

**Report and Final Recommendations of the
Council of Pediatric Subspecialties
November, 2007**

Process:

1. The fellowship application task force developed a questionnaire that was sent to all current pediatric fellows. The response rate was about one third (38.1%). We asked two questions:

- a) Would you use an electronic application service (ERAS) for application and if so, what release date (that date where the information was made available to the program directors): December 1 (19 months prior to starting fellowship) or July 15 (11 and 1/2 months prior)?
- b) Should fellowship programs utilize a match (NRMP) and if so, what match date (that date where the applicant was made aware of the results): May (14 months prior to starting fellowship) or Nov (8 months prior)?

The results were as follows: 76% of responders supported the use of ERAS with the July release date more favorable. 63% of those polled supported a match through the NRMP. There was greater support for the match for those fellowship programs already utilizing the match and a fall match date was once again, more favorable. The questionnaire and complete results by subspecialty are included at the end of this report.

2. Pros and cons of this subject were recently reviewed by Stapleton and Lux in *Journal of Pediatrics*. 149(5):587-588, 2006 entitled, "A uniform third-year application and offer date for pediatric fellow applicants: pro and con." The article is also attached.

3. ERAS is an electronic service that employs two release dates to Program Directors where information loaded into the system by applicants may be viewed or downloaded:
- a) July 15th, 11 1/2 months prior to starting fellowship training
 - b) December 1st, 19 months prior to beginning fellowship training.

The ERAS year cycle is identified as the upcoming academic year. For example, ERAS 2009 refers to the year beginning on July 1st, 2008 and ending on June 30th, 2009. The earliest ERAS year that Pediatric Subspecialties could be involved with is ERAS 2009. ERAS is not necessarily linked to a match or common offer date, however, the July 15th release date best fits with a late fall match date (e.g. December, 4 1/2 months later) and a December 1st release date best fits with a match date the following late Spring (e.g. May, 5 and 1/2 months later).

4. The match is managed by the National Residency Matching Program (NRMP) and is separate from ERAS, although the two utilize the same resident number to facilitate cross talk. The seven Pediatric Subspecialties currently utilizing the match have chosen dates in the late spring (rheumatology, hemeonc, cardiology and GI) or late fall (neonatology, critical care and emergency medicine). This breakdown could easily lead to two common match dates for programs to utilize.

More information about these two programs can be found at:
www.aamc.org/students/eras/ (ERAS) and www.nrmp.org/ (NRMP)

Task Force Recommendations:

- 1) In order to simplify the process for the applicants, we would recommend that all Pediatric Subspecialties utilize ERAS:
 - Each subspecialty would choose the best ERAS application release date (either July 15th or December 1st) for their group.
 - Goal: All eligible subspecialties would be encouraged to utilize ERAS by the 2010 cycle (academic year July 2009 – June 2010). Some subspecialties could start with ERAS as early as the 2009 cycle (academic year: July 2008 – June 2009).

- 2) In order to allow flexibility for subspecialties and enhance fairness to the applicants, we recommend utilizing a match, but suggest two match dates from which subspecialties could choose. These dates would be in the late spring and late fall.
 - These suggested dates would dovetail with the ERAS release dates:
 - 3rd week in May (13 1/2 months prior to starting fellowship) to coincide with a December application ERAS release date
 - or**
 - 1st week in December (7 months prior to starting fellowship) to coincide with a July ERAS application release date.
 - If a subspecialty is currently utilizing a match date different than the two suggested above, they do not have to change.

In order to enhance fairness to the applicants, if a subspecialty does not initially choose to utilize the match, the match date above becomes the common offer date for use throughout that subspecialty.

- 3) The evolution of this process will be reassessed by CoPS on a yearly basis by communication with ERAS, NRMP, and surveys of fellows and program directors. Results of the yearly assessment will be made available to the entire subspecialty community.