

Voice of the Clinical Fellow Survey 2025

Key Findings Fellowship Experience

The overall Fellowship experience has shown some improvement since 2021 and 2023, with 63% of Clinical Fellows rating their experience as Excellent or Very Good in 2025. Ratings of educational and learning progress remained stable, with 59% reporting Excellent or Very Good experiences in both 2025 and 2023, compared with 62% in 2021. Perceptions of a Program’s culture of respect remained consistently positive, with 68% of Clinical Fellows in 2025 rating it as Excellent or Very Good, similar to the levels reported in 2023 and 2021. A similar pattern was observed for the statement, “I have a mentor who supports and encourages my development,” with 67% of Clinical Fellows agreeing strongly or moderately in 2025, compared with 65% in 2023. Agreement with the statement, “My department supports the health and well-being of clinical fellows,” also increased, with 60% agreeing strongly or moderately in 2025, up from 57% in 2023.

	2021	2023	2025
Overall Experience (Excellent/Very Good)	59%	59%	63%
Education/Learning Progress Made in Year (Excellent/Very Good)	62%	59%	59%
Program’s Culture of Respect (Excellent/Very Good)	68%	65%	68%
Having a mentor who supports and encourages development (Agree Strongly/Moderately)	68%	65%	67%
My department supports the health and well-being of clinical fellows (Agree Strongly/Moderately)	63%	57%	60%

Well-Being

In the survey, Clinical Fellows completed the Professional Fulfillment Index (PFI), the single-item Mini Z burnout measure, and reported how often they felt a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day. In 2025, 47% of Clinical Fellows reported feeling a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day always or often. Additionally, 29% were classified as likely to be professionally fulfilled. And 29% reported some degree of burnout.

Feel a sense of accomplishment (Always/Often)	47%
Likely to be professionally fulfilled	29%
Experiencing symptoms of burnout	29%

PFI is an instrument used to assess physicians’ professional fulfillment and burnout. Professional Fulfillment assesses the degree of intrinsic positive reward we derive from our work, including happiness, meaningfulness, contribution, self-worth, satisfaction, and feeling in control when dealing with difficult problems at work.

Mini Z is a single-item burnout measure from the Mini Z Worklife Survey adapted for residents, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. Burnout is assessed on a validated 6-point scale, with scores of 3–6 indicating burnout; the measure has demonstrated concurrent validity with the Emotional Exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI).

In 2025, Clinical Fellows who grew up in the Upper-middle/Upper SES households were more likely to be professionally fulfilled than those who grew up in the Lower/Lower-middle and Middle SES (37% Upper-middle/Upper, 25% Middle, 18% Lower/Lower-middle). We also observed that burnout symptoms differed by socioeconomic status, with Clinical Fellows from Lower/Lower-middle and Middle SES backgrounds more likely to report burnout symptoms than those from Upper-middle/Upper SES backgrounds (46% Lower/Lower-Middle, 32% Middle, 23% Upper-middle/Upper).

	Upper SES	Middle SES	Lower SES
Likely to be Professionally Fulfilled	37%	25%	18%
Experiencing symptoms of burnout	23%	32%	46%

Health and well-being ratings have remained stable since 2023, with 62% of Clinical Fellows rating their overall health as Excellent or Very Good in both 2025 and 2023, compared with 56% in 2021. In 2025, the proportion of Clinical Fellows who reported feeling physically exhausted always or often remained consistent with the results observed in 2023 and 2021. However, the proportion reporting feeling overwhelmed always or often declined, from 36% in 2021 and 35% in 2023 to 30% in 2025. Similarly, the percentage of Clinical Fellows reporting feelings of loneliness decreased slightly over the same period. The proportion of Clinical Fellows who reported worrying about money always or often declined slightly compared with 2023; however, it remained substantially higher than in 2021 (49% in 2025, 53% in 2023, and 38% in 2021).

	2021	2023	2025
Overall Health (Excellent/Very Good)	56%	62%	62%
Feel physically exhausted (Always/Often)	49%	47%	47%
Feel overwhelmed (Always/Often)	36%	35%	30%
Feel lonely (Always/Often)	26%	24%	22%
Worry About Money (Always/Often)	38%	53%	49%

Learner Environment

The experience of mistreatment among Clinical Fellows remains a concern and is consistent with trends observed among other medical learners. In 2025, 51% of Clinical Fellows reported experiencing discrimination and/or harassment, representing a slight increase from 47% in 2023.

Faculty members continue to be the most commonly identified source of discrimination and/or harassment (45%), although this represents a decline from 51% in 2023 and 57% in 2021. Patients and patients’ family members were the second most commonly identified source, with the proportion of Clinical Fellows reporting this source decreasing slightly from 38% in 2023 to 36% in 2025. Nurses remained the third most commonly identified source of mistreatment; however, the proportion of Clinical Fellows reporting nurses as a source of discrimination and/or harassment declined considerably in 2025.

