

Dear Program Director,

Since 2022 APDEM has recommended all virtual interviews with or without optional, carefully planned in-person campus visits. This initial proposal was endorsed by >94% of PDs at the 2022 annual APDEM meeting, and at that same meeting, >75% of program directors (PDs) favored a unified model of interviewing across fellowship programs. This recommendation is relatively congruent with current guidelines from other national organizations: For example, the AAIM recommends all virtual interviews and recommends against any in-person component of recruitment. As another example, the AAMC also recommends virtual interviews; if there is an in-person component to the interview (e.g. tour/visit), then the AAMC recommends that a stipend be provided to applicants to offset travel costs.

The full text of the AAIM guidance can be found [here](#). The AAMC guidance can be found [here](#).

In May 2024, APDEM conducted a survey of endocrine program directors and current endocrine fellows to determine their experience with recent interviewing practices, with specific focus on the utilization of an in-person component. This data was presented at the May 2024 APDEM annual meeting and indicated that >90% of PDs and Endocrinology Fellow applicants were utilizing virtual interviews only, with <10% of survey respondents (either PD or applicant) utilizing some form of optional supplemental visits/tours. A very small minority (<3%) of either PDs or applicants utilized an in-person interview. Hence, adherence to national guidance (AAMC, AAIM, and APDEM) remains high since the 2022 recommendations.

APDEM's recruitment recommendations remain unchanged: We encourage all endocrine fellowship programs to strongly consider all-virtual interviews with or without optional, carefully planned in-person campus visits. The rationale for this recommendation is detailed below.

Similar to the AAMC/AAIM, APDEM has serious concerns regarding candidate and program equity for in-person *interviews*. APDEM also continues to have significant concerns regarding equity in the setting of optional in-person campus visits. While program signals can serve as a means to convey interest in a program, candidates may still feel that not visiting a program will be interpreted as a lack of significant interest and programs may be more positively influenced by in-person interactions.

Recruitment that includes an optional informal campus visit may offer programs a greater opportunity to attract candidates. However, it is possible that not all programs will be able to offer in-person visits, as programs may be unequally affected by institutional policies or available resources to host in-person visits. Thus, there is concern that some programs may be disadvantaged by their inability to accommodate in-person visits.

For these reasons APDEM encourages ALL programs, including those who choose to accommodate in-person campus visits, adopt the following recruitment plan:

- ALL interviews should be performed virtually, including for internal and local candidates.
- In determining whom to *interview*, programs can use program signals as one factor, but should also continue to evaluate candidates holistically
- In determining whom to *rank*, programs should evaluate candidates by their application and virtual interview, rather than in-person interactions
- Programs should institute processes to limit unconscious bias in the virtual interview process
- Programs should not require any candidate to make an in-person campus visit
- Any in-person campus visit should be at the request of the applicant
- In-person campus visits should be an informational visit and no attempt should be made to influence a candidate's rank order list during these visits

In-person campus visits could include very brief greetings with GME personnel (e.g., program coordinator) and a tour of clinics and hospital. However, there should not be formal interviews or one-on-one meetings with program faculty, program director, associate program director, fellows or meals with fellows or faculty.

Programs should adopt and uphold a policy that a candidate's choice to make an in-person campus visit will not impact their position on the program's rank order list (ROL). Also, the absence of an in-person visit will not harm a candidate's position on the program's ROL. Programs should not keep track of which applicants visit. Ideally, certification of ROL would occur prior to in-person tours/visits by applicants, although APDEM recognizes that this may be logistically challenging, and that the ROL can still be modified after initial certification. PDs should explicitly communicate when certification of ROL will occur in relation to an applicant's visit.

APDEM strongly encourages that all programs explicitly advertise their recruitment plans, including whether they will adopt 100% virtual interviews and whether they will accommodate in-person campus visits upon request. This should be done via program websites, ERAS (<https://services.aamc.org/eras/erasaccount/>), and FREIDA (www.aamc.org/gmetrack).

If a program plans to accommodate in-person campus visits, we encourage that the program explicitly advertises the following:

- How in-person visit requests will be addressed;
- What in-person visits will entail;
- That any in-person visits will not positively or negatively impact a candidate's position on the program's ROL and will preferably be conducted after the PD certifies the ROL;
- How the program will mitigate potential bias they might experience in favor of in-person interactions.
- When ROL certification will occur in relation to an applicant's visit

If a program chooses to adopt APDEM's interview plan, they may also provide a link to this document, which will be made available on the APDEM website.

Detailed guidance on the use of Program Signals and Artificial Intelligence in the recruitment process are available separately (links).

Summary

APDEM Council endorses all-virtual interviews with or without optional, carefully planned in-person campus. We encourage all programs to adopt APDEM's interview plan in order to maximize equity for all candidates and programs while allowing flexibility based on local circumstances and applicant preference.

Sincerely,
APDEM Council