

Residency Program Signaling In Orthopaedic Surgery

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INTRODUCTION: Orthopaedic surgery is among the most competitive residency specialties with recent cycles seeing record application volumes and declining match rates. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) signaling system's impact on interview invitations and outcomes in the 2023–2024 orthopaedic residency application cycle, building on data from its inaugural use.

METHODS: Application and interview data were collected from official National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) reports, Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Supplemental ERAS Application Report, and specialty-wide surveys . Statistical findings, including interview distributions and match rates, were extracted from previously published studies and AAMC database.

RESULTS: The 2023–2024 cycle had ~1,500 applicants. Nearly all orthopaedic applicants (~97%) participated in preference signaling. Applicants received significantly more interview invitations from programs they signaled than from programs not signaled. Signaled programs accounted for the majority (~79%) of interview offers. Applicants were far more likely to get an interview at a signaled program than an unsignaled program. Of matched applicants, the majority (90%) matched at a program they had signaled, indicating strong alignment between signaling and ultimate match. Further, the majority (63%) of applicants that matched were matched at programs where they had completed an away rotation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

Preference signaling in orthopaedic residency applications was associated with a marked increase in interview invitations from signaled programs and a high matching rate at signaled programs in the 2023–2024 cycle.

Degree	ERAS 2024	Mean	Min.	Max.	SD
DO	9157	48.19	3	257	66.04
IMG	3216	16.93	2	72	11.22
MD	35637	187.56	2	497	111.85
Overall	48010	252.68	41	542	89.20

Degree	Signal	No Signal	N
MD	24%	0%	1253
DO	5%	0%	389
IMG	0%	0%	163

Table 2: Median Interview Rates In Orthopaedic Surgery Varying By Degrees

Table 1: Number of Signals Received By Orthopaedic Surgery Programs From Applicants Varying By Degrees