



Post-fellowship Training Program in Head and Neck Surgery

Note: [The Guidelines for Recognition of Academy College of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (3.4) stated that the subspecialty is supervised by a separate Board and represented via its parent College.]

1 Head and Neck Surgery Board

1.1 Composition of the Board

The Head and Neck Surgery Board is formed by Fellows in Otorhinolaryngology with experience in Head and Neck Surgery. It should consist of not more than one representative from each HA hospital cluster, preferably one representative from each university and one or more representatives from the private sector if possible. Board members should be nominated by the College Council, individual cluster Chief of Service in ENT and heads of the respective university ENT departments accordingly. Board members and a Chairperson should be formally appointed by the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.

1.2 Term of Office

The term of office of Board members shall be 2 years and re-appointment is necessary.

1.3 Terms of Reference

- i. To promote and develop Head and Neck Surgery in Otorhinolaryngology practice in Hong Kong.
- ii. To oversee post-fellowship Head and Neck Surgery training of Fellows of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.
- iii. To recommend trainers in Head and Neck Surgery to the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.
- iv. To monitor and accredit ENT training centres, trainers and training program in Head and Neck Surgery.
- v. To assess and accredit performance of post-fellowship trainees in Head and Neck Surgery.
- vi. To recommend to the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists for awarding certificates in Head and Neck Surgery to trainees successfully completed the training program.
- vii. To act as an advisory board to the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists in Head and Neck Surgery training and development.
- viii. To report to the Education Committee of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists on decisions and actions taken on Head and Neck Surgery training. All decisions must be approved by the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.

1.4 Right of the College Council

When exceptional circumstances arise, special considerations and measures may be proposed by the Head & Neck Surgery Board, subject to the final approval by the College Council.

2 Training Centre

- 2.1 All training centres in Head and Neck Surgery will be inspected and accredited by the Head and Neck Surgery Board of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists every 4 years or when there is a request to increase the number of training posts in a centre.
- 2.2 Training centres in Head and Neck Surgery should have been accredited as higher surgical training centres in Otorhinolaryngology by the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists
- 2.3 Each accredited training centre in Head and Neck Surgery should have at least one full-time Head and Neck Surgery trainer.
- 2.4 Each training centre will be accredited a number of training posts based on the trainee-trainer ratio, caseloads and facilities.
- 2.5 Two or more centres can join together to apply accreditation as a conjoint training centre to meet the minimum caseload requirement. Each individual centre should have at least one full-time Head and Neck Surgery trainer and necessary facilities. The number of training posts accredited for the conjoint training centre will depend on its total number of caseloads and the total number of Head & Neck Surgery trainers. Trainees of this conjoint training centre should undergo rotational training in each of these individual centres.
- 2.6 Training program is supervised at the training centre by the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists appointed trainers.
- 2.7 Application for accreditation as training centre is not limited to public hospitals. Private hospitals can also apply for accreditation provided that the criteria are met.
- 2.8 A virtual inspection of the applying training centre shall be required [representatives from each unit applying for inspection will make a formal presentation to a panel based on the information submitted in the application form]. The panel shall consist of the President of the College, the Chairman of the Head & Neck Surgery Board, Censor-in-Chief and three members from the Head & Neck Surgery Board. Board members representatives will be selected according to the alphabetic order of their surname and who are not currently working in the respective cluster. The panel shall review all applications and operation statistics received by the College Secretariat. The panel shall determine the accreditation status of individual creditable units subjected to confirmation and approval by the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists, and subjected to the rights to appeal otherwise provided for in these Rules. Application must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast in the panel.
- 2.9 All appeal will be processed by the Head & Neck Surgery Board. The appeal must be in writing and it should be delivered to the College Secretariat. The Chairman of the Head & Neck Surgery Board shall form a three-person appeal committee who had not taken part in the original panel. All members of the appeal committee shall be entitled to vote on decisions and the outcome of the appeal shall be decided on the basis of a majority vote subjected to the confirmation and approval of the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.
- 2.10 All accredited training centre should inform the College Secretariat for any changes in circumstances of their institution/cluster which will render their centre no longer able to meet the requirements for accreditation for Head and Neck Surgery sub-specialty training.
- 2.11 The College will issue a certificate of accreditation with the defined period to each accredited training centre in Head & Neck Surgery.

