

Trends in Orthopedic Surgery Adult Reconstruction Fellowship Applications: A 5-Year San Francisco Match Analysis

William George Hamilton, Nancy L Parks, Cameron Ledford, Addison Clift, Anna J Hamilton, Michael J Taunton

INTRODUCTION:

This study investigated contemporary trends in hip and knee adult reconstruction (AR) fellowship applicant volumes, program changes, and match outcomes, including factors associated with successful matching.

METHODS:

Characteristics of AR fellowship applicants and programs were assessed using 2021 to 2025 San Francisco (SF) Match data. Trends in the number of AR fellowship positions offered, participating programs, applications, and percentage of positions filled/unfilled were reviewed. Further analysis of applicant demographics, including degree type, and rank-list success was also performed.

RESULTS:

Over the current study period, AR fellowship positions have increased 17% peaking at 236 for 114 programs in 2025. The mean number of applicants has been 263 (range, 251-281) and fluctuated +8% any given year. Despite a stable average match rate of 75% (range, 74-77%), unfilled positions rose sharply to a high of 38/236 (16%) in 2025. Applicants with medical (MD) or osteopathic degrees (DO) have significantly higher successful match rates than foreign medical graduates (FMG) (96% vs. 11% annual average, respectively, $p < 0.01$). In 2025, the highest number of matched AR fellowship applicants received their number one ranked program (51% vs. 40% in 2023 and 37% in 2024).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

The hip and knee AR fellowship match application numbers and success for MD and DO applicants has remained stable; however, increasing unfilled positions may suggest program growth to outpace orthopedic surgery resident interest. Ongoing AR fellowship match data surveillance is needed for strategic subspecialty fellowship growth and training.

Year	Applicants (+/- trend from prior year)	Matched (Hip/Knee)	Unfilled Spots	Total Positions Available
2021	268	201 (75%)	1	202
2022	251 (-6%)	191 (76.1%)	25	216
2023	269 (+7%)	200 (74%)	26	226
2024	281 (+4%)	211(75%)	20	231
2025	257 (-8.5%)	198 (77%)	38	236