procedures in the areas of fixed, removable and implant prosthodontics that will be utilized during the clinical components of the residency. Preclinical teaching in the complete and partial removable prosthodontics courses at UTHSC-SA is also completed in the first year. The first year curriculum culminates in the Clinical Introduction Course where residents make their transition to clinical Prosthodontics, primarily in the areas of diagnosis, treatment planning and fixed prosthodontics.

Second Year – Clinical prosthodontics dominates the schedule. Short clinically based introductory courses in complete and removable partial prosthodontics are completed prior to assigning patients with both limited focus and comprehensive treatment needs in the areas of fixed, removable and implant prosthodontics. Patients with less involved needs that allow the resident to rapidly become involved in prosthodontic rehabilitation are treated initially. Simultaneously, involvement with complex multidisciplinary patients requiring full mouth reconstruction is initiated. Diagnostic and pre prosthetic treatment is planned and executed to prepare for comprehensive rehabilitation during the later part of the second as well as the third year of the program. Cases are assigned and treatment initiated that will fulfill requirements for ABP certification. Selected short courses in orthodontics, orofacial pain, oral pathology and dental implantology are also included in the curriculum. Residents are also involved in teaching basic clinical prosthodontics procedures to Air Force general dentists during the Prosthodontics Postgraduate Course. Continuation and/or completion of the MS degree requirements are also expected.

Third Year – With progression to the final training year, residents are fully engaged in the reconstruction of patients with complex prosthodontics needs. Cases fulfilling requirements for ABP certification are completed. Interaction, delegation and utilization of dental laboratory technician services will increase as the residents demonstrate laboratory proficiency. Residents will complete written and oral mock board examinations to fully prepare them to attain board certification. Numerous opportunities to construct and deliver original lecture presentations will also occur in this year. If not completed during the second year of training, requirements for the MS degree may also be finalized prior to graduation. Residents also receive instruction in administration as it applies specifically to a military prosthodontics practice and an Air Force dental laboratory and to the Air Force Dental Corps in general.

SUMMARY:

Length: 36 month

Location: UTHSCSA/ WHMC

Number: 3 or 4 residents/ year

Upon Completion: Certificate and Master's Degree from UTHSCSA (upon completion of qualified research project)

ORTHODONTICS

The USAF provides training opportunities for 2 residents each year in the specialty of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics at the Tri-service Orthodontic Residency Program at Lackland AFB, TX. Typical residency classes are composed of 6 residents; 2 each from the three services, who are selected from active duty dental officer applicants at separate selection boards. The Tri-Service Orthodontic Residency Program is unique in that it is the only Tri-Service program dedicated to training dental officers of the three services in one facility. The program contains a comprehensive didactic and clinical orthodontic curriculum focused on treatment of all categories of skeletal and dental malformations requiring Phase I, growth modification, surgical-orthodontic treatment and management of craniofacial anomalies.

SUMMARY

Number: Varies by needs of the US Air Force, US Army and US Navy

Length: 24 month

Location: Lackland AFB, Dunn Dental Clinic

Upon Completion: Certificate

ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL PATHOLOGY

USAF-sponsored training in oral and maxillofacial pathology consists of a 36-month program. Once accepted for training, applicants will train at either a civilian institution acceptable to the Air Force Dental Corps or at the Naval Postgraduate Dental School in Bethesda, Maryland. During the three-year program, residents will receive instruction in general and oral pathology, anatomy, microbiology, physiology, biochemistry, immunology, histochemistry, pharmacology, statistics, genetics, virology, electron microscopy, and molecular biology. Other specific requirements in the curriculum include: surgical oral pathology, oral cytology, clinical evaluation and management of patients, anatomic pathology, laboratory medicine, radiology, and research. Depending on the institution, either a certificate or Master's degree will be issued after successful completion of the program. After graduation, USAF oral pathologists are expected to obtain board certification through the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology. The certifying examination is given each year in September or October. Board certification is considered essential for the practice of this specialty, and is usually a requirement in order to obtain sign-out privileges in a hospital/medical center, the setting in which most USAF oral pathologists practice.

