

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (Updated 04.23.2026)
Nicklaus Children's Hospital Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellowship

A. PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS

1. **Name of Host Institution:** Nicklaus Children's Hospital, Nicklaus Children's Health System
2. **Name of Affiliated Institution:** University of Miami, Jackson Health Systems
3. **Program Specialty/Subspecialty:** Pediatric Neurosurgery
4. **Program Address (Mailing):** 3100 S.W. 62nd Ave., Ste. 3109, Miami, FL 33155
5. **Program Address (Physical Location):** same as mailing address
6. **Program Phone Number:** 305-662-8386
7. **Program Fax Number:** 305-663-8490
8. **Fellowship Program Director E-mail:** robert.buckley@nicklaushealth.org
9. **Fellowship Program Director:** Robert Buckley, MD
10. **Division Program Director:** Robert Buckley, MD
11. **Alternate Program Contact:** Kari Bollerman, Physician Coordinator;
kari.bollerman@nicklaushealth.org

B. INTRODUCTION

1. **History:** The Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellowship Program has been in existence since 2003. Since its inception, 20 neurosurgeons have completed the training program.
2. **Duration:** A Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellowship is a postgraduate position of 12 months duration.
3. **Prerequisite Training/Selection Criteria:** Prior to beginning a Fellowship in pediatric neurosurgery, applicants should have satisfactorily completed an ACGME-accredited residency training program in neurological surgery (or the Canadian equivalent). Current valid certification of pediatric basic life support is also required.
4. **Goals and Objectives for Training:**
The objective of the Pediatric Neurosurgical Fellowship is to provide graduates with the training and skills to evaluate and treat the entire spectrum of pediatric neurosurgical disease and develop them into leaders in academic pediatric neurological surgery.

The objectives of the training program include:

- Competence in the neurologic exam of the infant and developing child.
- Understanding of the relevant physiology of the infant and child.
- Competence in the proper evaluation of diseases of the nervous system, including the ordering of appropriate tests and obtaining appropriate outside consultation when necessary. A thorough understanding of the preoperative evaluation of children considered for surgical treatment of the complete spectrum of neurologic diseases of childhood (i.e. epilepsy, spasticity, craniofacial reconstruction, brachial plexus repair, management of occult dysraphism, etc.) will be expected.
- Capable of the complete preoperative and postoperative management of infants and children, as well as the surgical and nonsurgical management of traumatic brain injury.
- Acquire the surgical skills necessary to operate on the developing nervous system, to a level deemed safe by the Pediatric Neurosurgical Attending Physicians.

5. **Program Certifications:** This Fellowship is accredited by the Accreditation Council of Pediatric Neurosurgery Fellowships (ACPNF) and qualifies the otherwise eligible applicants to pursue certification by the American Board of Pediatric Neurological Surgery (ABPNS).

C. RESOURCES

1. Teaching Staff

Robert Buckley, MD
Heather McCrea, MD
Toba Niazi, MD
John Ragheb, MD
Kristen Stabingas, MD

2. Facilities:

The primary training site is Nicklaus Children's Hospital. Jackson Memorial/Holtz Children's Hospital serves as a secondary training site.

D. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM – BASIC CURRICULUM:

1. Clinical and Research Components:

The Fellow is expected to participate in research under the guidance of the Faculty, to include novel and ongoing clinical, transitional and basic science projects. Independent synthesis of research projects is encouraged. **The Fellow will submit at least one manuscript for publication.**

2. Participant's Supervisory and Patient Care Responsibilities:

The Fellow will work directly with the Faculty to participate in all aspects of pediatric neurosurgical care at Nicklaus Children's Hospital and Jackson Memorial/Holtz Children's Hospital. The Fellow will assume increasing levels of responsibility for outpatient, inpatient, and operative management of patients as they progress.

The Fellow is expected to oversee and run the Pediatric Neurosurgical Service in conjunction with the Faculty. They will supervise and guide the resident(s) and APPs on the service. The Fellow will lead the team on daily hospital rounds and will oversee consultations performed by the neurosurgical residents.

The Fellow's primary responsibility will be in the operating room, where they will work intimately with the Faculty and resident(s). Case selection will be under the discretion of the Fellow. Surgical autonomy will be developed in a graduated fashion, with a goal to transition to semi-independent practice in the second portion of the fellowship. The Fellow will serve as a primary educator of the residents.

The Fellow will attend neurosurgery and multi-disciplinary clinics as the OR schedule permits. They will run a half-day fellow clinic on a biweekly fashion. Clinic patients will be reviewed with the attending surgeon on call, with the goal to develop experience in managing routine pediatric neurosurgical diagnoses in the outpatient setting.

The Fellow will be expected to take 10 days a month of secondary call in conjunction the on-call Faculty. There are no primary call responsibilities overnight. The Fellow is eligible to take primary night call for up to 7 days a month as a paid moonlighter.

The Fellow will attend and lead the weekly pre-operative radiology conferences. When able, they should attend UM Neurosurgery Grand Rounds and the various pediatric conferences (Epilepsy, Neuro-oncology, Complex spine). The Fellow is encouraged to attend to AANS/CNS Joint Section during their fellowship year. Travel/lodging will be funded after successful submission of an abstract for presentation.

3. Procedural Requirements: The Fellow must abide by the policies and procedures set forth by Nicklaus Children's Hospital.

4. Didactic Components:

- a. Daily neurosurgery rounds
- b. Pre-op neuroradiology conference (weekly, Friday AM)
- c. Neurosurgery journal club (bimonthly, Friday PM)
- d. Neurosurgery APP education (bimonthly, Friday PM)
- e. Epilepsy conference (weekly, Thursday PM)
- f. Neuro-oncology tumor board (monthly, Wednesday AM)
- g. UM Neurosurgery grand rounds (weekly, Thursday AM)

As schedule permits:

- h. Epilepsy outcome clinic (monthly, Thursday AM)
- i. Neuromuscular/spasticity clinic (monthly, Friday AM)
- j. Neuro-oncology clinic (monthly, Wednesday PM)
- k. Neurovascular/stroke clinic (monthly, Friday AM)
- l. Brachial plexus clinic (weekly, Thursday AM)
- m. Tumor Board (1x per month)
- n. Grand Rounds (1 x per week)
- o. Epilepsy Conference (1x per week)

E. EVALUATION

Informal feedback will be provided on a day-to-day basis. Formal evaluations of the fellow by the faculty, and the faculty by the fellow, will happen quarterly or as needed.