How to Apply for Fellowship

Dave Hong, MD
Associate Program Director
Pediatric Residency Program
July 22, 2014

Agenda

Choosing a Subspeciality
- Brief overview of fellowships available
- What is the best field for you?

The Application Process
- What makes a good applicant?
- Timeline and nuts/bolts for applying
- Interviewing for Fellowship

Fellowship
- What is fellowship like?
- Strategies for success during fellowship

Our distinguished panel

Soon-to-be Fellows:
- Elizabeth Burgener, MD (Soon-to-be Pulmonary Fellow)
- Danielle Burstein, MD (Soon-to-be Cardiology Fellow)
- Elizabeth Wadhwa, MD (Soon-to-be Heme/Onc Fellow)

Current Fellows:
- Cathy Collins, MD (AI Fellow)
- Loren Sacks, MD (CVICU Fellow)

Fellowship Directors and Attendings:
- Tandy Aye, MD (Endocrine Fellowship Director)
- Vinod Bhutani, MD (Neonatology Fellowship Director)
- Gary Dahl, MD (Heme/Onc Fellowship Director)
- Susan Gage, MD (Pulmonary Attending)
- Hayley Gans, MD (ID Fellowship Director)
- John Mark, MD (Pulmonary Fellowship Director)
- Ann Ming Yeh, MD (GI Attending)

Panel

Questions for the Panel:
- Introduce yourself
- Briefly summarize your training/practice to date (where, why?)
- The best thing about your specialty/job
- The most challenging or surprising thing about your specialty/job

Choosing a Subspeciality Fellowship
What Fellowships Are There?

American Board of Pediatrics
Pediatric Specialties
- Adolescent
- Cardiology
- Child Abuse
- Critical Care
- Dev-Behavioral
- Emergency Med
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology
- Heme-Onc
- Infectious Diseases
- Neonatal-Perinatal
- Nephrology
- Pulmonology
- Rheumatology

American Board of Pediatrics
Certificates of Added Qualifications
- Hospice and Palliative Medicine
- Medical Toxicology
- Neurodevelopmental Disabilities
- Sleep Medicine
- Sports Medicine
- Transplant Hepatology

ACGME Accredited
Non-Pediatric Specialties
- Allergy & Immunology
- Dermatology
- Genetics
- Preventative Medicine
- Toxicology

Other Pediatric Fellowships
- Academic General Pediatrics
- Pediatric Hospital Medicine
- Robert Wood Johnson
- CDC-EIS (Epidemiologic Intelligence Service)
- Alternative Medicine
- Environmental Health
- Pain Management
Where to get advice

- Becky Blankenberg
- Associate Program Directors, Advising and Career Development
  - Caroline Buckway, Carrie Rassbach, Dave Hong
- Assigned Advisor
- Coach
- Scholarly Project Mentor
- Fellowship Director at LPCH
- Faculty in your specialty of interest
- Fellows in your specialty of interest
- Current LPCH Residents

LPCH Fellowship Directors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Director</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent Medicine</td>
<td>Neville Golden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allergy and Immunology (Residency Program)</td>
<td>Sean McGhee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cardiology</td>
<td>Jeff Feinstein</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Informatics</td>
<td>Chris Longhurst</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Care</td>
<td>Deb Franzon</td>
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<td>Developmental and Behavioral Peds</td>
<td>Courtenay Barlow</td>
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<td>Endocrinology</td>
<td>Tandy Aye</td>
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<td>Gastroenterology</td>
<td>John Kerner</td>
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<td>General Pediatrics</td>
<td>Lee Sanders</td>
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<td>Genetics (Residency Program)</td>
<td>Jon Bernstein</td>
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<td>Heme/Onc</td>
<td>Gary Dahl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pediatric Hospitalist</td>
<td>Becky Blankenberg, Carrie Rassbach</td>
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<td>ID</td>
<td>Hayley Gans</td>
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<td>Neonatology</td>
<td>Vinod Bhutani</td>
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<td>Nephrology</td>
<td>Paul Grimm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pulmonology</td>
<td>John Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rheumatology</td>
<td>Tzeilan Lee</td>
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Things to Consider in Choosing a Specialty

- Clinical interest
- Research interest
- Intellectual Content of the subspecialty
  - Variety of medical problems, ages, exotic vs. common
- Subspecialty vs. primary care
- Predominantly inpatient vs. outpatient
- Chronic vs. acute
- Continuity of care vs. short-term
- Procedures
- Deaths and bad news

Things to Consider in Choosing a Specialty (practical aspects)

- Academic vs. community setting
- Clinical Work, Clinical Research, Laboratory Research, Education, Advocacy, Policy
- Hours of work
  - Daytime vs. nighttime
  - On-service time vs. shifts
- Ability to work part-time
- Geography, life-style
- Job market?

