

CHOOSING & APPLYING TO EMERGENCY MEDICINE: A DEAN'S GUIDE

WHY CHOOSE EMERGENCY MEDICINE (EM)?

EM is an exciting, fast paced career with multiple advantages, including:

- Wide knowledge base and breadth of clinical practice
- Undifferentiated patients, so medical decision making is at its finest in the ED
- Taking care of all patients and serving as a safety net for the community
- Ability to provide critical care and perform many procedures
- Shift work, which enables remarkable work-life balance
- High compensation with fewer work hours compared to most specialties
- No need to worry about insurers or prior authorizations

Multiple career paths & fellowships:

- Critical Care
- EMS
- Education
- Pediatric EM
- Toxicology
- Ultrasound



Applicants who apply to EM as their primary or secondary specialty are likely to match successfully.

Per the [2023 NRMP Main Match Data](#):¹

- There are 1.5 EM positions per applicant for US MD & DO seniors
- 99.3% match rate for US MD seniors applying to EM
- 99.4% match rate for US DO seniors applying to EM

HOW SHOULD MY STUDENTS PREPARE TO APPLY TO EM?²

MS1 & MS2

MS3

MS4

Exposure to EM in the pre-clinical years can help meet LCME requirements and generate student interest in EM



- Consider the addition of a 3rd year EM clerkship to your institution's curriculum
- Perform well in all clinical rotations--EM is a specialty of breadth and a wide knowledge base will serve you well
- Prepare to apply for away rotations on VSLO

- Complete minimum of 2 EM rotations at institutions that can write a Standard Letter of Evaluation (SLOE)
- Less competitive applicants may choose to add an additional away rotation
- Aim to complete at least one EM rotation by September so that a minimum of one SLOE is submitted with the initial ERAS application

WHAT ABOUT BURNOUT IN EM?

The [Physician Burnout & Depression Report in 2023](#)³ has placed EM as the most burnt out among all medical specialties. This does illustrate how demanding EM can be, both mentally and physically. However, there is some bias in how these surveys are conducted (ex, "lack of control" is inherent to EM and artificially inflates our burnout metrics).

[Other studies](#)⁴ have shown that EM residents are overall happier with their career choice compared to other specialties.

11.4%

EM RESIDENTS WHO REGRET BECOMING PHYSICIANS

14.1%

ALL RESIDENTS WHO REGRET BECOMING PHYSICIANS

3.3%

EM RESIDENTS WHO REGRET CHOOSING THEIR SPECIALTY

7.1%

ALL RESIDENTS WHO REGRET CHOOSING THEIR SPECIALTY

WHAT ABOUT THE EM WORKFORCE?

The recent article "[The Emergency Medicine Physician Workforce: Projections for 2030](#)"⁵ predicted an oversupply of emergency physicians by the end of the decade. However, estimates of the number of EM providers entering and leaving the workforce and demand for emergency care services are problematic and projections of this study are overinflated. Further research is ongoing through multiple EM organizations and will help better explore the future of the EM workforce. The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) has also been doing research into this and has an informative web page, "[Shaping the Workforce of Tomorrow](#),"⁶ which includes many solutions to potential work force issues including residency training, rural opportunities, expanding our scope, and others.

Currently there are plentiful opportunities for graduating EM residents and the job market for EM is vibrant!

REFERENCES

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