3 Trainers

- 3.1 Those who want to become trainers have to submit the application with the operation statistics in the past one year to the Head and Neck Surgery Board of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists for assessment and appointment.
- 3.2 Trainers must be fellows of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists and fellows of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine in Otorhinolaryngology or holders of other equivalent qualifications approved by the College.
- 3.3 Trainer in Head and Neck Surgery must have at least 4 years post-specialist working experiences. A trainer must possess a recognized qualification(s) in head and neck surgery from Hong Kong or overseas. A trainer (for both initial and subsequent accreditations) must demonstrate at least 50 cases of recognized head and neck surgical procedures as surgeon or supervisor in the preceding 12 months. The casemix of the surgical experience of the trainers submitted will be assessed by the board to make sure the trainers have adequate and wide exposure in head and neck surgery to fulfil the job requirement. Trainer must be in full-time employment in an accredited Head and Neck Surgery training centre and working predominantly in the field of Head and Neck Surgery.

The trainer's appointment is not quotable. This appointment must be attached to a college accredited Head and Neck Surgery training centre and will be removed if he/she stops working in a college accredited Head and Neck Surgery training centre. Trainers are accredited before their first appointment and re-accredited every four years, thereafter, concurrently with their training centre's accreditation, or when a trainer is working in a new training centre. The trainer in Head and Neck Surgery cannot be a trainer in other subspecialty boards (e.g. Facial Plastic Surgery) other than pre-fellowship general ENT – Head and Neck trainer.
- 3.4
- 3.5 The performance of trainers is monitored by the Head and Neck Surgery Board and the appointment of trainers is subjected to review by the Head and Neck Surgery Board and endorsed by the Education Committee. All decision must be approved by the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.

4 Trainee

- 4.1 Trainees must have obtained Fellowship of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists before they will be accepted as trainees in Head and Neck Surgery.
- 4.2 Trainees must have fully registered with the Medical Council of Hong Kong.
- 4.3 The number of training posts accredited in a training centre will depend on the trainee-trainer ratio, caseload and facilities of the centre.
- 4.4 The trainee to trainer ratio should not be greater than 1:1
- 4.5 Trainees should have registered with the Head and Neck Surgery Board before commencement of training. Trainees will commence their Head and Neck Surgery training from the 1st January or 1st July, which must in line with our College higher surgical training programme.
- 4.6 Each trainee should possess a Logbook and is required to update the Logbook regularly. The Logbook of clinical experience and exposure has to be certified by his/her Head and Neck Surgery trainer and endorsed by the Head & Neck Surgery Board every 6 months during the training period. The Logbook should contain operation statistics, morbidity and mortality, attendance of meetings/seminar, research and presentation. **[Note: please refer to items 5.7 and 5.8 for more details]**

5 Training Programme

- 5.1 The training program is under direct supervision of the Head and Neck Surgery Board of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.
- 5.2 There should be ample opportunities for trainees to observe, manage, and assume responsibility for the investigation and treatment of patients suffering from a variety of Head and Neck diseases.
- 5.3 Trainees should have wide exposure to various Head and Neck procedures during their training period, including but not limiting to neck dissection, thyroidectomy, salivary gland surgery, oral cavity surgery, skull base surgery, maxillectomy, laryngectomy, nasopharyngectomy, regional flaps and free flaps reconstruction.
- 5.4 The duration of training in Head and Neck Surgery should be 3 years. However, more time can be given to the trainees if the minimal requirement of surgical experience cannot be reached in the training period. The trainee has to apply for the extension of training through College with approval given by the Head and Neck Surgery Board. Application is reviewed by the Head and Neck Surgery Board on case by case and endorsed by the Education Committee. The final decision is subject to the discretion of the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.
- 5.5 Trainees after completion of the training programme should have acquired comprehensive knowledge and skills in the field. They should be clinically competent in Head and Neck Surgery and are capable of working independently in a variety of settings
- 5.6 The minimum requirement for training centres and trainees are as outlined below:

Key Procedures	Training Centre		Trainee as chief surgeon	Facilities
	Recommended number in a 6-month period	(minimum requirement in a 6-month period for each training post)	(minimum requirement in a 6-month period)	
Neck dissection	10	50	25	A dedicated Head and Neck Team is preferred. Combined Head and Neck tumour clinic with Oncologists. ICU and Radiology support. Multidisciplinary management of patients is encouraged
Salivary gland surgery	10			
Major Upper aerodigestive tract surgery (<i>nasopharynx, oropharynx, hypopharynx, larynx, trachea, oral cavity, nose and sinus</i>)	5			
Flaps reconstruction	5			
Major Endoscopic Head and Neck Surgery (<i>including robotic surgery and skull base surgery</i>)	10			
Thyroidectomy	10			

5.7 Research

Trainees should submit their research protocol within the first year of training to the Head & Neck Surgery Board. The research study should be original, started after commencement of the training, and has not been presented, published or simultaneously submitted elsewhere.

The research protocol should have obtained approval from the institutional review board/ethics committee of the training centre with a copy of the approval letter submitted together with the proposal.

Any amendments in the research protocol should be submitted to the subspecialty training board in writing, stating the reasons for amendments. The research protocol amendment should also obtain approval from the institutional review board/ethics committee of the training centre. The final decision is subject to the discretion of Head & Neck Surgery Board.

A completed research project (in research paper format) in Head and Neck Surgery should be submitted and vetted by the Head and Neck Surgery Board not later than one month before the completion of their training program.

5.8 Training Evaluation

Trainees should submit their logbook and research progress report on completion of every 6 months of training to the Head and Neck Surgery Board for recognition of the respective training period.

Trainees should attend an interview for final assessment by the Head and Neck Surgery Board within two months after the completion of the Head and Neck Surgery training. A completed logbook and research project should be required for presentation during the interview.

Upon satisfactory completion of the training program and passing the interview, trainees will be awarded a certificate of post-fellowship training in Head and Neck Surgery by the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.

5.9 Interrupted Training

Trainees are entitled to have interruption of training due to annual vacation leave, compassionate leave, sick leave and maternity leave. All other leaves require approval by the Head and Neck Surgery Board. Special leaves/study leaves for conference or training course are considered part of the training programme and are not considered as interruption or suspension of training. If the total entitled leave exceeds 22 weeks (154 days) during the 3 years of training, additional training will be required to compensate for those periods beyond 22 weeks.

It is the responsibility of a training centre to report to the College of any prolonged absence of an approved trainer if his/her absence should exceed 24 weeks (168 calendar days) within 12 months. Higher trainee(s) under his/her supervision would be required to make up for any period of unrecognized training according to our College rules.

A trainee(s) who is/are currently undergoing training in the Head & Neck Surgery post-fellowship training in a training centre deficient in the required number of trainers may be required to share any extra training period according to our College rules. The final decision and allocation would be made by the head of training centre upon agreement of the involved parties. Prior approval should be sought from the Education Committee. A final approval and endorsement by the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists is mandatory.

5.10 Overseas Training

Overseas post-fellowship training in Head and Neck Surgery may be recognized subject to prior approval by the Head and Neck Surgery Board of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists.

The maximum duration of overseas training with hand-on practice could be accredited up to 1 year. Overseas Training as an observer alone could only be accredited up to 3 months.

5.11 Remedial training, Disqualification and Appeal

Trainees who are deemed unsatisfactory on assessment will be required to undergo remedial training approved by the Head and Neck Surgery Board. Trainees who have unsatisfactory assessment on the remedial training will be disqualified from the training program. Trainees can appeal to the Council of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists concerning results of assessment and disqualification.

Reference:

1. http://m.hopkinsmedicine.org/otolaryngology/education/fellowship/head_neck_oncology.html
2. *Subspecialty training program of the College of Surgeons of Hong Kong*
3. *Paediatric Immunology and Infectious Diseases Subspecialty training program of the Hong Kong College of Paediatricians*
4. *Guidelines on criteria of subspecialty of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine*
5. *Training guidelines of the Hong Kong College of Otorhinolaryngologists*