SUMMARY:

Length: 36 month

Location: AFIT-sponsored civilian institution or Naval Postgraduate Dental School (Bethesda)

Number: as needed

Upon Completion: Certificate and/or Master's Degree

OROFACIAL PAIN

The Air Force offers a 2-year fellowship or a 3-year residency training program in the field of orofacial pain at the Triservice Orofacial Pain Center located at the Naval Postgraduate Dental School in Bethesda, MD. The program provides an education in pain physiology as well as training in diagnosis and management of patients with complex pain problems of the head and neck. This is provided through lectures, seminars, research, clinical experience, and specialty rotations. More information on the Triservice Orofacial Pain Fellowship/Residency is available at:

http://www.bethesda.med.navy.mil/careers/Postgraduate%5FDental%5FSchool/Orofacial_Pain/Residency.aspx

SUMMARY: Orofacial Pain Fellowship

Length: 24 months

Location: Bethesda, MD

Number: training availability based on needs of the USAF

Prerequisites: Previous 2-year general dentistry or specialty residency

Upon completion: Certificate, with opportunity for Master's Degree from George Washington University

SUMMARY: Orofacial Pain Residency

Length: 36 months

Location: Bethesda, MD

Number: training availability based on needs of the USAF

Upon completion: Certificate, with opportunity for Master's Degree from George Washington University

DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH

The USAF selects dental officers for a two year program in Dental Public Health. The first year is attending an accredited School of Public Health to receive a Master's Degree in Public Health (MPH). The second year is a 12 month residency at an accredited Dental Public Health Residency. The focus is on preventive/community dentistry, population health and policy. Past residents have attended University of Texas Health Sciences at San Antonio, Texas; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; and the National Institute of Dental Craniofacial Research at Bethesda, Maryland.

SUMMARY

Number: Varies by needs of USAF (Usually one every two or three years)

Length: 24 months

Location: Accredited School of Public Health/Dental Public Health Residency

Upon Completion: MPH and Certificate

MAXILLOFACIAL PROSTHETICS FELLOWSHIP

The United States Air Force Maxillofacial Prosthetics Fellowship began in 1984, with 17 fellows from the three major military services having been trained to date. It is a 12 month clinical and laboratory based program held at Lackland AFB. Applicants for this program must have completed an ADA accredited residency in Prosthodontics and be a member of one of the 3 uniformed services (US Air Force, Army, Navy). The fellowship program is accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation, having received its most recent recertification in 2003. Training focuses on prosthetic rehabilitation of patients with intraoral and extraoral defects of the head and neck resulting from wartime injuries, trauma, cancer ablation and congenital abnormalities. Emphasis is placed on close interaction and support of medical/surgical services including but not limited to Otolaryngology, Radiation Oncology, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Medical Oncology, Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery, Orthopedics, Neurosurgery, Speech Pathology, Anesthesiology, Aerospace Medicine, and Pulmonary Medicine. In addition to management of the maxillofacial patient in the operating room setting, the curriculum includes comprehensive training in the diagnosis, treatment planning, prosthetic rehabilitation and laboratory fabrication of prostheses and devices for maxillofacial patients with varied patient needs. Fellows will attend the annual scientific session of the American Academy of Maxillofacial Prosthetics where he/she will display a poster presentation describing a clinical treatment, laboratory technique or research project.

SUMMARY: Maxillofacial Prosthetics Fellowship

Length: 12 month

Location: WHMC, Lackland AFB TX

Number: 1 fellow (training availability based on needs of the USAF)

Prerequisites: Previous Prosthodontics Residency

Upon Completion: Certificate

ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL RADIOLOGY

The USAF selects candidates on a needs basis for Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology training. Prospective candidates will need to personally apply and be accepted into the program that they desire to attend. Individuals selected for training must complete a minimum of two years of full-time formal study and training in a university-based or university-related advanced education program (clinical and didactic post-doctoral certificate program). Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology residents are AFIT sponsored and will be approved to attend a 24-month program leading to a certificate upon graduation. The USAF has had the majority of its applicants attend the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA).

