Introduction to Careers in Medicine

Melanie Carlson
Financial Aid Assistant
October 30, 2013
What is Careers in Medicine?

A career-planning program to help you

• Identify career goals
• Explore specialty and practice options
• Choose a specialty
• Select and apply to residency programs
• Make good career decisions
Careers in Medicine model

- Understand yourself
- Explore options
- Choose a specialty
- Land a residency
Careers in Medicine model

Understand yourself
Careers in Medicine model

- Explore options
- Understand yourself
Careers in Medicine model

Choose a specialty

Explore options

Understand yourself
Careers in Medicine timeline

Year 1
Understand Yourself

Year 2
Explore Options

Year 3
Choose a Specialty

Year 4
Land a Residency
Access Careers in Medicine at www.aamc.org/cim

Welcome to the new Careers in Medicine

The CIM Web site now offers a tailored experience based on who you are, highlighting what's important to you when it's important you. Articles and data are now specific to particular users (e.g., U.S. M.D. users, U.S. D.O. users, Canadian users, users from international medical schools) and will display only to those users. So you see the data, information, and advice relevant to you.

Read more about the new CIM 5

Incoming students

Choosing a specialty is one of the most significant decisions you'll make in your career, and Careers in Medicine has the tools and information to assist you. However, incoming medical students will not have access to Careers in Medicine until August 1. We're sure you'll enjoy using all the features we have to offer, so check back with us after August 1. Then just sign in using your AAMC Account (the same user name and password you've used for AMCAS and MCAT).
Welcome!

Choosing a specialty is one of the most significant decisions you'll make during medical school. And residency positions are increasingly competitive. Luckily, Careers in Medicine can help!

The New Careers in Medicine

Introducing the new Careers in Medicine! This Web site is more user friendly and features more information than ever before — all to better help you choose a specialty and residency programs that best fit, successfully land a residency position, and plan your physician career.

Take the tour to check out our new features, then explore all the site offers.

The New Careers in Medicine 5

New on CiM

Gauging your competitiveness
July 19, 2013

Choosing Ob-Gyn: Reflections from a graduating medical school senior
July 16, 2013

Choosing Family Medicine: Reflections from a Graduating Medical School Senior
July 16, 2013

Recommended For You

Overview: Applying to residency

Match Timeline

Electronic Residency Application Service

8 things you should know about applying for residency but were afraid to ask

The basics of SOAP: The Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program

View my Assessment Tracker

See the results of the assessments you've taken and complete the assessments you haven't to get a more complete picture of how you may fit in medicine.

Recent Favorites

FAVORITES NOT AVAILABLE IN PREVIEW.

Careers in Medicine Timeline

The CiM Timeline can help you stay on track in the career-planning process.

Read more 5
Choose Your Specialty
Find the medical specialty that's the best fit for you

Land Your Residency
Find and successfully match into the residency program that meets your career goals

Shape Your Career
Consider practice options and maximize your career

Medical Specialties
Search/browse specialty programs

Find Your Fit
- Interests
  Identify your interests in medicine and find specialties that best fit
- Lifestyle
  Identify what's important in your practice and how to find it in any specialty
- Other Influences
  Learn about the other influences that affect your happiness in a specialty

Skills and Experiences
- Clinical Experience
  Assess your clinical skills and explore specialties using clinical experiences
- Educational Experience
  Maximize events during med school to explore and achieve your career goals
- Licensing Exams
  Learn about board exams and their impact on your career decisions
- Clinical and Research Opportunities
  A listing of summer and year-round programs

Making the Decision
Learn how to evaluate specialties and make a good decision

Careers in Medicine Timeline
The CIM Timeline can help you stay on track in the career-
Choose Your Specialty | Land Your Residency | Shape Your Career
--- | --- | ---
Find the medical specialty that's the best fit for you | Find and successfully match into the residency program that meets your career goals | Consider practice options and maximize your career

Medical Specialties
Begin your specialty exploration by selecting from our list of more than 120 specialties and subspecialties. For each, you'll find descriptions of the work the physicians do, salary, training requirements and the match, salary and workforce information, and links to relevant organizations and publications.

