

NETS Opportunities - a Fellow's Perspective

I commenced working as a Fellow at NETS in August 2007. This was my first exposure to the Australian Neonatal structure, having completed extensive Neonatal training in Ireland. NETS affords Fellows many opportunities including clinical career development and research opportunities.

During my time at NETS I conducted 80 primary transfers of acutely unwell infants who needed ongoing specialist care in a neonatal or paediatric intensive care unit. The scope of clinical exposure included acute management of pre-term infants with respiratory disorders and a wide range of neonatal surgical conditions. In addition to that, as NETS transfers children under 6 kilograms, Fellows also have the opportunity to conduct complex paediatric transfers including congenital cardiac lesions, acute neurological dysfunction and sepsis. As the team typically comprises of a neonatal Fellow and a neonatal transport nurse, the post enabled me to consolidate my clinical experience and to make autonomous decisions with the support of a NETS Consultant.

In addition to the aforementioned experience, the nature of the role at NETS means that there are periods of time when the team are not responding to an acute call. During this time, Fellows have the opportunity to explore other areas of career development including research. It is an ideal opportunity to complete projects, which are often a challenge to complete during standard Intensive Care Unit positions. Whilst at NETS, I completed and submitted three papers to a peer review journal.

Furthermore, I conducted a retrospective review of the NETS experience in transporting infants with bronchiolitis and established a database of two hundred patients with this condition. I also had the opportunity to explore potential research opportunities beyond my NETS role, and have secured a research Fellow position which will allow me to complete a higher degree.

Future Fellows at NETS can expect a position, which is clinically challenging, within an environment, which has the necessary expertise to support them through their ongoing career development. As one of the largest designated neonatal transport networks in the world they can anticipate extensive clinical exposure while working with a dedicated and committed team of experienced nurses and doctors. They can also benefit from the unique structure of a post, which affords the opportunity to develop other interests during non-clinical time.

Regards,

Dr Paul Fleming