Securing an EM Away Rotation:
A survey on the applicant experience and perspective

The CORD Advising Students Committee in EM (ASC-EM) and Application Process Improvement Committee presents an evidenced-based panel discussion highlighting key challenges in away rotation applications in EM. The discussion focuses on key concepts such as student self-perception, application timing, intrinsic and extrinsic influencing factors, and detailed data breakdown between traditional allopathic and osteopathic applicants. CORD ASC-EM & API members will share consensus-driven recommendations and raw data will be unveiled to strengthen the recommendations and discussion.

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Objectives:

1. To assess influences on visiting away applications in Emergency Medicine (EM).
2. To identify areas for process improvement from the student perspective.
3. To propose evidence-based recommendation for away application rotators.

Terminology:

1. **%offer =** % of away programs offered to applicants
2. **%yield** = % of offers per application sent by applicants
3. **%accepted =** % of offered away rotations accepted by the applicants

Presentation Outline:

1. Introduction
    a. Visiting away internship (VAI) challenges
        i. Increased Emergency Medicine (EM) applications
        ii. Medical student overapplication
        iii. Lack of evidence-based recommendations

2. Objectives
    a. To assess influences on visiting away applications in EM
    b. To identify areas for process improvement from the student perspective
    c. To propose evidence-based recommendation for away application rotators
3. Survey study methods
    a. 30-item questionnaire for EM applicants, sent from September to December 2018, completed remotely via email.
        i. (QR code below to access study survey)
    b. 358 students assessed for eligibility
        i. N=252 (met inclusion criteria) → N=192 (MD), N=61 (DO)
        ii. National data vs. survey data:
            1. National EM applicant: 2700; MD/DO ratio: 75%/25%
            2. Our data: 252 (~10%), 75%/25%
4. Data analysis
    a. Quantitative analysis: data stratified by:
        i. MD vs. DO [Figures 1, 2]
        ii. Self-perceived competitiveness [Table 1]
        iii. Application timing [Table 2]
    b. Qualitative analysis: open-axial analysis (subjective responses)
5. Key results
    a. Starting the application process early (**Jan-Feb**) is associated with higher percentage of successful offer per application
    b. Students can anticipate receiving **1 offer** for every **3-6 programs** they apply to.
    c. **DO** (osteopathic) students **do not need** to apply to more VAI programs than MD students to get the same number of offers
    d. **Peers advice** result in over-application without clear rotation yield benefits
    e. **VAI housing/transportation costs** are the biggest factors in reducing applications
    f. **Transparency** [absent] is the most stressful element of VSAS (Visiting Student Application Service)

VSAS Survey QR Code

APPENDIX:

Figure 1: Median Allopathic (MD) Applications vs. Applications Needed for 1 Away Rotation by Perceived Competitiveness.
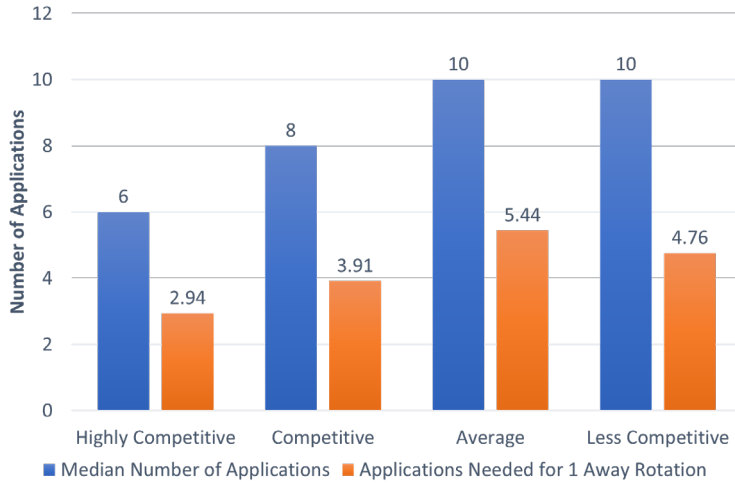

Figure 2: Median Osteopathic (DO) Applications vs. Applications Needed for 1 Away Rotation by Perceived Competitiveness.
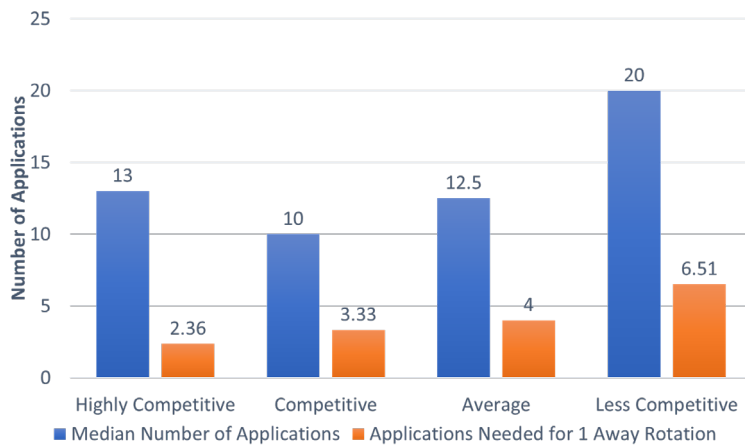
Table 1: Comparing the average number of visiting away internship (VAI) application to average VAI offers based on self-perceived competiveness for MD and DO students

	Average #VAI Applied	Average # VAI Offered	Average # VAI Applications Submitted to Receive 1 Offer
Most Competitive (36)	8.5	3	**2.9**
Competitive (102)	11	3	**3.7**
Average (78)	15	3	5
Less Competitive (37)	22	4	**5.5**
Overall (253)	13.7	3.2	**4.3**

Table 2: MD and DO applications and offers based on application start time. Key: 'early most,' 'middle most,' and 'late most' reflect when the majority of the applications were submitted during that time period.

MD&DO Application Start Time		# of responses	Total # VAI Applied (STDEV)	Total # VAI Offers (STDEV)	% Offers/Applied
Early Start (Jan-Feb)		100	12.6 (1.28)	3.46 (0.2)	**27.5%**
	Early Most	33	13.1 (3.1)	3.1 (0.3)	23.8%
	Middle Most	65	11.4 (0.9)	3.4 (0.2)	30.8%
	Late Most	2	25 (22)	3 (0)	12.0%
Middle Start (Mar-Apr)		138	15.3 (2)	3.2 (0.2)	**21.0%**
	Early Most	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Middle Most	124	15.4 (2.2)	3.2 (0.2)	20.9%
	Late Most	14	14.4 (3.9)	3.1 (0.4)	21.9%
Late Start (May-)		15	10.8 (3.2)	2.2 (0.3)	**20.4%**
	Early Most	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Middle Most	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Late Most	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

FAQ:

1. Do students over-apply?
2. Do EM faculty recommendations matter?
3. Should DO's apply to more programs?
4. What is the best time to send out away applications?
5. What is the most frustrating component of VSAS?
6. Do competitive students have an unfair advantage?