Find Your Fit
Sound vocational theory says you're more likely to be satisfied in your professional life if your career matches your personal and environmental characteristics such as interests, values, personality, and skills. In medicine, these aspects of yourself can be reflected in your preferred practice setting(s), patient type(s), medical condition(s), colleagues, and tasks and activities. Finding your fit entails first exploring who you are and what you want for your life, then identifying those career options that will support those goals and in which you can thrive.

- Interests
- Lifestyle
- Other Influences

Skills and Experience
Everything you do and learn during medical school contributes to the total package you submit when applying for residency. However, it's not just the events that take place (e.g., a research project, a leave of absence), but how you handle them. No one expects you to be perfect — but residency programs do expect to see that you try hard, learn from your mistakes, are open to feedback, and strive to improve.
Find your fit: Interests and Values

Medical Specialty Preference Inventory, Revised Edition (MSPI-R)

• Measures your interest in various activities, tasks, and experiences found in medicine

• Your ratings on 150 items provides the probability of entering 16 medical specialties, and your preferences for 18 areas of medical practice

Physician Values in Practice Scale (PVIPS)

• Identifies your priorities regarding six values (Autonomy, Management, Prestige, Service, Lifestyle, and Scholarly Pursuits)

• Results can be used to compare to various environments and activities in medical practice.
Medical Specialty Preference Inventory, Revised Edition

Rate each item to indicate your degree of desirability. When you make a selection the next statement will appear. You must answer all 150 items for the results to be computed. Once you are finished, your results will be reported on a new page.

Question: 6 of 150

A practice in which I treat many minor diseases each day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Medical Specialty Preference Inventory, Revised Edition

### Specialty Choice Probabilities

The following scores represent the probability that you will enter into one of the 15 specialties based on your interest in performing specific activities in medicine. A higher probability indicates a stronger preference for that specialty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatrics</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dermatology</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jeanette Calli  
Assessment Date: 7/10/13
## Medical Interest Scales

The Medical Interest Scales measure your interest in specific areas of medical practice. High scores indicate more interest. As you review your results, pay particular attention to scales on which you scored either very high or very low. These generally indicate important areas to focus on as you explore specialties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Scoring Interests</th>
<th>Lowest Scoring Interests</th>
<th>Compare Your Score to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Care</td>
<td>Reproductive Care</td>
<td>Anesthesiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Results</td>
<td>Psychological Care</td>
<td>Dermatology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Taking</td>
<td>Knowledge of Anatomical Structures</td>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Problems</td>
<td>Patient Counseling</td>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency-Critical Care</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palliative Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Complex Problems          | 6.3                      |
| Comprehenseive Care       | 7.0                      |
| Diagnostic Precision      | 5.2                      |
| Emergency-Critical Care   | 5.8                      |
| History Taking            | 6.8                      |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choose Your Specialty</th>
<th>Land Your Residency</th>
<th>Shape Your Career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find the medical specialty that's the best fit for you</td>
<td>Find and successfully match into the residency program that meets your career goals</td>
<td>Consider practice options and maximize your career</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Physician Values in Practice Scale Assessment**

Read and respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree. After you choose your response, the next statement will appear. You must answer all 60 statements for the results to be computed. After you respond to the last statement, your results will appear on a new Web page.

**Question: 4 of 60**

**In my medical practice it will be important that I work a predictable number of hours.**

- **Strongly Agree**
- **Agree**
- **Neutral**
- **Disagree**
- **Strongly Disagree**
## Physician Values in Practice Scale Results

This report identifies your priorities regarding the six values and the type of work settings and activities that reflect those values.

To use this report, examine your scale and subscale scores to identify your least and most important values. Then consider your item responses noting how you feel about the specific areas and activities associated with each value.

Use this information to help you consider how you want to practice medicine—not what specialty to choose. Use your values to help determine geographic location, type of work environment (e.g., research or community-based), and activities (e.g., serving on community boards or leading research). While our PVIPS research found some significant differences between specialties and specialty groups (and these are noted below), you can incorporate your values into your career regardless of the specialty you choose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Life Balance</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly Pursuits</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medical Specialties

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Maximize your experiences during medical school, learning and growing as much as possible. Use these strategies to strive for positive outcomes including personal and professional development as well as to successfully recover from and move past less than ideal situations.
Begin your specialty exploration by selecting from our list of more than 120 specialties and subspecialities. For each, you’ll find descriptions of the work physicians do, salary, training requirements and the match, salary and workforce information, and links to relevant organizations and publications.