SUMMARY

Number: Varies by needs of the USAF

Length: 24 months

Location: UTHSCSA (historically), selected by candidate

Upon Completion: Certificate

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

The Air Force selects candidates on a needs basis for pediatric dentistry training. Individuals selected for training are able to attend either a hospital based or a university credentialed program of their choosing. Air Force sponsored candidates need to personally apply and be accepted into the program they desire to attend. Pediatric dental residents are AFIT sponsored, and will be approved to attend a 24 month program leading to a certificate upon graduation

SUMMARY:

Number: Varies based on need

Length: 24 months

Location: selected by candidate

Degree upon completion: certificate

AEGD-1

The Air Force Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD-1) Residencies are postgraduate educational programs offering the recent dental graduate advanced professional education beyond the undergraduate level. The 52-week programs are accredited by the ADA through CODA (Council on Dental Accreditation).

Currently, USAF offers the AEGD Residency at the following AF bases: Barksdale AFB, LA; Bolling-Andrews AFB, Wash, DC; Eglin AFB, FL; Elmendorf AFB, AK; Langley AFB, VA; Nellis AFB, NV; Offutt AFB, NE; Scott AFB, IL; Sheppard AFB, TX; Travis AFB, CA; USAF Academy, CO; and Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.

The objective of the programs is to produce competent, well-rounded Air Force General Dental Officers who can effectively manage the comprehensive dental health needs of the Air Force community and beneficiaries. Didactic and clinical training are provided as each resident expands their depth and breadth of knowledge and expertise in the disciplines of endodontics, oral surgery, orthodontics, periodontics, implantology, fixed and removable prosthodontics, comprehensive treatment planning, operative, and pediatric dentistry. In addition to these disciplines, forensic dentistry, infection control, preventive dentistry, geriatric dentistry, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, oral pathology, radiology, anxiety and pain control (including IV sedation), and physical diagnosis are emphasized.

Though programs vary slightly, the training provided at each location is remarkably similar, as all follow the same highly successful template to achieve comparable outcomes. Staff to student to ratios are again very similar with larger programs having more staff mentors. Locations obviously offer much diversity. However, it should be noted that the resident will only be at the training location (except Elmendorf AFB AK) for one busy year, then be reassigned to another permanent duty location. Thus, the location of the AEGD-1 residency is not highly significant to the program or the long-term quality of family/personal life.

Applicants will interview at one of the AEGD-1 programs. However, residents are applying to USAF Board and not that particular residency program. Candidates submit a preference list for the residency they would like to attend.

SUMMARY:

Length: 12 month

Locations: Andrews-Bolling AFB (9), Barksdale AFB (5), Elmendorf AFB (3), Eglin AFB (8), Keesler AFB (8), Langley AFB (6), Nellis AFB (6), Offutt AFB (8), Scott AFB (6), Sheppard AFB (6), Travis AFB (6), USAF Academy (6), and Wright-Patterson AFB (8).

Number: Approximately 85 residents/year; (see above)

Upon Completion: Certificate

GPR

The General Practice Residency (GPR) is a postgraduate educational program offering the recent dental graduate advanced professional education beyond the undergraduate level. This 52 week program conforms to the standards set forth by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association. At this time the USAF currently offers a GPR at Keesler AFB, Mississippi, one of the largest medical centers in the Air Force. The objective of the program is to produce competent, well-rounded Air Force General Dental Officers who can effectively manage the comprehensive dental health needs of the Air Force community and beneficiaries. The majority of the resident's time is devoted to advanced clinical training in recognized dental specialties and comprehensive dentistry in ambulatory care settings. Patient care is also provided under general anesthesia in the Operating Room. Additional hospital experience is gained through rotations in Anesthesia, Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine, ENT , Oral Surgery, Pediatric Dentistry, and by participation in rounds and consultative services with various medical disciplines. Emphasis is also placed on training related to the care of medically compromised patients. Didactic and clinical training will be provided as each resident gains clinical experience in the disciplines of endodontics, oral surgery, orthodontics, periodontics, fixed and removable prosthodontics, treatment planning, operative, and pediatric dentistry. In addition to these disciplines, residents will be exposed to infection control procedures, preventive dentistry, geriatric dentistry, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, oral pathology, radiology, forensic dentistry, anxiety and pain control, and the concepts of physical diagnosis.

SUMMARY:

Length: 12 month

Location: Keesler AFB MS

Number: 2 residents/year

Upon Completion: Certificate