

INTENSIVE CARE CLERKSHIP YEAR 4

Clerkship Directors: Rita Pechulis, MD

Clerkship Duration: 4 weeks

Medical students will achieve the following competencies:

- Recognize when a patient has a life threatening illness and needs intensive monitoring and care in an ICU setting
- Basic tenets of resuscitation and stabilization of an unstable patient
- Development of a thorough differential diagnosis for patients with life threatening conditions
- Basic indications for and management of a patient requiring mechanical ventilation
- Recognize medical futility and the appropriate setting for “do not resuscitate” orders or withdrawal of care

The Intensive Care clerkship is 4 weeks in duration. Students spend one week on an anesthesia rotation and the remainder of the time is spent in an intensive care unit. Students have the option of choosing to rotate in a medical ICU, surgical ICU, cardiac ICU, pediatric ICU or neurologic ICU. This would more correctly describe it as a “required selective.” During the anesthesia and ICU portion of the rotation students are in the hospital 40-60 hours/week engaged in clinical care and didactics. Overnight call and weekend work is not a required portion of this rotation.

As the students have the option of selecting from one of five specialized intensive care units, it is unlikely that all students will achieve the same level of competency. However, all students will be exposed to critically ill unstable patients for whom the common pathway of resuscitation will apply. Procedural skills will vary depending on which unit students rotate through, but basic procedural skills that will be obtained in all units include insertion of nasogastric tubes, arterial blood sampling, and venous blood sampling. Other commonly performed procedures that will vary depending on unit specialty may include insertion of central and arterial lines, lumbar puncture, and minor surgical procedures. The ideal clinical setting for establishing competency and meeting the clerkship objectives is an intensive care unit with a multidisciplinary approach to patient care. The multidisciplinary team includes clinical pharmacists, nutritionists, respiratory and physical therapists, nurses, attending physicians and residents who all act as integral members of the team. All sites that the students rotate through fulfill these criteria.