

**Association of Program Directors in Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism  
Recommendations for the 2022 Fellowship Recruitment Season**

Dear Program Director,

In late April 2022, APDEM conducted a survey of endocrine program directors and current endocrine fellows to determine their preferences for fellow recruitment in 2022. There was substantial support for preserving virtual interviews while also allowing an optional in-person component. Greater than 75% of PDs favored a unified model of interviewing across fellowship programs. Shortly after survey completion, the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), in conjunction with the American Medical Association, Organization of Program Directors Association, ECFMG, and the National Resident Matching Program released guidelines recommending virtual interviews for all applicants (including local candidates) while strongly discouraging a mix of virtual and traditional in-person interviews. No comment was made on the option of supplementing virtual interviews with informal in-person visits. Furthermore, the Alliance of Academic Internal Medicine issued similar recommendation for fellowship programs in Internal Medicine.

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

**Given our survey results, the AAMC recommendations, the AAIM recommendations and concerns elaborated below, APDEM encourages all endocrine fellowship programs to strongly consider all-virtual interviews with or without optional, carefully planned in-person campus visits for the 2022 recruitment season.** This proposal was presented at the APDEM annual meeting on May 19, 2022 and was endorsed by >94% of present program directors via live poll.

APDEM has concerns regarding **candidate and program equity** in the setting of optional in-person campus visits. COVID trends remain difficult to predict and fellowship candidates may not feel comfortable traveling and/or may have travel restricted by institutional/governmental policies. Candidates may 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 likely that not all programs will be able to offer in-person visits this year, as programs may be unequally affected by institutional COVID-related restrictions. 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. A virtual interview toolkit has been developed by APDEM and is available [here](#).
- 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. Visit-related costs (travel, hotel, meals) should not be covered by the program.

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. Also, the absence of an in-person visit will not harm a candidate's position on the program's rank order list. Program should not keep track of which applicants visit the program.

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 and ERAS (<https://services.aamc.org/eras/erasaccount/>) and FREIDA ([www.aamc.org/gmetrack](http://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 rank order list and will preferably be conducted after the PD certifies the rank list
- How the program will mitigate potential bias they might experience in favor of in-person interactions.

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.

### **Summary**

APDEM Council endorses **all-virtual interviews with or without optional, carefully planned in-person campus visits** for the 2022 interview season. **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