Program Overview

The mission of the BU-CHART program is to train physicians to design and carry out clinical HIV/AIDS research among disadvantaged populations, of the highest scientific and ethical standard.

The BU-CHART program is based at BUMC: Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM), Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH), and its affiliate, Boston Medical Center (BMC), a 547-bed tertiary care hospital formed in 1996 from the merger of Boston City and University Hospitals. BMC is a founding partner of HealthNet, a consumer-driven urban health network with 15 community centers where BU-CHART trainees may also perform research. Additionally, The V.A. Boston Healthcare System (VABHS) has a major academic affiliation with BU.

Program Elements

BU-CHART Fellows complete a 24-month* structured program of mentored clinical research leading to the Masters of Science (MSc) degree in Epidemiology. Program start-dates are flexible.

*In order to enhance a successful transition to junior faculty status, selected trainees can extend the training period to 36 months.

Trainees will participate in the following 6 program elements:

~ HIV/AIDS Basic Science Course work: An introductory course in HIV virology, immunology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, and therapy of HIV disease.

~ Ethical Issues in Disadvantaged Populations Study: Each trainee will work with one of our ethical co-mentors to write a paper on an ethical issue in clinical trials in disadvantaged populations.

~ Clinical Research Coursework: 32 credits of coursework in biostatistics, clinical trials conduct and management, and epidemiologic study design and management, leading to the MSc degree. Trainees select an epidemiology or clinical trials track.

~ Mentored Clinical Research Project: A supervised thesis consisting of either a clinical trial or epidemiologic study with an ethical component. Trainees design, conduct and analyze a study, obtaining a comprehensive understanding of design issues, IRB considerations and manuscript preparation. Each trainee will collaborate with a mentoring team consisting of a senior faculty mentor experienced in HIV/AIDS clinical research, a project-specific co-mentor and an ethical co-mentor.

~ CREST Program: Participation in the BU Clinical Research Training (CREST) K30 Program, which includes biweekly seminars about clinical research, presentation of fellow projects for peer and faculty review, and a brief IRB internship.

~ Clinical Care: The option to follow and provide primary care to HIV-infected patients, at all disease stages, in a weekly half-day ambulatory clinic (optional).

Senior Program Faculty

The didactic faculty for the BU-CHART program consists of senior mentors, ethical co-mentors and project co-mentors from the departments of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, Health Law, International Health and Community Health Sciences, BUSPH as well as from the Departments of Medicine and Pediatrics, BUSM.

Senior Mentors

Director
C. Robert Horsburgh Jr., MD, MUS
Professor of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Medicine, BUSPH & BUSM. Dr. Horsburgh’s research interests include HIV, tuberculosis, nontuberculous mycobacterial diseases, and hepatitis C. Dr. Horsburgh has trained many physician-scientists who are pursuing active research careers.

Jerrold Ellner, MD
Professor of Medicine and Community Health Sciences, BUSM & BUSPH, Chief of General Internal Medicine at BMC and Vice Chair for Public Health in the Department of Medicine. He has focused his research efforts on epidemiology and clinical care of patients with HIV, alcohol and drug dependency.

Deborah J. Cotton, MD, MPH
Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology, BUSM & BUSPH.

Jeffrey Samet, MD, MA, MPH
Professor of Medicine and Community Health Sciences, BUSM & BUSPH, Chief of General Internal Medicine at BMC and Vice Chair for Public Health in the Department of Medicine. He has focused his research efforts on epidemiology and clinical care of patients with HIV, alcohol and drug dependency.

George J. Annas, JD, MPH
Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Law, Bioethics & Human Rights at BUSPH, and Professor at the Law School and BUSM. Dr. Annas is a nationally recognized expert in ethical and legal aspects of HIV related clinical investigations and human studies and ethics of access to care in underserved populations.
Michael A. Grodin, MD, is Professor in the Department of Health Law, Bioethics & Human Rights, and Professor Psychiatry and Socio-Medical Sciences and Community Medicine at the BUSM & BUSPH. He is also the Medical Ethicist at Boston Medical Center; a consultant to the National Human Subjects Protection Review Panel of the NIH AIDS Program Advisory Committee; and consultant on Ethics and Research with Human Subjects for the International Organizations of Medical Sciences and the WHO.

Wendy K. Mariner, JD, LLM, MPH, is Professor of Health Law, Bioethics & Human Rights at BUSPH and Professor at BU Law School. Her research interests include legal rights of patients and providers, federal and state health reform, legal entitlement to health care and health insurance, and regulation of personal behavior to prevent risks to public health.

In addition to the senior mentors and ethical co-mentors listed above, trainees may also collaborate with one of our 13 additional co-mentors.

John Bernardo, MD
Shakendr Bhatn, MD
Allen Gifford, MD
Christopher Gill, MD, MPH
Christopher Hamer, MD
Edward Jones-Lopes, MD, MSc
Terence M. Kearns, PhD

BUMC – An Ideal Training Location

BUMC is uniquely positioned to offer a comprehensive education and research experience in HIV/AIDS, ethical and substance abuse issues.

~ BUMC serves a large population of HIV-infected persons with many social, medical and financial challenges.

~ BUMC has an internationally recognized health law department that has been in the forefront of analysis of ethical issues in HIV/AIDS research, as well as, a nationally recognized group of substance abuse researchers.

~ BUMC has an adult AIDS Clinical Trials Unit that is part of the national Adult and AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG), is a site for clinical trials of HIV and tuberculosis, and conducts several international HIV research studies.

~ Investigators at BUMC conduct NIH-sponsored epidemiologic studies of HIV in women and children (WITS), HIV and hepatitis C, HIV and alcohol abuse, and others.

Admission Criteria & Application Process

Applicants to BU-CHART must be physicians, have completed an accredited clinical residency training, and be interested in pursuing an academic research career in HIV/AIDS. Applicants must be US citizens or permanent residents. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Applicants must complete the BUSPH MS Epidemiology program application (SOPHAS) and provide a statement of career goals, CV, three letters of assessment, and transcripts from institutions previously attended.

Applicants should clearly state they are applying to the BU-CHART program in their statement of career goals.

Application materials or more information can be obtained by contacting:

Department of Medicine
Section of Infectious Diseases
Boston University SM
650 Albany Street, EBRC 6
Boston, MA 02118
Phone: 617-414-3518
Email: rhorsbu@bu.edu

John Bernardo, MD
Shakendr Bhatn, MD
Allen Gifford, MD
Christopher Gill, MD, MPH
Christopher Hamer, MD
Edward Jones-Lopes, MD, MSc
Terence M. Kearns, PhD

Boston University Clinical HIV/AIDS Research Training Program (BU-CHART)

~ Provides training to physicians that will enhance their ability to design and carry out ethical human HIV/AIDS research among disadvantaged populations.

~ Offers NIH/NIAID T32 and K30 Award mentored clinical research experience with full tuition for the MSc degree.

The Boston University Clinical HIV/AIDS Research Training Program (BU-CHART) is a 24-month traineeship, with an option for 36 months, in clinical research and epidemiologic studies. It has a special focus on HIV/AIDS ethical and substance abuse research issues. The program is based at Boston University Medical Center (BUMC) in the Schools of Public Health and Medicine. Trainees design, conduct and analyze a clinical research project under the guidance of an experienced mentoring team. They participate in a didactic clinical research curriculum and a clinical research seminar series geared toward preparing trainees for success in future independent clinical research careers.