



Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R)

2-Week Medical Student Elective Guide

Welcome

Welcome to your Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (PM&R) elective. We are delighted to have you join us and hope this experience provides you with a broad exposure to physiatry across inpatient rehabilitation, outpatient subspecialty clinics, and community-based practice. PM&R focuses on optimizing function, independence, and quality of life for patients with neurological, musculoskeletal, cancer-related, and complex medical conditions. This elective is designed to help you understand the role of the physiatrist within multidisciplinary teams and to explore physiatry as a potential career path.

Clinical Sites

During your two-week elective, you may rotate through a combination of the following clinical sites:

Foothills Medical Centre (FMC)

Tertiary Neurorehabilitation (TNR) – Unit 58

- Location: 5th Floor, South Specialties Building (SSB), FMC
- Unit: Unit 58
- Capacity: 45 inpatient beds
- Services: - 15 Brain Injury beds - 15 Stroke beds - 15 Spinal Cord Injury beds

This unit provides specialized inpatient rehabilitation for patients with complex neurological conditions and offers exposure to interdisciplinary team-based care.

There are associated outpatient clinics with brain injury, spinal cord injury, stroke, and amputee rehabilitation clinics in the SSB main floor clinic area.

Alberta Children's Hospital (ACH)

Pediatric hospital in Calgary. Pediatric rehabilitation clinics and inpatient consults take place here

Location: 28 Oki Drive NW Calgary AB T3B6A8. The ACH is a 20 minute walk from FMC/ medical school (FMC/ medical school is the location of most Academic Half Day sessions on Thursday afternoons)



Sheldon M. Chumir Health Centre (SMCHC)

Location: Downtown Calgary

Select Adult neurorehabilitation clinics for pediatric onset conditions, and amputation/ limb difference clinics take place here

Rockyview General Hospital (RGH)

South Health Centre (SHC)

Peter Lougheed Hospital (PLC)

Community Musculoskeletal (MSK) Clinics (clinic websites hyperlinked):

- Kinesis Medical Centre
- Infini Health
- Group 23
- Access Orthopedics

These clinics provide exposure to outpatient MSK physiatry, including assessment, injections, and non-operative management of musculoskeletal conditions.

Arthur J.E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre

- Exposure to cancer rehabilitation, symptom management, and functional optimization for patients across the cancer care continuum.

Electromyography (EMG) Clinics

- Various EMG and neuromuscular clinics located throughout hospital sites
- Opportunities to observe nerve conduction studies, needle EMG, and perform neuromuscular assessments

Before the Elective Starts

Please ensure the following are completed prior to your start date:



- Connect Care / EMR access: Confirm your electronic medical record access is active
 - Parking: Arrange hospital or clinic parking in advance as needed
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Expectations & Professionalism

To help you succeed and gain the most from your elective, please adhere to the following expectations:

- Preceptor communication: Email your assigned preceptor(s) 7 days prior to your first clinical day to introduce yourself and confirm logistics
- Punctuality: Arrive 15 minutes early for all clinical duties
- Preparation:
 - Pre-read about assigned patients using Connect Care / EMR
 - Review relevant diagnoses, rehabilitation principles, and functional goals
- Documentation:
 - Identify and adapt SmartPhrases/templates for histories, physical examinations, and progress notes (ask your preceptor/rotation lead which ones are most useful for various assessments)
 - Complete chart notes and documentation as directed by your preceptor

Professionalism, engagement, and initiative are highly valued and will enhance your learning experience.

Structure of the Elective

- Electives are typically organized by subspecialty blocks, with one subspecialty per week
 - Students are assigned to groups of staff preceptors rather than a single physician
 - Flexibility is expected, as schedules may change based on clinical needs
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Teaching & Rounds

Attendance at educational activities is an important component of the elective.

Required

- Department of Clinical Neurosciences Grand Rounds (ask your staff for the location – may be in-person or virtual)
 - Friday mornings during the academic year (Sept-June) (attendance is mandatory) – 8am-9am



Additional (if occurring during your elective)

- Calgary Physiatry Rounds – Thursday mornings 8am-9am (ask your staff for the location – may be in-person or virtual)
- Quality Improvement (QI) Rounds – Friday mornings 8am-9am (ask your staff for the location – typically virtual)

Please inquire at the start of your elective to determine whether these sessions are scheduled during your rotation.

If you would like direct clinical or bedside teaching, please let your staff know. This is dependent on clinical volume.

History/Physical Exam Components

Please see the separate template document for helpful history, physical exam and impression/plan templates for each PM&R subspecialty to use during your elective experience.

Textbook & Online Resources (hyperlinked to the titles if pdf available)

General PM&R

Braddom textbook of PM&R – available in the resident room

[Cuccurullo PM&R textbook](#) – available in the resident room

Textbook & Online Resources (continued)

[The Neurologic Examination](#)

Brain Injury rehabilitation – [Zassler Brain Injury Rehabilitation Textbook](#) (also in the resident room); [Canadian Brain Injury Guidelines](#); [ERABI brain injury guidebook](#)

Stroke rehabilitation

Spinal Cord Injury rehabilitation – [SCIRE Guidelines](#); Kirschblum textbook (in the resident room)

Musculoskeletal & Sports Medicine – Brukner & Khan; Hoppenfeld examination textbook

Neuromuscular/EMG - [Aids to Peripheral Nervous System Examination](#)

Amputee/Prosthetics & Orthotics -

Pediatric rehabilitation - Read about 'cerebral palsy' and 'myelomeningocele', as well as any topics your preceptor recommends



Learning Objectives (University of Calgary – PM&R Elective)

By the end of this two-week elective, medical students are expected to:

- Describe the role of the physiatrist across inpatient, outpatient, and community settings
 - Perform a focused functional history and rehabilitation-oriented physical examination
 - Identify common rehabilitation issues in brain injury, stroke, spinal cord injury, neuromuscular, cancer, and MSK populations
 - Demonstrate understanding of interdisciplinary team-based care in rehabilitation
 - Formulate basic rehabilitation-focused assessments and management plans
 - Communicate clearly and professionally with patients, families, and allied health professionals
 - Reflect on PM&R as a potential career path and its interface with other specialties
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Assessment & Feedback

Assessment during the elective is primarily formative, with emphasis on engagement, professionalism, and clinical growth.

Students will be assessed on: - Professionalism and reliability (punctuality, preparation, communication) - Clinical reasoning and functional assessment skills - Quality of patient interactions - Willingness to seek and incorporate feedback - Documentation (when applicable)

Students are encouraged to: - Actively request mid-elective and end-of-elective feedback from preceptors - Reflect on strengths and areas for growth throughout the rotation

Formal evaluation will be completed according to University of Calgary Undergraduate Medical Education requirements involving EPAs, ITERs and narratives.

Professional Conduct & Learning Culture

The PM&R Division at the University of Calgary is committed to providing a respectful, inclusive, and supportive learning environment. Students are expected to:

- Uphold patient confidentiality and professional standards
- Engage respectfully with patients, families, staff, and allied health team members
- Demonstrate curiosity, initiative, and openness to feedback

We value teaching and are invested in your success.



Final Notes

We encourage you to ask questions, seek feedback, and actively engage with the interdisciplinary teams throughout your elective. We hope this experience is both educational and enjoyable, and that it provides meaningful insight into the breadth and impact of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation.

Welcome to PM&R!