

pediatric gastroenterology

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM





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from the fellowship directors

Welcome to the Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition Fellowship Program at UT Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW). Our mission is to provide an environment that encourages the development of the cognitive, clinical, procedural and critical research skills that are essential in cultivating a successful and productive career as an academic pediatric gastroenterologist. Our training program is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).

Ranked 10th in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, the UT Southwestern Division of Pediatric Gastroenterology at Children's HealthSM provides integrated and comprehensive care to children with a range of gastrointestinal illnesses, from the common to the complex.

The clinical services provided by the division are not dependent upon fellows. The fellowship program is structured primarily as a learning experience. It consists of three years of training: the first year focuses mainly on developing and mastering clinical skills, and the second and third years concentrate on the development of analytical research skills that will guide each fellow in the successful completion of a scholarly project.

Thank you for your interest in our fellowship program. This brochure is intended to provide an overview of our program and help you with the application process. Please feel free to contact us directly with any questions you may have. We believe our program offers one of the most comprehensive and competitive training experiences available – and we hope you'll consider joining us at UTSW and Children's Medical Center for this exciting next step in your career.

Sincerely,

Meghana Sathe, M.D.

Fellowship Director

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Associate Fellowship Director

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fellowship leadership

Our fellowship program is supported by several key committees that ensure a robust and well-rounded training experience:

- The **Program Evaluation Committee (PEC)**, made up of faculty and fellows, advises on the structure of clinical rotations, electives, didactics and recruitment to ensure program quality and alignment with ACGME standards.
- The **Clinical Competency Committee (CCC)** reviews each fellow's performance and professional development. It reviews evaluations and assesses progress toward achieving ACGME milestones, prepares semiannual milestone reports and advises the program leadership on promotion and advancement decisions.
- Each fellow is also supported by a **Scholarship Oversight Committee (SOC)**, which guides the development of their individual scholarly activity. This committee includes at least three UTSW faculty members – one of whom is the fellow's primary research mentor – offering a broad range of expertise and perspectives to support both research and overall career development.

faculty

Our program includes 35 faculty members with expertise in general and subspecialty gastroenterology. Many are nationally recognized leaders actively engaged in research across gastrointestinal, hepatic and nutritional diseases. Ongoing research activities are supported by industry sponsors and foundations such as the NIH, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation.



teaching institutions

UT Southwestern Medical Center

UT Southwestern Medical Center is the most prominent medical education and biomedical research institution in Texas. It is the largest medical school in the University of Texas System. Seven UT Southwestern alumni and/or faculty members have been awarded Nobel Prizes. In addition, the faculty currently includes 25 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 17 members of the National Academy of Medicine, 15 Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigators and 15 members of the American Academy of Arts and Science.



2,000 clinical residents
and fellows annually



5,700 active
research projects



Nearly \$425 million
in annual research funding

Children's Health and Children's Medical Center Dallas

The core of our training is performed at Children's Medical Center Dallas, part of the Children's Health system. Recognized as one of the top pediatric hospitals in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*, this health care center has 490 licensed beds, including 77 Level I PICU and CVICU beds, more than 25 subspecialties and a Level I trauma center. It has a 24-bed inpatient gastroenterology unit, an endoscopy suite, an outpatient surgical center, a solid organ transplant clinic and a dedicated gastroenterology outpatient clinic. The clinical activity of our division is centered on providing high-quality care to our large-volume service.



20,000 outpatient
visits annually



2,000 inpatient
admissions annually



More than 3,000
procedures per year

Other training sites

In addition, we provide consultation in the NICU and Newborn Nursery at Parkland Memorial Hospital, UT Southwestern's William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital and Texas Health Resources Presbyterian Hospital. Additional elective rotations and research opportunities are available at Children's Medical Center Plano, Baylor University Medical Center and the Veteran Administration North Texas Health Care System located in downtown Dallas.

curriculum

Fellowship: first year

The first year of fellowship focuses on building core knowledge and clinical skills in gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition. Fellows rotate through the gastroenterology inpatient unit, hepatology inpatient unit, and consult service, with four weeks of selective time. Two of those weeks can be used to explore specialty electives such as liver transplant, intestinal rehabilitation, IBD, cystic fibrosis, eosinophilic esophagitis, aerodigestive and motility. Fellows may also gain exposure to advanced procedures like ERCP, endoscopic ultrasound and motility studies. The remaining two weeks are dedicated to research electives, allowing fellows to explore academic interests and identify potential mentors for their scholarly projects.