**Allergy & Immunology**
- Clinical & Laboratory Immunology

**Anesthesiology**
- Critical Care Medicine
- Obstetric Anesthesiology
- Pain Medicine
- Pediatric Anesthesiology

**Colon & Rectal Surgery**

**Dermatology**
- Dermatopathology

**Pathology-Anatomic & Clinical**
- Blood Banking - Transfusion Medicine
- Chemical Pathology
- Cytopathology
- Forensic Pathology
- Hematology
- Medical Microbiology
- Neuropathology
- Pediatric Pathology

**Pediatrics**
- Adolescent Medicine
- Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine
- Pediatric Cardiology
- Pediatric Critical Care Medicine
- Pediatric Emergency Medicine
- Pediatric Endocrinology
- Pediatric Gastroenterology
- Pediatric Hematology-Oncology

**Compare Specialties**
Choose up to three of the major U.S. M.D. specialties and view select data points side-by-side.

**Take self-assessments**
Take these self-assessments to help find your fit in medicine.
An anesthesiologist is trained to provide pain relief and maintenance, or restoration, of a stable condition during and immediately following an operation, obstetric, or diagnostic procedure. It is the anesthesiologist’s foremost purpose and concern to protect the patient’s well-being and safety just prior to, during, and after surgery. Anesthesiologists have many responsibilities: preoperative evaluation of patients to determine conditions that may complicate surgery; management of pain and emotional stress during surgical, obstetrical, and medical procedures; provision of life support under the stress of anesthesia and surgery; immediate postoperative care of the patient; and knowledge of drugs and their interactions with anesthetic agents. Their functions also include long-standing and cancer pain management; management of problems in cardiac and respiratory resuscitation; application of specific methods of inhalation therapy; and emergency clinical management of various fluid, electrolyte, and metabolic disturbances.

### Median Salary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early career</th>
<th>All physicians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$329,545</td>
<td>$423,753</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Mean USMLE Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 CK</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Average Hours Worked Per Week

61.0

### Length of Training

4 year(s)

### Specialty News

Non-invasive continuous arterial pressure monitoring with Nexfin(R) does not sufficiently replace invasive measurements in critically ill patients.

*British Journal of Anaesthesia*
**Anesthesiology**

### The Work

#### Patient Profile

5 most frequently encountered conditions:
1. orthopaedic procedures
2. obstetric and gynecological procedures
3. pain conditions
4. cardiothoracic procedures
5. abdominal procedures

#### Setting

- 57% of physicians in this specialty practice in an urban setting
- 3% of physicians in this specialty practice in a rural setting
- Office-based patient care
- Hospital-based physician staff
- Teaching

#### Lifestyle

- **On-call schedule**
  - LOW
  - MED
  - HIGH
- **Average hours worked per week**
  - 51.0
- **Average weeks worked per year**
  - 45.4

#### Patient Load

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours spent seeing patients per week</th>
<th>&lt;30 hr</th>
<th>30–40 hr</th>
<th>41–50 hr</th>
<th>51–60 hr</th>
<th>&gt;60 hr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of patient visits per week</th>
<th>&lt;25</th>
<th>25–49</th>
<th>50–99</th>
<th>100–149</th>
<th>&gt;149</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minutes spent with each patient</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Related Articles

Source: [Link]
## Anesthesiology

### Salary

#### Clinical Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Starting salaries</td>
<td>$220,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–2 years in specialty</td>
<td>$229,545</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All physicians</td>
<td>$352,797</td>
<td>$423,753</td>
<td>$502,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Academic Medicine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant professor</td>
<td>$276,000</td>
<td>$315,000</td>
<td>$357,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/Full professor</td>
<td>$309,000</td>
<td>$348,000</td>
<td>$395,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [Link](#)  
Source: [Link](#)
### Training and Residency Tracks

#### Requirements and Recommendations

**Prerequisites**
PGY-1 year in internal, critical care, emergency, or family medicine; general surgery or any surgical specialty; pediatrics; obstetrics and gynecology; neurology; or any combination of these.