Exposure to Subspecialties

- Electives and Selectives
- Away rotations
- Research
- Division meetings
- Attend subspecialty clinics during quieter months
- Informational interviews
- Subspecialty conferences
Choosing a Fellowship program

- Choosing a fellowship program is very different from choosing a residency.
- Every program is different and offers different experiences and opportunities.
- "Fit" is even more important (on multiple levels).
- Can I work with this group?
- Are there mentors that mesh with my interests?
- Do they have a track record of launching trainees into successful careers?
- Don’t choose a program that doesn’t offer what you’re interested in (broadly).

Find Out About Programs:
Figuring Out Where to Apply

- Think carefully about what you want to get out of fellowship.
  - What type of clinical training?
  - What kind of research/scholarly product you want to complete?
  - What you want to do long-term?
  - Possibilities for advanced training (MPH?, MSEd?, etc.)?
  - Where the mentors are who fit what you are looking for?
- Meet with advisor, fellowship director, and other attendings and fellows in the division to see what programs they recommend to you.

Find Out About Programs:
How to Get Information on Programs

- Look on the web:
  - ACGME Website: www.acgme.org
  - NRMP Website: http://www.nrmp.org/fellow
  - Check subspecialty professional society websites
  - Individual Program Websites
- Email/call programs for more information
- Talk with advisor, fellowship director, other attendings and fellows in the division
- Consider arranging an away rotation at the institution you are interested in.

Fellowship Applications

General Timeline

- Varies greatly from subspecialty to subspecialty.
- Check with LPCH fellowship director for more details.
- Most fellowships are now part of a national match.
- Some subspecialties might have some programs that are not participating in the match (so they might have some match and some non-match processes).

NRMP Match Programs Timeline
(apps due 1 year ahead)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fellowship Program</th>
<th>Match Begins</th>
<th>Rank List Due</th>
<th>Match Day</th>
<th>Fellowship Start Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peds Specialty Fall Match (PSFM)</td>
<td>8/27/14</td>
<td>12/3/14</td>
<td>12/17/14</td>
<td>July 2015</td>
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<td>Child Abuse</td>
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<td>Dev/Behav Peds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peds Critical Care</td>
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<td>Peds ED</td>
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<td>Peds Hospital Med</td>
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<td>Peds Nephrology</td>
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<td>Peds Rheum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adolescent Medicine</td>
<td>8/6/14</td>
<td>11/5/14</td>
<td>11/19/14</td>
<td>July 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allergy/Immunology</td>
<td>7/30/14</td>
<td>11/12/14</td>
<td>12/3/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical Genetics</td>
<td>7/23/14</td>
<td>10/29/14</td>
<td>11/12/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peds Rehab Medicine</td>
<td>9/10/14</td>
<td>12/17/14</td>
<td>1/7/15</td>
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<td>Primary Care Sports Medicine</td>
<td>9/10/14</td>
<td>12/17/14</td>
<td>1/7/15</td>
<td>July 2015</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**NRMP Match Programs Timeline**

(apps due 1 ¼ - 1 ½ years ahead)

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<th>Fellowship Start Date</th>
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<td>Peds Specialty Spring Match (PSSM)</td>
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<td>May 2015</td>
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<td>Peds Endo</td>
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<td>May 2015</td>
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<td>Peds GI</td>
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<td>Peds Pulmonology</td>
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**Non-Match Specialties General Timeline:**

**When to Start Applying**

- Non-match specialties:
  - Often Fall 1½ years before starting to Fall ¾ year before starting (i.e., Fall of second year to Fall of third year for starting right after residency)
  - Sooner the better
  - Definitely check with the fellowship directors as these timelines are moving targets

**Highly idealized, very linear sample pathway to fellowship**

- Identify your passion, career, goals
- Decide on fellowship, choose subspecialty mentor
- Find research mentor and project
- Choose scholarly concentration
- Work on project
- Apply for Spring Match Fellowships
- Spring Match!!
- Finish project
- Find Mentor for Fellowship
- Apply for funding?
- Start Fellowship!!!

**Gap year – yes or no?**

- It’s ok to take a year off (or even two or three) before fellowship…
  - Think about what is best for your personal situation
  - Good to take time if you don’t yet know what to go into…better to be sure of your decision
  - Fellowship directors understand this
- Make good use of your year(s) before fellowship
# How to Apply to Programs

- **For Match Specialties:**
  - Look at the NRMP Website: [http://www.nrmp.org/fellow](http://www.nrmp.org/fellow)
  - Most use the ERAS applications
  - [https://www.erasfellowshipdocuments.org/index.asp](https://www.erasfellowshipdocuments.org/index.asp)
  - Some still have their own applications

- **For Non-match Specialties:**
  - Look at the program websites
  - Write/Email/Call Programs for information and applications
  - Brief cover letter
  - Puts you on the radar screen
  - Sooner the better

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# What is in an Application?