Fellowship: second and third years

During the second and third years of fellowship, fellows focus on completing a basic science or clinical research project to fulfill ACGME scholarly activity requirements. Those pursuing basic science projects gain experience in experimental design, laboratory techniques, and the foundational skills needed for a career as a physician-scientist. Fellows focusing on clinical research develop competencies in patient-oriented investigation, including study design, data analysis and outcomes research. All fellows receive training in scientific presentation, abstract and manuscript writing and grant development. Research mentorship is flexible and can extend beyond the Pediatric Gastroenterology Division to other departments within UTSW and its affiliate centers, depending on the fellow's interests. Additionally, fellows participate in a structured quality improvement (QI) curriculum and complete a QI project, gaining practical skills in leading and evaluating data-driven improvement efforts.

Specialty electives

Fellows have numerous opportunities to participate in elective rotations throughout their training. External electives at other academic institutions are also available with prior approval from the Division Director and the Chair of the Department of Pediatrics.

Continuity clinics

Outpatient clinics offer fellows the valuable opportunity to manage a longitudinal cohort of patients. Each fellow's clinic is designed to include a diverse mix of chronic and acute gastrointestinal, hepatic and nutritional conditions. Under the supervision of a dedicated clinic mentor, fellows take primary responsibility for their patients, allowing them to develop clinical skills and emphasize continuity of care. A multidisciplinary support team – including dietitians, psychologists and nurse practitioners – ensures each clinic provides comprehensive, integrated care.

Procedures

Our fellowship benefits from a high-volume therapeutic endoscopy program, with 3,294 procedures performed in 2024 alone. This robust clinical exposure ensures all fellows achieve competence and proficiency in core procedures, including upper endoscopy, colonoscopy, polypectomy, esophageal dilatation, rectal suction biopsy and therapies for gastrointestinal bleeding (e.g., banding, sclerotherapy, cautery and clips). Fellows also gain experience with advanced procedures such as gastrostomy tube placement, esophageal impedance monitoring, pneumatic and esophageal dilatation, manometry (esophageal and anorectal), capsule endoscopy, ERCP, balloon enteroscopy and endoscopic ultrasound.

In addition, we've integrated GI Simulation experience at the UTSW Simulation Center to enhance fellowship training with procedures.



training tracks

There are several training tracks within our program:

Clinical track

This track is designed for fellows pursuing careers as academic clinicians or clinical educators with a focus in a specific subspecialty area. After the first year, fellows may concentrate on areas such as inflammatory bowel disease, pancreatobiliary disease, therapeutic endoscopy, motility, nutrition, cystic fibrosis or liver disease. Fellows engage in clinical research and develop advanced skills within their chosen focus area.

Cystic fibrosis (CF) track

This specialized track offers a rich environment for fellows interested in cystic fibrosis (CF) care and research. Uniquely led by both a pediatric gastroenterologist and a pediatric pulmonologist, our CF Center supports a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach. Ongoing research at UTSW focuses on CF-related liver and lung disease, nutrition, pregnancy and emerging therapeutics targeting genetic mutations. Fellows in this track may also apply for a Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Fellowship Grant to support their clinical and research efforts during training and beyond.

Research track

This track is designed to train fellows to become independent physician-scientists in gastroenterology, hepatology or nutrition. Following the first year of clinical training, fellows focus on a specific area of basic research under the mentorship of a UTSW faculty member and their Scholarship Oversight Committee. While the majority of time is dedicated to laboratory research, fellows continue to care for patients through their weekly outpatient clinic to maintain clinical continuity.

National meetings and training grants

All fellows are encouraged to submit and present their research at local, regional and national conferences. Many have delivered both poster and oral presentations, earning awards and securing financial support for their scholarly work.