**Recommended Away Electives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>MED</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Recommended Research Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>MED</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Length of Training

- **4 year(s)**

  (including PGY-1)

#### Interview Timing

- November
- January

*Source [AAMC](https://www.aamc.org)*
### Competitiveness

#### Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>132</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-duty residents</td>
<td>5,954</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### USMLE Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S.M.D. Seniors</th>
<th>Matched</th>
<th>Unmatched</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 CK</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Independent Applicants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matched</th>
<th>Unmatched</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2 CK</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NRMP Match Statistics

NRMP Results and Data: 2013 Main Residency Match

### Charting Outcomes in the Match

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>U.S. seniors</th>
<th>Independent applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matched</td>
<td>Unmatched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of U.S. Seniors</td>
<td>(n=1,005)</td>
<td>(n=41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of contiguous ranks</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of distinct specialties ranked</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean USMLE Step 1 score</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean USMLE Step 2 score</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of research experiences</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean number of abstracts, presentations, and publications</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Workforce

### Total Physicians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33,997</td>
<td>35,898</td>
<td>41,092</td>
<td>42,948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per 100,000 population</td>
<td>12.82</td>
<td>12.76</td>
<td>13.55</td>
<td>13.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Workforce Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Activity</th>
<th>Metropolitan Statistical Area</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Show data for</th>
<th>New York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Professional Activity Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office Based Patient Care</td>
<td>2,035</td>
<td>2,269</td>
<td>2,513</td>
<td>2,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Based Resident</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital Based Physician Staff</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Teaching</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locum Tenens</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Demand

A 2003 assessment of the supply of and demand for anesthesiologists found a current shortage. There was not enough data to determine with confidence how demand for anesthesiologists would change in the coming years. If demand increases above 1.5%, the authors project a continued shortage through 2015.

[Source](#)
Anesthesiology

Additional Resources

Societies, Boards, and Other Organizations
- American Board of Anesthesiology
- American Society of Anesthesiologists
- American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine
- Association of University Anesthesiologists
- Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research
- Society for Education in Anesthesia
- Society for Technology in Anesthesia
- Society of Academic Anesthesiology Chairs (SAAC) and the Association of Anesthesiology Program Directors

Publications
- American Society of Anesthesiologists Newsletter
- Anesthesiology
- American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine Newsletter
## Compare specialties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Lifestyle</th>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Competitiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anesthesiology</td>
<td>4.0 year(s) (including PGY-1)</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
<td>4.0 year(s)</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>MED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopaedic Surgery</td>
<td>5.0 year(s)</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Training
- Length of Training
  - Anesthesiology: 4.0 year(s) (including PGY-1)
  - Psychiatry: 4.0 year(s)
  - Orthopaedic Surgery: 5.0 year(s)

### Lifestyle
- Average Hours Worked per Week:
  - Anesthesiology: 61.0
  - Psychiatry: 46.5
  - Orthopaedic Surgery: 57.0

### Salary
- Median Salary (All Physicians in Clinical Practice):
  - Anesthesiology: $423,753
  - Psychiatry: $205,927
  - Orthopaedic Surgery: $520,113

### Competitiveness
- Competitiveness Rating
  - Anesthesiology: LOW
  - Psychiatry: LOW
  - Orthopaedic Surgery: LOW

### Programs
- Programs:
  - Anesthesiology: 132
  - Psychiatry: 194
  - Orthopaedic Surgery: 154

### Mean USMLE Scores
- Anesthesiology:
  - USMLE Step 1: 228
  - USMLE Step 2 CK: 235
- Psychiatry:
  - USMLE Step 1: 214
  - USMLE Step 2 CK: 225
- Orthopaedic Surgery:
  - USMLE Step 1: 240
  - USMLE Step 2 CK: 245
Clinical Experience

Clinical experiences are your chance to learn the nitty-gritty of what it’s like to practice. Identifying extracurricular clinical opportunities early in medical school, strategically approaching scheduling your fourth year, and effectively evaluating your clinical experiences can provide significant advantages in helping you learn about and narrow your list of specialties.

During these hands-on experiences, you might discover a specialty is not what you previously thought or another may become more appealing. You might also wonder whether clinical practice is a good fit for you. The earlier you identify which specialties you like and don’t, the more time you have to progress in your search — either continuing to explore different specialties or confirming the specialty(ies) you suspect you like.

Strategies for getting clinical experience early in medical school

As a first-year student and my school does not provide any clinical experiences until the third year, how can I get some exposure to the specialties I’m interested in before starting clerkships?

