

## Medical students match in record numbers, celebrate virtually

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In a Match Day unlike any other in history, more medical students paired with residency programs through the National Resident Matching Program than any year that preceded it.

A record-high 40,084 applicants submitted program choices for 37,256 positions. Looking at postgraduate year 1 (PGY-1) position match rates, senior medical students from MD-granting medical schools matched at a 93.7% rate and seniors from (DO-granting medical schools matched at a 90.7% clip.

While record numbers of applicants and record position fill rates have become norms for the Match annually, Friday's Match Day was abnormal in many other ways for medical students on the verge of residency.

With the COVID-19 pandemic leading to most traditional Match Day ceremonies being cancelled, many institutions held their own virtual ceremonies. There were also celebrations on Twitter at the hashtags #Match2020 and #MatchDay.

Deena Kishawi, a fourth-year medical student at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine and AMA member, found out she matched at Saint Joseph Hospital Chicago obstetrics and gynecology program.

"I'm from Chicago originally," she said. "I was born and raised here. So, my number one priority was staying in Chicago because I wanted to be able to give back to the community that helped me get this far. I put Chicago programs at the top of my [rank-order] list, hoping to stay here. Thankfully I got what I wanted."

Rather than commemorate her Match in her medical school's atrium, as Kishawi had witnessed fellow medical students do in prior years, she participated with 100-plus classmates via a virtual Match celebration from her home in Chicago's Portage Park neighborhood. She dubbed her couch the

“celebration station.” She was sitting there when she opened the email notifying her of her placement. She then took in the joy with family members before participating in a number of group video chats with friends and classmates.

In terms of a bigger celebration, Loyola students are still holding out hope that graduation will take place in May. “We just tried to make the best of the situation given the circumstances,” Kishawi said. “And I think most medical schools did a good job with that. We are hoping at some point there will be a bigger celebration, but if that doesn’t happen, we’ll eventually find a way to commemorate these years.”

Learn what do after you Match with a residency program.

## MD, DO matches fully combine

“NRMP is proud to congratulate thousands of young physicians as they celebrate their transition to residency,” said Donna L. Lamb, NRMP president and CEO. “We are especially excited that the 2020 Match marks a milestone for the medical education community: The first Single Match for U.S. MD and DO senior students and graduates and the inclusion of DO senior students as sponsored applicants.”

Lamb’s reference to the “Single Match” represents the culmination of a process that began in 2014. It is the result of the creation of a single accreditation system forged by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. In 2014, those organizations approved an agreement to recognize the ACGME as the primary accrediting body for graduate medical education programs by 2020. As part of that transition, the AOA Match ended in 2019.

Overall, the number of PGY-1 positions increased by 6.4%, to more than 34,000. That spike was largely due to the migration of positions formerly in the AOA Match. In total, 6,581 senior students from DO-granting medical schools participated in the Match, an increase of 1,103 from 2019. The 90.7% match rate for that segment was a 2.6 percentage point increase from 2019. Since 2016, the number of seniors from DO-granting medical schools has increased 120%, according to NRMP data.

## U.S. senior MDs and IMGs

At 19,326, the number of seniors who submitted program choices from MD-granting medical schools was an increase of 401 from the prior year. This year's match rate of 93.7% has remained consistent with the numbers that have been posted in past years.

There was a slight increase—to 5,167—in U.S. citizen international medical school students and graduates (IMGs) who submitted program choices for the 2020 cycle. Among those applicants the match rate was 61%, the highest rate since 1991.

## Checking in on primary care

More than half of the total first-year positions offered in the Match were in the primary care specialties of family medicine, internal medicine, internal medicine-pediatrics, internal medicine-primary, pediatrics and pediatrics-primary. The number of positions offered in those specialties represented a 7.4 percent increase over 2019. Those positions filled at a 95.4% rate, with 45.1% of the spots being filled by seniors from MD-granting medical schools.

Internal medicine and family medicine saw increases of over 500 in the number of positions offered in each discipline.

## Other specialty notes

- | Obstetrics and gynecology programs offered 1,433 first-year positions, 48 more than in 2019, and filled all but three. The overall fill rate was 99.8%, and 75.5% were filled by seniors from U.S. MD-granting medical schools.
- | Orthopedic surgery programs offered 849 PGY-1 positions, 94 more than in 2019. While the overall fill rate was 99.4%, the number of positions filled by US MD seniors decreased for the first time since 2016 but only modestly. In a significant uptick, seniors from U.S. DO-granting medical schools filled 112 (13.2%) of the available positions this year compared to only 13 (1.7%) in 2019.