The fellowship program is supported by several training grants, including:

- National Institutes of Health (NIH) T32, in conjunction with our adult GI colleagues
- Cystic Fibrosis Foundation-sponsored Clinical Fellowship training grant

The program also has reserved fellowship slots for M.D./Ph.D. candidates as part of the Department's Physician-Scientist Training Program (PSTP) in Pediatrics (PSTP2). The PSTP2 allows qualified candidates to receive training in pediatrics at UTSW and Children's Medical Center for two years followed by clinical and research training in the Pediatric Gastroenterology Fellowship program. The program also fosters transition to a junior faculty appointment through several ongoing support mechanisms.

teaching and didactic activities

Fellows actively engage in a robust didactic curriculum designed to integrate clinical practice, scientific knowledge and scholarly development. These educational activities provide a comprehensive foundation to support both clinical excellence and academic growth within the Division.

National

Our program ensures all fellows have the opportunity to attend and participate in the NASPGHAN Fellows' Conferences. We are deeply committed to supporting NASPGHAN and its educational initiatives, which provide invaluable networking and career development opportunities. Several of our faculty – Bradley Barth, M.D., Norberto Rodríguez-Báez, M.D., Rinarani Sanghavi, M.D., Meghana Sathe, M.D., and David Troendle, M.D. – have proudly served as organizers and leaders of these events.

We also encourage our fellows to participate in conferences hosted by other organizations, such as American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), North American Cystic Fibrosis Conference (NACFC), Digestive Diseases Week (DDW), Society of Pediatric Research (SPR) and Pediatric Academic Societies (PAS) to further expand their academic exposure and professional connections.

Departmental

We encourage fellows to participate in departmental conferences that promote multidisciplinary collaboration. Fellows are frequently invited to present complex cases alongside faculty from various specialties, highlighting challenges and key learning points.

Departmental conferences include: Department of Pediatrics Research Forum, Departmental Fellows Conference, Grand Rounds and Multidisciplinary Conference.

Intradepartmental

Intradepartmental conferences provide focused, case-based discussions on GI-related topics in collaboration with other divisions, promoting interdisciplinary learning within the department.

These conferences include: Joint GI and Surgery Conference, Joint GI and Critical Care Conference, Nutrition Conference, Pathology Conference, Pediatric/Adult Combined Conference and Radiology Conference.

Special endowed lectures

The Division hosts several endowed lectures throughout the year, including the annual Willis C. Maddrey Liver Lecture and the Gary Morchower Lectureship in Pediatric Gastroenterology. These events bring nationally recognized leaders in gastroenterology and hepatology to UTSW for state-of-the-art clinical and research presentations, faculty and fellow discussions and the exchange of educational insights.

Divisional

Divisional conferences are designed specifically to support fellows in mastering core GI topics while also building a strong foundation for academic and professional success. The curriculum includes discussions on ethics, evidence-based medicine, quality improvement, research and career development.

Divisional conferences are: Board Review, Book Club, Fellow-Faculty Career Development/Teaching Series Conference, Academic Half Day, Culinary Medicine, Fireside Chats, Inflammatory Bowel Disease Team Weekly Meeting, Journal Club, Liver Transplant Meeting, Liver Team Weekly Meeting, Fellows' Motility Series, Case Conference, Morbidity and Mortality and Quality Improvement.

sample weekly conference schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A.M. *IBD team meeting	A.M.	A.M. *Grand rounds	A.M. Case conference (every other week)	A.M.
Noon Liver team meeting	Noon *Departmental multidisciplinary conference	Noon Board review	Noon	Noon
P.M.	P.M. Fellows' clinic or academic half day**	P.M. Fellows' clinic or academic half day**	P.M. Fellows' clinic or academic half day**	P.M.

**Optional/rotation specific*

***Academic half day rotates afternoons every other week. Fellows' clinic is canceled during Academic Half Day*

developing teaching skills

Teaching is a vital component of our fellowship, aimed at equipping fellows with the skills to become lifelong educators. Fellows lead inpatient rounds with faculty supervision and actively participate in medical education across all levels, including the second-year GI medical school curriculum, fourth-year boot camp, Pediatric Clerkship core lectures and residency lecture series. Our fellows are regularly recognized by the pediatric house staff for their dedication to education and patient care, and many have received teaching awards from medical students and residents. Past recipients include Michael Russo, M.D., Eduardo Beltroy, M.D., Lillianne Chan, M.D., Sherief Mansi, M.D., Nicholas Norris, M.D., Claudia Moreda-Rivero, M.D., and Alex Wright, M.D.