Read more

Using your clinical rotations to explore specialties

As you gather knowledge and skills during medical school, your clinical rotations are going to be invaluable experience, not just for learning how to be a good physician, but also to help you figure out which specialty might be right for you.

Read more

Evaluating your specialty prospects after a negative clinical rotation

I always thought I wanted to go into pediatrics, but I hated my pediatrics rotation. Where do I go from here, and should I still look at pediatrics considering my experience?

Read more
Residency Programs

Choosing a residency is a big decision, and one that creates stress and anxiety for many students. Your residency is important because it's a time of tremendous growth both in your clinical knowledge base as well as your professional development. Much of what you learn will come from patients. So you must find a program where you are motivated to learn and study about your patients and can become an excellent, caring, humanistic physician, as well as feel happy in your work and home environments.

There's no one perfect residency that's the best fit for all students — the best program for you depends on your strengths, weaknesses, goals, and personality. You must systematically approach researching and considering residencies to find programs that fit your individual needs and eventually match to a program and feel relatively happy during your time there.

- Find Programs
- Researching Programs
- Residency Preference Exercise

Residency Application

Once you've effectively researched programs and identified those where you might fit, it's time to apply to and interview with those programs. Your application includes several components, each designed to explain your qualifications and, ultimately, encourage programs to consider you for an interview. Interviews are your best opportunity to tell programs why they should consider you for a position.

However, any missteps along the way can as much as torpedo your candidacy. Luckily, strategies exist to help you present your best self on paper and in person.

- Applying
- Interviewing

The Match

Generally speaking, the match is a process designed to help applicants secure their preferred residency position(s) and help programs secure their preferred candidates. It's based on a computer algorithm that compares the rank order list of applicants with those of residency programs. This basic premise is simple, but the circumstances surrounding the match are complicated.

There are increasingly more applicants than residency slots, and certain specialties experience an even more disproportionate amount of applicants. This means residency applicants must act strategically to ensure they match to a residency program. As without residency training, the career options and income available to medical school graduates are severely limited.
Residency Application

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Applying

A successful match to a residency program starts long before you create your rank order list. In fact, applying to residency programs is more involved and strategic than you might think. First, narrow the more than 9,000 programs to a shorter list of programs that are the best fit for you. Then present your best self through your application. Completing both tasks well will help programs foretell the mutually beneficial experience of you as their resident and encourage them to interview you.

Interviewing

Every fall and winter, thousands of fourth-year medical students travel hundreds of miles and collectively spend millions of dollars to interview for residency positions. It's an expensive, time-consuming process — one that often leaves students feeling uncomfortable and uncertain about what to expect. Employ the resources available to you — especially your advisor(s), so you can most effectively manage the process. This will lessen the bandwidth devoted to those activities and, rather, allow you to redirect that energy to presenting your best self and finding the program(s) that best fit.

Tools

Match Timeline
To eventually participate in the match, you must apply to, interview with, and rank programs — and each of these phases involves many steps. Here's a timeline by year and month to help you manage the process and ultimately accomplish every step.

Residency Preference Exercise
Helps you assess your desired characteristics for a residency program, including educational opportunities, clinical experiences, coworkers, and work environment.
State of the Match
Friday, July 12, 2013

With 29,171 positions and 34,355 active applicants, the 2013 Main Residency Match was the largest on record, according to the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP). The number of positions in the Match increased by 2,399 over the 2012 Match, with much of the growth attributed to the new "all-in" policy requiring programs to include either all or none of their positions in the Match. Significant increases in positions occurred in internal medicine, family medicine, and psychiatry, likely due to the all-in policy.

Increasing applicants, increasing competition

But along with growth in the number of positions available came growth in the number of applicants. This year’s Match included 17,487 U.S. M.D. seniors, 960 more over 2012, due to new medical schools graduating their first classes as well as established schools increasing enrollment and creating new campuses. Increases also occurred with other applicant types: 2,677 U.S. D.O. students (317 more over 2012) and 12,633 international medical graduates (1,556 more over 2012).

Successfully matching at a rate of 93.7 percent were 16,390 U.S. M.D. seniors, with 79.8 percent matching into one of their top three choices and more than 52 percent matching to their first choice. The match rate decreased for U.S. M.D. seniors from its 2012 high of 95.1 percent, but remained within its historical range of 92–94 percent over the last 30 years.

