

## April 16 Online Discussion Summary

APGO and CREOG leaders, along with the RRR Grant Team convened a call on April 16 to review the [APGO and CREOG Residency Response to COVID-19](#).

Over 280 Department Chair, Clerkship Directors, Program Directors, Program Managers, Clerkship Coordinators and Medical Students participated in the discussion, led by Maya Hammoud, MD, MBA. Doctor Hammoud opened the call, sharing that the leadership of APGO and CREOG, along with this RRR Grant Team, created the guidelines together after receiving a lot of questions from students about how the application process would change under COVID-19. A great deal of thought went into developing the guidance. The group determined that as a specialty, Ob-gyn wanted to delay the application process to give enough time for students to be prepared, even if the education organizations elect not to make any changes.

### The guidance focuses on two issues:

1. **Away electives:** While both students and programs rely on them, we don't know if students will be able to travel or not, and we wanted to encourage programs to save electives for students who do not have the opportunity to explore at their own institutions. The situation also presents an opportunity to think about how these practices can be streamlined to save time and expenses for students.
2. **Timeline for having applications ready:** We expect there might be some modifications to the application timelines by the educational organizations with oversight of the process. We will continue to monitor and make changes accordingly.

The guidance didn't comment on the nature of interviews, but this will have to be addressed, and video interview options will need to be explored.

Members of the **Learner Advisory Group (LAG)** on the RRR Grant offered their thoughts:

- DO students often do multiple audition rotations in order to match so they were glad that the guidance didn't call for canceling all away rotations. They applauded the language about allowing those who cannot get the experience at home to do away rotations, even if those rotations end up being shorter or otherwise different from traditional away rotations.
- Transparency from programs about what they are looking for (10 questions) about what they value in a resident.
- Token system where students would get limited tokens to indicate the programs to which they would have completed an away rotation if possible. This would help programs faced with reviewing so many applications because they would know who is really interested. After much discussion, this did not seem a viable solution.

**Program directors** commented from their perspective:

- Programs really need to articulate their mission and what they care about the most. How can this be done?
- Programs would need to be transparent and honest about it as different programs have different appeal

- Suggested current residents can develop the list of what they think is important to the program

Dr. Hammoud reviewed the **timeline proposed in the guidance**:

- Applications due 10/16 (last year we suggested 10/1)
- Interviews offered November 3 and November 10 assuming NRMP and ERAS dates do not change

There were some concerns with winter travel in colder climates and also Election Day on November 3. It was suggested that the interviews be offered on November 3 and applicants not sign up until the following day once they know all of their offers and can be intentional about it.

The group discussed **video interviews**, which may be necessary.

FPRMS recently held interviews via Zoom.

- Social event the night before
- Breakout rooms with different interviewers
- One person controlled where interviewees went
- Process felt almost identical to the live process for interviewers
- May have felt different for interviewees
- Savings to interviewee in terms of travel time and cost can be very beneficial
- FPRMS did all video interviews which would be important to be consistent and do the same for everyone. If some students can travel and some cannot to be sure to level the field somehow.

As a specialty ob-gyn should plan for the possibility of video interviews with best practices and platforms in case this is needed. The group will continue the discussion.

How are PDs going to look at **pass/fail clerkships**?

- Tell Clerkship Directors that if a required clerkship is pass fail to try to get them in for Sub-I or elective
- Need to explain in a letter how COVID-19 affected their clerkship
- Don't want to disadvantage people who got caught up in the COVID-19 situation

## **NRMP and AAMC**

The AAMC and NRMP are members of the [Coalition for Physician Accountability](#) who is taking the lead to provide guidance on the overall residency application process and match timeline in the next few weeks.

Participants were asked to identify **future topics for discussion**, which include:

- Virtual Residency fairs
- Creative ways to give students the experience of an actual visit
- Lessons learned from FRMRS interviews
- Video interview standards

Click here to listen to the full [online discussion recording](#).