

Holistic Application Review

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- Increasing numbers of applications are submitted annually for EM residency positions
- Standardized testing is often used as an initial screening method, however, this has only been shown to correlate with success on future standardized tests rather than overall success in residency
- Many benefits of a diverse physician workforce have been demonstrated and achieving such diversity within a residency class requires innovative screening and recruiting methods
- We will discuss methods for holistic review of applications in order to include an assessment of non-cognitive qualities and skills in application screening

Small Group Discussion:

What are the benefits of a diverse physician workforce?

Who is responsible for screening and reviewing applications to your program?

Are reviewers offered training? How are recruiting goals communicated to reviewers?

How does your program define goals for application screening?

Do you screen for specific non-cognitive qualities when reviewing applications?

What resources does your medical center or hospital offer to assist with recruitment of underrepresented in medicine (URM) candidates?

Action Items:

Consider setting a minimum criterion for success in your residency (minimum USMLE scores, minimum grades, assessment of certain “red flags”) and create a strategy for complete review of all applications that fall above that standard

Consider involving others outside of your program leadership in application screening (ex. non-PD faculty, residents, coordinators) to allow a closer look at each applicant and varying perspectives

Train reviewers to ensure that they understand nuances of application review (ex. grade inflation, limitations of SLOEs, etc)

Train reviewers to ensure that they understand your goals for recruiting

Identify and screen for specific non-cognitive qualities that would most enhance your program (ex. academic interest, leadership, service to community, resilience, work ethic, empathy, compassion, diverse background, other specific skills related to past experiences or employment)

Use ERAS filters to search for specific applicant qualities other than traditional metrics

Research and utilize resources outside of your department to assist with recruiting diverse residency candidates

References and Suggested Reading:

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