



2025 Road to Residency Webinar 1

VSLO Applications

Could you share if you have already filled up all the visiting rotation spots for the fall?

Ravi Kasi: We are in the process of sending out invitations at RUSH, the medical school should be sending them out this week (there is a delay from when we say yes and them sending it out). I don't know when they will officially go out

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: We are full from June - December but still have spots in May. We will look at applications for the 2026 months in the summer

Ashlee Bolger: University of Cincinnati is mid-process currently but not full

Tracy Friedlander Johns Hopkins PD: Johns Hopkins is full July-Mid November. We have availability after that or before.

Diana Molinares (U Miami): I second this comment

Many programs require a personal statement for VSLOs and specifically ask about interest in their program — in addition to the website, what are good ways to learn about the program?

Lucy Beuses, PGY-1 Mount Sinai: PM&R scholars virtual residency videos are a great way to learn more about tons of PM&R programs!

Ravi Kasi: Agree! If you can set up a meeting with a resident from a program you like, that's a great way as well

How can a student stand out in their application if they have little experience/ research in PM&R due to being exposed later on in their third year of med school?

Lucy Beuses, PGY-1 Mount Sinai: I would say, try to get involved in PM&R organizations (if you can, in a leadership position). Also, any volunteering experience like sports coverage, pt/ot, or neuro volunteering opportunities



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How would you recommend communicating and approaching difficulties with two programs accepting VSLO rotations with some overlapping dates?

Ravi Kasi: You just have to make a decision on one or the other. And then professionally communicate the one you say no to.

If there is proof for being included in research related to PM&R since first year and multiple publications related to it, will it compensate the disadvantage of being international student and increase likelihood of acceptance or it is just evaluated under different circumstances?

John Evans (Mayo PM&R): Many programs are going holistic review...so research helps, but so does the rest of the application

When is the latest recommended to do an away rotation if you intend to get a letter of rec in time for submitting to the residency application?

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: From a practical standpoint August. In September It will be tough for that attending to get it ready by the application opening date

International Students- VSLO

I wonder about the situation of IMGs for finding place in PM&R rotations and importance of previous research experiences for it.

Ravi Kasi: I think research is a component like the PMR application. If it is very meaningful research, it can be positive. You can also do other activities such as race medicine, adaptive sports, disability advocacy, etc

Diana Molinares (U Miami): For IMGs there are some institutions that offer observerships that you can apply for. I would look into the partnerships that your university has with institutions here. That could help the process.



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Away rotations- number

Typically how many away rotations do you recommend doing if your medical school does not have a home program?

Ravi Kasi: I think doing 2 would be great. I know this is controversial as some faculty would say don't overdo it with PMR electives. I think doing at least two will allow you to get some solid LORs and demonstrate interest. If you can do more, that is also great!

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: At least two before the application submissions with a goal of getting two strong letters of recommendation. A third as an audition say in November or December would be very beneficial

John Evans (Mayo PM&R): Agreed. 2-3.

Ashlee Bolger: Agree with 2-3 but would say if you happen to have a home program that provides robust experiences you also don't have to do an "away"

Would doing 2 away rotations and a home attending internship be seen as too much?

Ravi Kasi: No, not for me. I think that's fine especially

Away rotation- How to pick where

Is it recommended to do a variety of pm&r away rotations such as SCI, sports med, peds, etc?

Ravi Kasi: Ideally, yes, but that's not always possible. I think I'd go with the flow with what is offered but try your best to get a well rounded experience so you can say you know all aspects of PMR

Any advice for a couple applying to PM&R together, or generally about couples matching?

Drew Redepenning: Email programs and make them aware. Communication is super important as most programs will be super supportive of making sure you both stay together during the couples match process.



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Vivienne Riven: I was able to get into several medical schools with my significant other (I know it's different than residency) but I believe communicating with them regularly and be as transparent as possible especially if its your local/hometown program definitely helped us. Best of luck!!

Does the geographical rule still apply if you're originally from that area?

Ravi Kasi: If you do like a region / state, I'd try to do a rotational experience in that area - it usually helps but it's not a firm 'rule.' In our personal statement, you can talk about how you like a specific city / region in your last paragraph which is also a good way to show your interest in an area

Away rotations- During the rotation

If you intend to get a letter of recommendation from an away, when should you ask? I've heard within the first week or so, so that attendings have a heads up?

