

Asheville Rotation Update

One of the highlights of our residency program is the 6 months rotation that 4th year residents spend working at the Asheville VA. This experience is one of the few rotations where residents play a major role in the clinical decision making for their patients, both in the operating room and in the clinics. With the guidance of Drs William Ogden, Frank Brown, John Lucey, Robert Francis, Richard Fellrath, Carey McKain and Glenn Rechtine, this is arguably one of the most educational and challenging times in residency because of the independence that is afforded to each resident surgeon. In the words of Dr Ogden, 'More than anything else, (in Asheville) you are taught to be in-charge of the operating room and how to be in-charge of yourself.'

Over the past year, we have gained the privilege of working with two new orthopaedic staff surgeons, Dr Carey McKain and Dr Glenn Rechtine. Dr McKain completed both medical school and orthopaedic residency training at Duke. He came to Asheville from London, Kentucky, where he worked as a general orthopaedist. His knowledge and experience have made him a true asset to an already tremendous faculty. Dr Rechtine trained at Naval Regional Medical Center in Portsmouth, Virginia, before going on to a spine fellowship at Case Western Reserve University. He has served as faculty spine surgeon at the University of Rochester Medical Center as well as the Bay Pines VA in Florida. He has recently moved to Asheville to join Dr Fellrath in creating an orthopaedic spine service at the VA. Drs McKain and Rechtine have already enhanced the resident experience through their knowledge and willingness to teach. Their presence will make the Asheville rotation even stronger.

Residents who have had the opportunity to experience this rotation almost universally say that this is the best rotation of their residency. The faculty members serve as mentors for their residents. The physician assistants on staff work side by side with residents and their dedication to the veterans is inspiring. I know that the knowledge, skill and confidence that I and my colleagues have gained in Asheville will play a role in the rest of our careers and has made us both better physicians and better surgeons.

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