

Ob-gyns get AMA help to redesign residency application process

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Association of American Medical Colleges data reveal that the last decade saw a doubling in the average number of applications submitted by medical students seeking to match into ob-gyn residency programs.

This trend means more stress for everybody involved; more applications for students to submit, of course, but also more for residency program directors to review. That latter figure grew to an average of 440 in 2019—2.6 times higher than it was in 2010. As a result, program directors find themselves relying more heavily on metrics that have little to do with success in residency, such as United States Medical Licensing Examination Step 1 scores, to help determine which applicants to interview.

(Editor's note: Starting no earlier than 2022, the USMLE program will move to reporting only a pass-fail outcome for the Step1 exam—a decision the AMA supports.)

Now the AMA Reimagining Residency initiative is funding a five-year project that aims to simplify the process by reducing applications and creating a more equitable interview invitation system.

The grant will help fund work by the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO) to develop:

- A single national calendar for residency application deadlines, interview offers and rejections and establishing communication guidelines between applicants and programs.
- Additional application review metrics to encourage holistic review of residency applications.
- An applicant compatibility index app that aids students with program selection by increasing transparency of the metrics and characteristics programs use for residency selection.
- An optional early result match program to decrease the number of applications needed for a successful match, whenever possible.

The program's goals are to:

- | Optimize the alignment and fit between interested applicants and potential programs through the application and Match processes.
- | Provide incoming matched PGY-1 residents with professional development to ensure they have the medical knowledge, skills and support necessary to successfully begin residency.

APGO will work along with the other organizations sponsoring Reimagining Residency projects to evaluate successes and lessons learned, and promote wide dissemination and adoption of successful innovations.

“This will not be an overnight process,” said Maya Hammoud, MD, president of APGO and a professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Michigan. “It took many years to get to this point; it will take many years to get out of it.”

The AMA Reimagining Residency Initiative has awarded more than \$15 million in grants to institutions that will transform residency training to meet the workforce needs of America's current and future health care system. Learn about the other transformative residency-training projects that have been awarded AMA grants.