Ravi Kasi: I would wait until you are 75% of the way through the experience with that person if it is 1 week or 4 weeks. I'd wait till you have done something so they can confirm if they can give you one based upon the performance. Everyone knows you are looking for a LOR so they won't be shocked.

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: Yes, earlier the better. Asking something like I am hoping to get a strong letter of recommendation from you at the end of this rotation, what can I do this month to improve my letter of recommendation.

Sneha Gundavarpur, PGY-2 Georgetown: I got two letters from two of my away rotations and I asked near the end of the first week! By waiting till the end of the first week, I had already established somewhat of a relationship with the attending but then having time till the rotation was over allowed for the attending to also then give me feedback and give me more responsibility as well to have more content for the letter.

Ashlee Bolger: Echo Sneha- I love getting the request somewhat early because I try to jot down specific examples I can use.



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If a student ends up doing an away rotation at your program, would you still recommend that they use one of their preference signals there, or do you see the rotation itself as a strong enough sign of interest?

Ravi Kasi: Dr. Bolger is the expert with this but from last memory, I believe you are still to send a signal – I'll wait for her to confirm.

Ashlee Bolger: You should signal any program you have interest in (regardless of home program/away rotation). More discussion to come on this in upcoming webinars!

Do you have any resources (like PM&R pocketpedia) that you really like that set students up for success on rotations?

Lucy Beuses, PGY-1 Mount Sinai: Representation in Rehab has a tab in their website with links to resources on prepping for a variety of PM&R med student rotations!

Danielle Broussard: We have resources on the Pathways in PM&R website as well!

How can students prepare for away rotations? and what are the expectations for students rotating at your program?

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: Be professional, be punctual, be engaged

Would an audition rotation after Mid-November be considered too late?

Tracy Friedlander Johns Hopkins PD: No not too late but I caution the term "audition". We try to think of rotation as an opportunity for you to learn and get exposure the program but does not guarantee an interview regardless of when you rotate. Strong applications and clear communication about your interest go a long way.

How is it viewed if we do an audition rotation in November/December and need to take time off for residency interviews?

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: I would not hold it against anyone, as we want you to take as many interviews as you can. Just let us know as early as possible.



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Ravi Kasi: I would be open and honest about the fact that you have interviews when you start the rotation - we get it that you have interviews.

Ashlee Bolger: Tell us early! (or as early as you can) Our school has pretty "set in stone" absence policies that we need to abide by and its sometimes stressful to have to create makeup work at the last minute. We know this happens sometimes but so appreciate the most heads up we can get!

If you were to have a rotation during the AAPMR conference as a 4th. Year, is it frowned upon to ask to go to the conference during the rotation?

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: Depends. If it's a few days probably not a big deal. If its missing 4 days for interviews and 4 for the conference out of 20 rotation days its probably a negative.

Ravi Kasi: I've seen students miss the Friday only (leave on Thursday night and attend the weekend) - I think that would be fine

What level of background knowledge in PM&R and its subspecialties do you expect from visiting students before they begin their audition rotation?

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: Hopefully a decent Neuro exam, and able to take a competent H&P. We usually don't expect people to have the strongest MSK skills

John Evans (Mayo PM&R): Know what you should know...MSK anatomy, working knowledge of a neuro exam. We can teach you PM&R...but having confidence in your base is huge

How open are you all to having DO students perform OMM on patients (when appropriate and clinically indicated of course) when there is time?

John Evans (Mayo PM&R): Lots of our staff do OMT at Mayo FL. I trained at Mayo Rochester, and they were really receptive to me doing OMT (with permission)...even the MD staff

Ravi Kasi: I welcome it as a MD, it can only help the patient. Plus most programs have a lot of DO attending that will let you do it



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Other

Would you recommend going to the annual AAP conference, and how much does it affect applying to residency programs?

Ravi Kasi: It's a great way to network and meet people. Those connections can translate into interviews or even future jobs! It's also a great learning experience.

John Evans (Mayo PM&R): AAP is wonderful. Your fate is largely sealed by the time of AAP, but it is a wonderful conference

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: I think for a MS4 the AAPMR conference would be very beneficial. As well as its right as interview invites start going out.

How to get involved in case studies with residents during a rotation? Should you ask them about a case you found interesting or see if they have something they are working on and would like help with it?

Ravi Kasi: Yes, you can always ask!

Haris Choudry Burke Rehab PD: Yes pretty much. Also be on the lookout for cases yourself and approach a resident to work with you