

## **Maintaining Holistic Application Review in the Setting of Increasing Volume**

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### **What is Holistic Application Review?**

Holistic review is a flexible, individualized manner of assessing an applicant's capabilities by which balanced consideration is given to experiences, attributes, and academic metrics. It also considers the potential contribution and potential of the applicant as an emergency medicine physician.

A balance of experience, attributes, and academic metric (EAM) is:

- Used to assess applicants with the intent of creating a richly diverse interview and selection pool
- Applied equitably across the entire applicant pool
- Grounded in data that provide evidence supporting the use of selection criteria beyond grades and test scores.

### **Why Employ Holistic Application Review?**

- 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

### **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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