Fellows also contribute to patient and family education through programs such as Camp Oasis and dedicated sessions for individuals with inflammatory bowel disease, celiac disease, eosinophilic esophagitis and cystic fibrosis.

Several of our faculty have been honored for their excellence in teaching. Charina Ramirez, M.D. received "Best Course Director & Favorite Course" from the UTSW medical students in 2022. John Andersen, M.D., and Norberto Rodríguez-Báez, M.D., have both received UTSW teaching awards. At the national level, Dr. Rodríguez-Báez was awarded the 2022 NASPGHAN Master Educator Award, recognizing his significant and sustained contributions to pediatric gastroenterology, hepatology and nutrition through educational scholarship.

In 2022, the John Milton Andersen Award for Teaching Excellence was established in honor of Dr. Andersen's decades of dedication to teaching and mentoring at UTSW and Children's Health. The inaugural recipient was Norberto Rodríguez-Báez, M.D., followed by Amal Aquil, M.D., Bhaskar Gurram, M.D., Megha Mehta, M.D. and Lauren Lazar, M.D.

alumni's performance

We are proud that our program consistently achieves a high first-time pass rate on the Pediatric Gastroenterology Board Certification exam. Additionally, many of our graduates have gone on to successful academic careers at major medical centers across the U.S., excelling in both clinical and research tracks. Our alumni also hold prominent leadership roles within NASPGHAN and other professional medical societies.

alumni's perspectives

"The faculty truly has your best interest at heart. I enjoyed working in such a positive environment. It helped me grow and understand the art of medicine even more. My fellowship gave me the opportunity not only to focus strongly on my clinical training but also to spend my second and third year working on a basic science research project. Even though I did not pursue basic science research as a career, the experience taught me to critically think and problem solve. If you come to UTSW, you will inherit a second family. These relationships will remain an indispensable resource throughout your career."

SABINA ALI, M.D.
CLASS OF 2008

"I really loved my fellowship in Dallas. It was like a family, and I believed the attendings were invested in my growth. I was always passionate about treating childhood obesity, which led me to my work in NAFLD. Aside from the strong clinical foundation the fellowship provides in general GI, I was able to do clinical research specializing in NAFLD. I was very fortunate to have amazing mentors, obtain a research grant and learn how to lead a multidisciplinary team. With the support of my mentors and the program, I was able to do extra training at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia in nutrition and obesity. I believe if you are passionate and hardworking, this fellowship will help foster your goals and train you to be an amazing gastroenterologist."

JENNIFER PANGANIBAN, M.D.
CLASS OF 2015

"UTSW was my top choice for fellowship because of two reasons – people and training! Every person I met on my interview day at UTSW was so warm and welcoming. I felt like this is the type of 'work family' I want for fellowship. Since I matched, I was supported by the faculty and my amazing co-fellows in every matter – be it moving from the East Coast or adjusting to the new city/workplace – everyone was very helpful (and flexible in times of the COVID pandemic). Fellow education, training, career goals and their well-being are given the utmost importance at UTSW. Diverse clinical exposure and endless research opportunities were the norm! Living in Dallas was great (and more affordable compared to NY/NJ life)."

AAYUSH GABRANI, M.D.
CLASS OF 2023



fellows' perspectives

"I am so excited to be a first year fellow at UTSW, my top pick for fellowship. As a Texan interested in cystic fibrosis research, I feel like I could not be luckier to have a great cystic fibrosis center in Texas that does leading edge research and has a dedicated multidisciplinary cystic fibrosis clinic. There is a great support system within the Children's Health clinics and hospital. The environment in this division is welcoming, collegial and robust. Doing research with other divisions is well received and lends itself to innovation and discovery. Dallas has all the accommodations you would hope for with things like arts, entertainment, housing and shopping. With such a large city and hospital system, this is truly a place where you can see yourself becoming the physician, the leader, the teacher and the researcher you have always wanted to be."

