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## **Resolution Regarding Gastroenterology Fellowship Applicants, Including all Research and Clinical Fellowship Applicants and Positions**

This resolution concerns the conditions surrounding gastroenterology fellowship offers to applicants, acceptance by applicants of such offers, and participation by applicants and programs in the gastroenterology fellowship Match. The general spirit of this resolution is that each applicant should have an opportunity to consider all programs before making a decision and be able to participate in the Match. In addition, applicants and programs should understand the rules for accepting and offering fellowship positions, and know that those participating in the Match are contractually bound by its results. The intention of this resolution is to ensure uniformity so that everyone participates fairly and to establish the principle that all positions should be filled through the Match or after Match Day. It therefore seeks to create rules that give both programs and applicants the confidence that applicants and positions will remain available to be filled through the Match and not withdrawn in advance of it.

This resolution addresses the issue that some applicants may be persuaded or coerced to make commitments prior to, or outside of, the Match. Early offers and acceptances, and offers outside of the Match, are violations of the rules and of this resolution and are not condoned. Any applicant may participate in the matching process by registering for the Match to interview and consider match-participating programs; however, an applicant who accepts a position prior to, or outside of, the Match must comply with the National Resident Matching Program/Specialty Matching Services (NRMP/SMS) Match Participation Agreement by either resigning the accepted position if he/she wishes to submit a rank order list of programs or by withdrawing from the Match prior to the rank order list certification deadline, which is the first week in June. In addition, no program may withdraw a position from the Match after the quota change deadline to offer that position outside the matching process. The failure of applicants and programs to abide by these rules or to accept the results of the Match is a violation of the NRMP/SMS Match Participation Agreement, and sanctions may be levied against the program and applicant in accordance with the NRMP/SMS Violations Policy. The spirit of this resolution is to make it unprofitable for program directors to press applicants to accept early offers, and to give applicants an opportunity to consider all offers as well as to provide uniform and widely acceptable rules that protect both applicants and fellowship programs.

### **RESOLUTION**

**1. To Whom this Resolution Applies:** This resolution applies to all gastroenterology fellowship positions in all ACGME - accredited gastroenterology fellowship programs and to all applicants for these positions.

**2. Acceptance of Offers:** Gastroenterology fellowship applicants are under no obligation to accept an offer prior to, or outside of, the Match. Outcomes of the Match are contractually binding, in accordance with NRMP/SMS Match Participation Agreement. Additionally, in

accordance with NRMP policy, a match-participating program must ensure that post-Match offers are not made to applicants who have a binding match commitment to another program.

**3. Eligibility for the Match and Participation in the Match:** All fellowship positions and applicants are strongly encouraged to participate in the Match. Offers prior to, or outside of, the Match, whether made by a program participating in the Match or otherwise, are a violation of this resolution and are not condoned. All applicants are eligible to participate in the matching process by registering for the Match to interview and consider match-participating programs; however, an applicant who accepts a position prior to, or outside of, the Match must either resign that position if he/she wishes to submit a rank order list of programs or withdraw from the Match prior to the rank order list certification deadline. Applicants are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner and are discouraged from making commitments unless they intend to honor them. An applicant may submit a rank order list of programs as long as he/she does not hold any other positions outside of the Match at the time of the rank order list certification deadline, which is the first week in June. No program may withdraw a position after the quota change deadline in order to offer that position outside the matching process. Any agreement reached through the Match is contractually binding.

Applicants who receive several offers prior to, or outside of the Match, to which they are persuaded to reply before the rank order list certification deadline can at any time accept the one they prefer and should contact the programs whose offers they reject, whether they have accepted them beforehand or were simply considering the offer.

When applicants and programs are each others' first choice, e.g., are ranked to match, the matching algorithm will automatically match them when they submit those preferences on their rank order lists. Indeed, if an applicant ranks a program as his/her first choice and the program ranks the applicant within its quota of positions offered in the Match, it is certain the applicant and program will be matched to each other. When all participants comply with the spirit of this resolution, all positions will be offered through the Match in an orderly fashion and will be filled through the Match or afterwards.

Note on reversion of positions: Some programs may wish to appoint a specific number of research fellows, and if they cannot appoint as many as they wish, want to increase the number of positions they offer to clinical fellows. The Match will accommodate this through the "reversion" of positions. A program may specify that any unfilled research position(s) be added to the number of clinical positions offered in the Match. Programs submit separate rank order lists for research candidates and clinical candidates. For example, a program may have one research position and one clinical position, but if it cannot find an appropriate research fellow would like to appoint two clinical fellows. Such a program would specify this in the Match by submitting a rank order list for one research position, and a rank order list for one clinical position, with instructions that if the research position were not filled, it would revert to a clinical position, so that there would now be two clinical fellowship positions to be filled from the clinical position rank order list. Thus, a program can fill both kinds of positions through the Match, even if it is not sure that it can fill its research positions.

**4. Distribution of this Resolution:** To facilitate mutual compliance, a copy of this resolution shall be distributed by each fellowship program to all applicants. The American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) will distribute it to all Gastroenterology Fellowship Program Directors, and Internal Medicine Residency Program Directors, during the gastroenterology fellowship interview season.

▶ *Match Resolution*