- **ERAS Demographic/Informational Section**
  - Or if a non-match specialty, then a cover letter
- CV
- Personal Statement
- Deans Letter/MPSE (from medical school)
- Transcripts
- USMLE Scores (need to be released by NMBE)
- Letters of Recommendation

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# Letters of Recommendation

- Usually 3-4 total
  - Residency program – PD or APD
  - 1-2 from Subspecialty
  - 0-1 from attending in another subspecialty or general pediatrics
  - 1 from your research mentor
- Best letters usually come from people who know you well
- When asking for a letter, ask “Can you provide a strong letter in support of my application?”
- Ask for the letters early

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# Interviews: Scheduling

- Most interviews are offered, not requested
  - But if you haven’t heard from a program or will be in the area anyway, it is ok to contact the program and ask
- Be persistent (but nice and appreciative) in scheduling an interview
- Try to cluster interviews if part of a non-match specialty
  - Because the timing of interviews at some programs may overlap with offers from other programs
- Sooner the better

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# Interviews: Preparation

- Learn about the programs you are going to visit
- Why do you want to attend that program?
- Why would you be a good fit?
- What type of research and with whom would you want to work?
- Read up on the particular research or clinical interest of faculty you may be meeting

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# Comparing Programs:

**Things to think about in preparing for and on actual interview day**

- Priorities of the Program, Fellowship Director, and Division Chief
  - Career advancement of fellows
  - Clinical needs of division- are there adequate faculty and support staff?
  - Research needs of division- are there adequate faculty and support staff?
  - Other needs of division (eg., teaching)
  - Recent or impending changes (retirements, sabbaticals, leaves of absence etc)
Comparing Programs:
Things to think about in preparing for and on actual interview day continued

• Quality of Mentorship
  – Quality of clinical training
  – Quality of research training, opportunities, and facilities
    • May include being able to earn Masters Degree (who pays for this?)
  – Success with getting fellowship grants
  – Duties and ancillary services (advice nurses, clinical NPs)
  – Satisfaction of current and prior fellows
  – Post-fellowship placement of fellows

• Funding
  – Are they NIH training grant supported or not?
  – Who provides the funding for your fellowship?
  – Do you have to apply for grants during fellowship?
  – Is there a safety net in case you apply for a grant but are unsuccessful?

Interviews: Actual Day

• Remember this is a job interview
• You are the consumer – make sure the fellowship will be a good fit
• Ask the right questions of the right people, but make sure your questions are answered
  – Fellows and admin staff for practical stuff – call schedule, meals, call rooms, conferences
  – Talk with faculty and fellows about research opportunities, scholarship
• Do your homework before coming
  – What are the division’s strengths?
  – How do you see yourself fitting in?
  – Identify potential mentors
• Ask questions in a positive/neutral way

Post-Interview

• Thank you notes/emails
  – Can never hurt to write them
  – Recommend:
    • Thank you note/email to the fellowship director minimum
    • Many fellowship directors recommend sending thank you notes to everyone you met

Offers

• Match (like residency match)
• Non-Match (like med school offers)
  – Don’t be pressured into making a hasty decision
  – Don’t leave programs hanging too long
  – Remember: you’re the consumer
• Contracts

Success in Fellowship and Beyond!
What happens during fellowship?

• All ABP Fellowships are (at least) 3 years
  – There are no clinical tracks (yet)
  – Most fellowships have 1 year of clinical training
    • Cardiology is 2 years of clinical training
  – The rest of the time is spent in Scholarly Activity
  – Broad definition of Scholarly Activity
  – Must produce a Work Product by end of fellowship
  – Progress monitored by an SOC (Scholarship Oversight Committee)
  – Many people extend fellowship training 1-2yrs

• Become clinically competent in your subspecialty field
• Gain skills in scholarship – build your toolbox of skills beyond becoming “board-eligible”
• Build your portfolio – i.e. show that you can do what you say you can do
• Make yourself marketable by establishing yourself in a niche that institutions want – clinical research, basic research, education, QI, clinical specialty

Success as a Fellow

1. Passion
2. Taking Initiative
3. Good Mentorship

Success as a Fellow

• Good Mentorship
  – Through your research advisor
  – Through your fellowship director
• Scholarship Oversight Committee
• Individual Development Plan (IDP)
  – Distribution of Areas of Effort:
    • Research/Other Scholarly Activity
    • Patient Care
    • Professional Self-Development
    • Education (Teaching Activities)
    • Administration
    • Other Professional Accomplishments

Advice for Interns

• Identify your passion – what aspect of pediatrics really gets you excited?
• Identify potential subspecialties
• Start to identify mentors – don’t be afraid to ask faculty to discuss their subspecialty
• Request particular electives/rotations for junior year
• Consider doing away electives junior year
• Consider attending academic pediatric and subspecialty conferences
  – Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting (usually in May)
  – Other subspecialty conferences

Advice for Juniors/Seniors

• Solidify commitment to specific subspecialty
• Start to think about training goals
• Develop your scholarly concentration project
• Write for applications
• Arrange interviews
• Interview
• Weigh options
• Choose a program
• If possible and necessary, arrange your senior schedule so you have time to move to fellowship
Special thanks to:

- Becky Blankenberg
- Carrie Rassbach and Caroline Buckway
  – APDs for Advising
- Michelle Brooks
- Our esteemed panelists