

ASPHO Career Path Spotlight

Jacquelyn M. Powers, MD, MS



Career Description

1. Current position: **Assistant Professor of Pediatrics**
2. Institution: **Baylor College of Medicine/Texas Children's Hospital**
3. Years at institution: **3**
4. Did you complete additional post-fellowship training? Was it an important factor in your current position? **I completed a Masters of Clinical Science over a period of 3 years, beginning during my second year of fellowship and completing near the end of an instructor year (approximately 1 year post-fellowship). The Master's degree was an important component of my career development as a clinical investigator, so yes, I believe it was an important factor, along with my additional year as an instructor, in my current position.**
5. Years out of Fellowship: **4**
6. Type of institution: **Academic center**
7. Approximate number of attendings in your PHO department/division: **>100**
8. How do you allocate your effort? (*Please provide a % for each area): **75% Research, 22% Clinical, 3% Administrative**
9. Position Specifics (Please give a brief description of your current responsibilities in these areas)
 - a. *Clinical activity:* **I am a pediatric hematologist with a focus on general hematology. While attending on the inpatient hematology service I cover all primary hematology inpatients and consults. In the outpatient setting, however, I primarily focus on general hematology and iron disorders.**
 - b. *Scholarship/Research:* **My primary research focus is on iron deficiency anemia, specifically in the conduct of clinical trials and outcomes research. I also have an interest in the assessment of patient-reported outcomes, such as health-related quality of life, and how different treatment approaches impact these outcomes.**
 - c. *Education/Teaching:* **My teaching primarily occurs with fellows and residents on the inpatient service or outpatient clinic. I also give invited local lectures on general hematology topics and teach by way of presenting clinical case vignettes at our weekly hematology case conferences and CME conferences.**
 - d. *Administration:* **I am the Team Lead for General Hematology and Director of the Iron Disorders and Nutritional Anemias Program at our center. I also serve as the Series Director for our Section's Hematology and Coagulation CME conference and am a**

ASPHO Career Path Spotlight

member on our Section's Protocol Review Committee and our Department's Committee on Gender Equity.

- e. *Other:* I am an active member of both ASPHO and the American Society of Hematology and enjoy contributing to both societies whenever an opportunity arises. I am also a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Hematology/Oncology.

Career Perspectives

1. What were important factors in your taking on this role (e.g., professional interest, family, geography, spousal profession)? What made this career path appealing?
I am extremely lucky in that my current position provides me the opportunity to both work at an excellent and supportive academic center in terms of having a focused niche within patient care and research and allows me to live where I grew up. I grew up in a suburb of Houston and attended Rice University for undergraduate so always loved being around the Texas Medical Center. When the opportunity to take a hematology-focused position arose that gave me the chance to move back home and be closer to family, I jumped at the chance. I have two young children and having relatives close by made a real difference for me and my family in terms of support and flexibility.
In terms of career path, I completed my residency and fellowship at UT Southwestern where a number of clinical investigators in pediatric hematology preceded me under the mentorship of George Buchanan. I was able to see the impact that their work had in terms of the care of children with blood disorders (sickle cell disease, ITP, iron deficiency anemia, and beyond) and wanted to pursue a career that allowed me to potentially have a direct clinical impact and progress the field of hematology in some way.
2. Is there specific training or experience that helped you obtain this position?
The mentorship and guidance that I received during my fellowship was really important. I was guided into a niche of hematology where there wasn't a lot of active clinical research being performed. I was also encouraged to be aggressive in pursuing funding opportunities and this experience eventually ended up in getting the grant support I needed to continue on in my research as a junior faculty member. The Master's program I completed also allowed me to meet other clinical investigators from other fields of Medicine and get their input and advice as I pursued my own work.
3. Is this career path what you expected? Please explain.
Overall, it is what I expected. When I was a fellow, I couldn't appreciate all the additional items that compete for your time as an attending. So, as with every other phase of medicine and training, there was an adjustment to life as an attending and all the associated obligations. Transitioning to a new institution also took time in terms of getting to know colleagues, clinical practices, and getting my research (and a research team) up and running. I think what I've learned is that no matter the level of support you have from your institution, colleagues and/or mentors, you have to personally enjoy the work you're doing and believe it

ASPHO Career Path Spotlight

is important enough to keep pursuing to maintain a career as a clinical investigator - to finish the manuscript, write and submit the next grant application, begin that new project, etc.

4. What do you find most rewarding about your current professional role?

I love direct interaction with patients, working with and teaching our hem/onc fellows, giving talks that impact how providers treat patients with iron deficiency, and enjoy thinking through complex patients with other providers. From a research standpoint, I love getting the results after data collection is complete and putting the final touches on a manuscript.

5. What do you find most challenging about your current professional role?

As I alluded to earlier, balancing competing obligations can be challenging. Specifically, always keeping up with the many small tasks required in academic medicine that, if left unattended, can build to a mountain of things to complete. Those items can really whittle away at your time if you let them. I also have to make a concerted effort to give myself a break from work (a real break) to focus on my family and things that I enjoy outside of work.

6. What do you see yourself doing in 5 years and 10 years?

I hope to be doing a lot of the same things that I'm doing now, only with more collaborations and leading a larger research team. I would also love to spend more time mentoring fellows and junior faculty with their own research and career progression.