



# Association of Program Directors for Colon and Rectal Surgery

## 2025-2026 APDCRS Robotic Training Program Overview

This will mark the fourteenth year that da Vinci training courses are offered to colon and rectal surgery fellows. The training programs have always been a collaborative effort by Intuitive Surgical (which provides facility space, equipment, and personnel) and members of the Association of Program Directors for Colon and Rectal Surgeons (APDCRS) with da Vinci expertise (faculty, curriculum development, clinical training).

The courses are organized, managed, and coordinated by the Program Directors Association, with continuing generous financial and logistical support from Intuitive Surgical.

APDCRS-affiliated Program Directors are encouraged to apply to the program. Once selections are made, fellows are required to complete da Vinci system-training and documented robotic case experience prior to attending the one-day training program at an Intuitive Training center (Atlanta, GA). Based on feedback from program directors and fellows, we have made some changes to the course. These changes are made to address the concerns regarding availability at the end of year on the one hand, and an opportunity to expand the experience for some who may find the current course unfulfilling due to already high-volume experience.

1. Both a Spring course and a June course will be offered.
2. Some programs and fellows with high volume experience have expressed interest in a more varied training. For those that meet criteria we will have a progressive, alternative procedure-based course. The qualifications to attend this new addition will be a higher volume of documented console cases.
3. The high-volume hands-on course is intended for fellows in high volume robotic programs who can meet the minimum numbers earlier in their training and are ready for more complex procedure training.
4. The standard hands-on course is intended for fellows with moderate da Vinci case volume who want a springboard to practice at the end of training.

We hope that these changes provide a better match of resources to training needs.

The Surgeon-Led Course will feature a combination of peer-led didactic training (provided both virtually and on-site) and hands-on surgeon-led procedural training. Awardees will return to their institution and apply their training in surgical procedures with their attending surgeon. It is expected that all trainees return to their institution to earn a robotic Training Equivalency Certificate from Intuitive before the conclusion of the academic year.

The fellowship will also include instructional webinars over the course of the academic year to supplement the learning and development of each awardee. It is strongly encouraged for all to attend every webinar.

### **I. APPLICATION PROCESS Program Eligibility Criteria**

- i. Program Director at academic institution a member of the APDCRS
- i. Commitment from Program Director or Lead Attending to mentor fellow over the course of the program through attainment of robotic equivalency certificate
- i. Surgeon mentor with 30 robotic cases in between Q4 2022 and Q3 2023 (volume to support attainment of equivalency certificate)
- iv. Mentor will ensure all relevant activities are completed by the resident as outlined in the program curriculum
- v. Trainee a colorectal fellow in an US-based ACGME-accredited program

## II. **TRAINING PATHWAY**

To be completed to qualify for the Surgeon-Led Course:

1. da Vinci Technology Online Modules:
  - o Documented completion of the set of interactive online modules covering the basic design and operation of the Da Vinci system on the Intuitive Learning site (specifically the Xi Multiport Learning Plan for Residents and Fellows).
2. da Vinci Technology Overview In-Service and Skills Simulation:
  - o In-person overview of the da Vinci system conducted at the hospital by an Intuitive clinical representative
  - o Skills Simulator modules – Complete modules as defined by the APDCRS in the chart below (and based upon simulator type at program) - with a score of 90% (or completion of console skills drills for those without a simulator). Results to be submitted by fellow when applying for program. Additionally, fellow should continue to practice these skills drills weekly throughout their fellowship year to build psychomotor competency in the use of the da Vinci system.
3. Submission of all robotic cases into the My Intuitive App case log system (these cases will be automatically logged to the app for you via “Cloud Login” at the completion of each da Vinci case.
4. Participation in a minimum of 10 Da Vinci Cases as console surgeon (with majority of the case performed by the fellow) –entered into the My Intuitive App case log *prior* to the Fellow Course Application deadline.
5. Participation in the Surgeon-Led Hands-on Course offered in Spring 2026 (Dates TBA)
6. Faculty-Led Webinars: One monthly from February to July (open to all current and former fellows)
7. Participants completing 20 Console Cases and 10 Bedside cases may be eligible to earn a Certificate of Equivalency Training issued by Intuitive Surgical. A final determination as to technical and clinical competency of the fellow on the da Vinci system for the purposes of the Equivalency Certificate is at the discretion of the fellow’s program director. Case

participation is noted as having completed most of a case as a console surgeon or bedside assist as defined by the APDCRS Program Directors. Participants who earn an equivalency certificate and complete the APDCRS training pathway are eligible to attend an additional training course at an Intuitive facility in their first year of practice through the Intuitive Premier program.

8. The APDCRS strongly recommends that the fellow complete a minimum of 30 robotic cases during the course of their fellowship year to build technical and clinical competence on the robot prior to entering practice.
9. Mentorship touchpoints will be provided to the fellows to assist them in their career development and transition to practice. This will be facilitated in the following ways:
  - The APDCRS fellowship course faculty will offer two webinars during the fellowship year focused on contract negotiation, building your practice, negotiating for robotic OR time, and to answer fellows' questions regarding the next step in their career.
  - Ongoing virtual check-in webinars facilitated by APDCRS faculty will be offered in the year following fellowship, which will provide continued career-development topics. These webinars will be held in conjunction with the Sunday Night CRS Virtual Education Series that is a benefit of the SurgeOn app.
  - All fellows will be invited to join a private community within the SurgeOn App that will be moderated by the APDCRS faculty. This private community will offer a space for the fellows to network, to ask questions, and to support each other through their transition to practice.

### **III. HANDS-ON COURSE OFFERINGS**

- Atlanta (five one-day courses): Dates to Be Announced

### **IV. TRANSITION-TO-PRACTICE SUPPORT**

1. For trainees completing the full year training pathway and earning a training equivalency certificate during their final year, they will be eligible to participate in the

*Intuitive Premier* program sponsored by Intuitive. This program will enable trainees to register for refresher training or Surgeon-Led Course training during their first year of practice.

2. Fellows will be provided with a link through which they can opt-in to the Intuitive Premier training program.