WILLIAM D. WOOD IV, M.D.
CLASS OF 2028

"Being a pediatric GI fellow at UTSW has been an unforgettable chapter in my medical career. The breadth of gastrointestinal pathology and procedures we are exposed to on a daily basis is remarkable. This program cultivates such a warm, supportive and collaborative environment that is ideal for learning and personal growth. All faculty are excited to teach and share their own passions and knowledge within the field. Living in Dallas with endless sunshine and delicious BBQ is just another perk. I am truly so grateful to train at a program that feels more like a big family than just an institution."

ASHLEY POLACHEK, M.D.
CLASS OF 2026

"Training as a Pediatric GI fellow at UTSW has been an incredible experience. The program is highly supportive, mentorship-focused and committed to education. Faculty and fellows are always accessible – help is just a phone call away! The diverse patient population and broad spectrum of GI pathologies provide an outstanding learning environment. Plus, living in Dallas has been a bonus – the city is welcoming, beautiful and full of amazing food."

SANDRA RIOS MELENDEZ, M.D.
CLASS OF 2027

living in dallas



8+ million
people in Dallas-Fort
Worth and its surrounding
communities



**Highly diversified
economy**
with broad employment
opportunities for
two-career families



One of the most
stable housing
markets in the nation



DFW International
is one of the nation's
largest airports



**No state or city
income tax**



World-class
art museums and a
vibrant night life



- Dallas' diverse population infuses neighborhoods, street festivals, food and culture with rich ethnic inspirations



- Strong public and private school systems
- Cost of living lower than the national average



- Home to the corporate headquarters of many major organizations
- One of the largest urban districts in the country
- Numerous public lakes and trails
- Diverse shopping scene, from luxury brands at NorthPark Center to hidden gems in neighborhoods like the Design District and Knox/Henderson
- One of only 13 cities in the country with all four major professional sports teams
- Southwest Airlines is headquartered in the heart of the city at Dallas Love Field Airport

More information about Dallas can be obtained from [visitdallas.com](https://www.visitdallas.com)
and [listings.guidelive.com](https://www.listings.guidelive.com).

a message from the Division Chief, Dr. Bradley Barth

Thank you for considering UT Southwestern and Children's Health as the site of your pediatric GI, hepatology and nutrition fellowship training! You will undoubtedly find this to be a supportive and collegial environment committed to training future leaders in our field. Our expertise in clinical care and medical education, including the most advanced pediatric therapeutic endoscopy program in the nation, is well recognized nationally and frequently attested to by our graduated trainees. Clinical and bench research opportunities are bountiful and include, but not limited to, opportunities in IBD, cholestatic liver disease, cystic fibrosis and obesity.

I appreciate your interest in joining our team, and I look forward to meeting you on your interview day.

BRADLEY BARTH, M.D.
Division Chief



applying to our program

Our fellowship program participates in the National Resident Match Program (NRMP) and the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS). Our program accepts U.S. citizens, greencard holders/permanent residents, and J1 visa holders. We do not accept H1B visa holders at this time.

Contact information

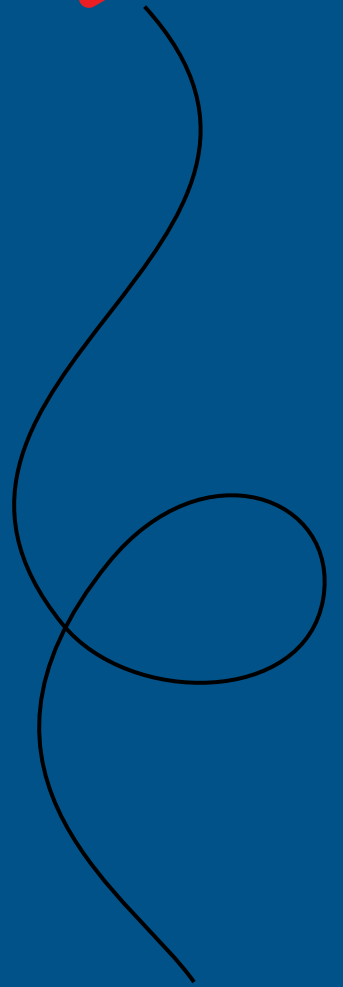
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**Scan the QR code for
more information.**



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Medical Center.™