A Step-by-step Guide to Applying to a Neurology Residency Program

Applying for a residency can seem like a complicated process. Learn more about the four steps of applying to residency by clicking on the links below.

Finding an ACGME-Accredited Neurology Residency Program

The following is a list of Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Residency Programs/Directors:

- The American Medical Association Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access System (AMA-FREIDA). For more information, visit the AMA-FREIDA website.

- The annual AMA Directory of Graduate Medical Education Programs (the “Green Book”) is available at the student affairs office of each medical school. This publication provides additional information, including requirements for accreditation of residency programs and certification requirements for various specialties. It may also be ordered from the AMA at (800) 621-8335.

Selecting a Program for Application

Seek counseling about programs from a wide variety of sources including:

- The neurology department chair
- Other neurology faculty
- Neurology residents
- Recent graduates who are currently in programs elsewhere

Consider the following factors when selecting programs:

- Academic environment: Education curriculum, conference schedule, research activity, facilities, faculty-to-resident ratios, and availability of neurology subspecialty expertise
- Area of interest:
  - Academic career: Look at university-based programs with a well-balanced faculty involved in fulltime teaching and research commitments
  - Subspecialty interest: Seek out programs with a well developed division in a specific area, in order to facilitate introduction to research and more specialized practice (e.g., movement disorders, cerebrovascular disease) and to determine which programs might offer a fellowship in that area after completion of residency
• **General clinical neurology**: Investigate the degree to which each program will allow you graded autonomy in managing patients in a resident’s clinic and in evaluating newly presenting undiagnosed patients (e.g., is there a busy emergency department with many patients presenting with a wide spectrum of neurologic disease?)

• Information: Request information about conference schedules and curriculum or ask about this during interviewing to ensure there is a well designed program of didactic education

• Size of program

• Patient-to-resident ratio: Ask about patient-to-resident ratio on the inpatient service, numbers of consults seen per month for the inpatient consult service and numbers of patients seen on an outpatient basis to make sure that adequate exposure to a wide variety of patients is provided

• Location: If you want to go into clinical practice, remember that many residents go into practice where they trained. During the training process, you usually become familiar with employment opportunities and practicing neurologists and groups in the area

• Selectivity/competitiveness of the program: Ask your medical school neurology department chair and other neurology faculty for assistance in estimating both the selectivity of training programs and applicant competitiveness

**PGY-1 Training**

You should apply to first post-graduate year (PGY-1) programs at the same time as the Neurology program. Some neurology programs include a PGY-1 year within their program (integrated programs). The applicant who matches at a neurology program that guarantees an integrated internship should still submit a rank list to the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) listing the PGY-1 position as top choice. Other Neurology programs require that the applicant find a PGY-1 position independently through the NRMP Match.

**Combination Programs**

A limited number of combination programs are available in the following areas:

• Internal Medicine/Neurology (five-year program)

• Neurology/Diagnostic Radiology/Neuroradiology (seven-year program)

• Psychiatry/Neurology (five-year program)

These programs are listed on FREIDA. They do not participate in the National Examination for Medical Practitioners (NEMP) but rather in the NRMP.

**Interviewing**

Talk with each program to get an idea of scheduling. Most neurology programs interview in November and December. Some start the interview season earlier. Many programs also extend the interview season into the first half of January.
You’ll be invited for interviews based on your submitted credentials, personal statement, and letters of reference. The interview and visit to each program is the best opportunity to gather more information. Prepare for interviews by reading about the programs and have a list of questions ready. Meeting with the house staff to get their candid impressions of the program is an important part of the interview process.

After interviews are complete, you must prepare and submit a ranking list of programs to the Neurology Matching Program. This is typically submitted in early January for the Match, which occurs in late January.

**Match Program: The Neurology Match**

Adult and Child Neurology Programs utilize ERAS (Electronic Residency Application Service) for resident applications and the NRMP to match the residency positions. Contact ERAS and NRMP for more information about the Adult Neurology Match.

The Match process in neurology is generally quite favorable. The percentage of US medical school seniors matching to programs has generally been 95–98 percent in the past ten years.