	2021	2023	2025
Experienced Discrimination/ Harassment (At least once this past year)	43%	47%	51%
Contacted Someone (At least once this past year)	26%	30%	27%
Faculty Member As source of mistreatment (Multi-response)	57%	51%	45%
Patient/Patient Family As source of mistreatment (Multi-response)	26%	38%	36%
Nurse As source of mistreatment (Multi-response)	21%	30%	19%

Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

Clinical Fellows represent a diverse range of educational, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Perceptions of fair and equitable access to opportunities, as well as feelings of belonging among peers, vary considerably across socioeconomic, religious, and ethnic groups.

In the Voice of the Clinical Fellow surveys, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement: “From childhood, I have had access to the right people or networks that could help me access education and career opportunities.” In 2025, 59% of Clinical Fellows reported moderate or strong agreement with this statement, a slight decline from 62% in 2023. Fellows were also asked to assess the fairness and equity of their access to opportunities relative to their peers. In 2025, 57% rated their access as Excellent or Very Good, compared with 61% in 2023. Similarly, perceptions of peer inclusion declined slightly. In 2025, 66% of Clinical Fellows reported feeling included by their peers, compared with 68% in 2023.

	2021	2023	2025
Access to Networks since Childhood (Agree Strongly/Agree Moderately)	60%	62%	59%
Fair and equitable access to opportunities compared to peers (Excellent/Very Good)	58%	61%	57%
Feeling included by your peers (Excellent/Very Good)	60%	68%	66%

Perceptions of access to social and professional networks differed substantially by socioeconomic status (SES). In 2025, 80% of Clinical Fellows from Upper- or Upper-middle SES backgrounds agreed that they had access to the right people or networks to support their educational and career opportunities from childhood, compared with only 27% of those from Lower-middle or Lower SES backgrounds.

Similar disparities were observed in perceptions of fair and equitable access to opportunities. Among Clinical Fellows from Lower-middle or Lower SES backgrounds, 55% rated their access to opportunities as Excellent or Very Good in 2025, compared with 74% of those from Upper-middle or Upper SES backgrounds.

	Upper SES	Middle SES	Lower SES
Access to Networks since Childhood (Agree Strongly/Agree Moderately)	80%	34%	27%
Access to Opportunities (Excellent/Very Good)	74%	59%	55%

Future Plans

In 2025, 70% of Clinical Fellows reported feeling excited or positive about their future career path, a 5-percentage-point decline from 2023 (75%) and a return to the level observed in 2021 (70%).

Fellows were also asked how likely they would be to choose a career in medicine again if given the opportunity to start over. Responses to this question showed a modest improvement in positive sentiment since 2023, with 74% indicating they would definitely or probably choose medicine again, up from 72% in 2023. However, this remains slightly below the 2021 level of 75%.

	2021	2023	2025
Feelings about future career path (Excited/Good)	70%	75%	70%
Likelihood of becoming a physician if they could start all over again (Definitely/Probably)	75%	72%	74%

You Said, We Heard

The inaugural survey of clinical fellows was first deployed in 2008. Since that time there have been significant initiatives and improvements in resources available as well the implementation of standards and guidelines for both fellows and fellowship programs. Much of this has been achieved through the [Fellowship Education Advisory Committee \(FEAC\)](#), under the current leadership of Dr. Laura Simone. Some of the recent activities include Clinical Fellow Leadership Development workshops, introduction of the Dimitris Oreopoulos International Learner Transition Fund, the joint UHN-PGME Transitions Program for incoming fellows and multiple community-building and welcome events for clinical fellows. In addition, new guidelines on the Remuneration and Benefits for clinical fellows were recently updated in [January 2026](#).

In addition to these initiatives, clinical fellows can avail themselves of the many offerings of [The Office of Learner Affairs \(OLA\)](#), which provides equitable, inclusive, and comprehensive support to learners across the medical education continuum including career counselling, accommodations and accessibility, religious accommodations and wellness services. OLA also offers a highly skilled team of committed leaders and case managers for the confidential disclosure and reporting of learner mistreatment through the Learner Experience Unit. In addition, the Office of Inclusion and Diversity offers [Temerty Medicine Community Connects \(TMCC\)](#) events to create safe spaces for the dissemination of data and shared experiences to drive action.

Methodology

The 2025 Voice of the Clinical Fellow survey was deployed as an online survey to all clinical fellows enrolled in a U of T clinical fellowship in the 2024-25 academic year and were active for 1 month or more in that fellowship. The survey was deployed from March 27, 2025 to July 10, 2025 to a total population of 1,546 clinical fellows, including Canadian citizens, permanent residents and international clinical fellows on work permits. The response rate to the survey was 41%, and all respondents received a \$10 gift card.