

AO Spine Spine Centers Application

AO Spine Spine Centers is a prestigious clinical network of institutions that provides approved standard of training and education to shape our fellows skills and understanding of spine principles. To establish incentives for the sharing of knowledge, AO Spine invests in various forms of international, regional and national fellowships. AO Spine fellowships are offered in official Spine Centers (see further details on the AO Spine website), namely hospitals or clinics throughout the regions. Candidates can specify preferred Centers in their application. However, the final decision regarding choice of Center is made on the basis of the application and availability. An AO Spine fellowship cannot be undertaken in a Center where the fellow already works.

Spine Center Application and Selection Process

- All applications must be online through the official AO Spine Spine Center Application System.
- Applications are sent to the Country Council Spine Center and Fellowship Officer of the application (if there is no Country Council in the application country, then the application is sent directly to the Regional Board Spine Center and Fellowship Officer).
- Applications evaluated and approved by the Country Council are forwarded to the Regional Board Spine Center and Fellowship Officer.
- Spine Center is approved/denied by the Regional Board.
- All Spine Centers need to apply for recertification within 3 years.
- Recertification is based on re-documentation of the qualities required to become a Spine Center as well as on the reports submitted by the fellows visiting the Spine Center during that period. These reports are evaluated by the Fellowship Officers and discussed with the Spine center if the overall satisfaction with that Spine Center is low.

Global Spine Center Criteria and Documentation Required

1. At least one faculty member who is responsible of the fellowship program (the AO Spine Fellowship Program Director) who is a good standing member of AO Spine and provides proof of involvement in AO Spine Educational activities as a faculty member.
2. Proof/declaration of a substantial number of spine surgeries performed per year, the exact number and/or scope to be defined by the regions.
3. Proof/declaration of at least two outpatient spine clinics sessions per week.
4. Proof/declaration of a multidisciplinary program that incorporates non-surgical disciplines.
5. Proof/declaration of a wide spectrum of spine surgery.
6. Proof/declaration of research activities.
7. Proof/declaration of an established educational program.

It is the Spine Centers responsibility to notify the local AO Spine Country Council (or the Regional Board if no council is in place) who then notifies the Regional Board if any of the above mentioned criteria cannot be fulfilled. The Spine Center status may then be

suspended temporarily. These Spine Centers may then be asked to present a working plan on replacing the missing quality to regain their status. Failure to do so results in permanent termination.

Regional Criteria-Asia Pacific

1. Spine Center Director is paid member of AO Spine.
2. Present a Fellowship training curriculum.
3. University campus or recognized academic environment.
4. Dedicated training facilities.
5. Broad spectrum of spine surgeries—at least four from the list:
 - a. Trauma
 - b. Pediatric deformity
 - c. Lumbar disc replacement, or ligamentoplasty, discectomies and fusion
 - d. Adult reconstructive procedures, ie, scoliosis, kyphosis, osteotomy
 - e. Cervical reconstruction, ie, occipito-cervical fixation, osteotomy
 - f. Anterior lumbar procedures
 - g. Cervical spine discectomies, decompressions
 - h. Vertebroplasties
 - i. Spinal Tumor/Infections
6. Case workload approximately or in excess of 200 per annum
7. Two surgeons conversant in AO Spine principles, philosophies, and tools.
8. Minimum of two dedicated spine surgeons.
9. Published 3 basic, or clinical research articles related to spine in the past 5 years.
10. Accept English-speaking short-term fellows or observerships.
11. Preferably have provision of accommodation for fellow.