SOAP results

In a post-Match press release, NRMP Executive Director Mona M. Signer said, "We are very pleased with the 2013 Match results for medical school applicants and their residency programs." After the NRMP matching algorithm was processed, only 1,041 positions were unfilled, and 939 were placed in the Match Week Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP) — the process used by NRMP for unfilled residency positions.

A total 2,076 U.S. M.D. seniors were eligible to compete for positions in SOAP because they were either completely or partially unmatched (i.e., matched to a preliminary position but not an advanced position, or matched to an advanced position but not a preliminary one). Of the 980 U.S. M.D. seniors completely unmatched, 452 obtained positions through SOAP, leaving 526 (266 more over 2012) with no position.

“[T]here are many reasons why applicants don’t match. Some overestimate their qualifications and apply only to very competitive specialties. If they don’t apply to and rank programs in less competitive specialties, they often do not get matched there either because they left the options off the list.”
Practice

Medicine provides a myriad of practice options, ranging from the traditional private practice to large academic medical centers with hundreds of affiliated physicians. Obtaining a basic understanding of the types of practice settings available ensures you’ll be equipped to choose a setting that suits your career and personal objectives.

- Patient Care
- Research
- Teaching
- Administration

Setting

"Practice setting" refers to the types of organizations (e.g., private practice, hospital) as well as types of geographical locations (e.g., urban, rural) where physicians can practice. The characteristics that define each type of organization and geographical location vary and, consequently, affect the care you’ll provide. When you choose your practice setting, you’ll choose both a type of organization and geographic location.

- Rural Medicine
- Hospital

Professional Development

Medicine is a field where its professionals especially must change with the times throughout a career. However, evolving in your role as a physician — or, professional development — ideally involves taking this growth and development to the next level. This level of professional development includes dedicating yourself to enhancing your medical knowledge and skills over time, effectively managing your education debt and general financial health, networking with other health professionals to broaden your horizons, and other topics.

- Networking
- Switching Specialties
- Financing your Career

Alternative Careers

A small but growing number of medical school graduates are choosing alternative careers. These paths less taken often make good use of a physician’s medical, scientific, and clinical skills — although success often hinges on other skills and qualifications a candidate brings beyond the medical degree. Many of these alternative options value the medical education’s scientific foundation but look beyond the hospital setting for more personally satisfying and financially rewarding opportunities.
Spotlight on Specialties

Infectious Disease

The field of infectious diseases (ID) involves the diagnosis and treatment of patients with infections — acute and chronic. Some acute infections can be easily diagnosed and managed within just days, says Cmdr. Todd Gleeson, M.D., the infectious disease staff clerkship director at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Md., and an active duty ID physician in the U.S. Navy. Conversely, other infections require invasive procedures to obtain specimens on which highly specialized testing must be performed to ultimately make evasive diagnoses. These patients often require months of complicated therapy.

Read more »

Special Feature

The truth behind switching specialties during residency

Switching specialties usually adds time to your training and dollars to your debt, so it's an event you should avoid. Here's help for trying to find the right fit the first time, and if you end up unhappy, know you can — and should — try again.

Read more »

Getting It Right the Second Time: Dr. Charlie Goldberg

During residency, Dr. Charlie Goldberg switched from urology to internal medicine. In this interview, Dr. Goldberg shares how he arrived at his various decisions along the journey and how he managed the switch.

Read more »
new on CiM

Gauging your competitiveness
July 19, 2013

Choosing Ob-Gyn: Reflections from a graduating medical school senior
July 16, 2013

Choosing Family Medicine: Reflections from a Graduating Medical School Senior
July 16, 2013

Overview: Audition electives
July 12, 2013

State of the Match
July 12, 2013

Recommended For You

Overview: Applying to residency

Match Timeline

Electronic Residency Application Service

8 things you should know about applying for residency but were afraid to ask

The basics of SOAP: The Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program

Types of residency positions

Navigating the Match as a couple
Our CiM Program includes:

Workshops
Panels
Courses
Upcoming Workshops/Programs

join us!

Student-Alumni Q&A Luncheon

Friday, November 15, 2013
12:00 P.M. – 1:00 P.M.
Classroom 1200
Pizza and drinks provided
first come, first serve

Can’t make it? No problem!
Tune into our live video stream
and ask questions via Twitter through our live chat!
Use #FSUMSAA