



## 2026 Road to Residency Post-Match Webinar

### Resources

PM&R Board Review Podcast from AAP RFC: <https://www.physiatry.org/resource/pmr-board-review-podcast/>

Clerkship Guide from AAP MSC: <https://www.physiatry.org/resource/physiatry-clerkship-guide/>

AAP Road to Residency. In each session you get multiple PDs and multiple residents sharing their opinions. They are also recorded and posted on the AAP website/learning platform so you can see the ones from last year too.

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### Away Rotations

#### What advice do you have for succeeding in that many (5) aways?

Ashlee Bolger: I would just add that some schools have restrictions for aways or don't have as much flexibility in 4th year. On average most students do 2 (maybe 3) PMR rotations. So if you are at one of those schools its ok:)

#### What strategy do you advise when applying to aways? I heard you should only apply for one program for one timeframe to avoid having to say no to programs

Ashley Thornton: Apply as early as you can, work on all of the health requirements asap because it can be a lot, and it depends on your 4th year schedule, if you have the luxury to only apply to one per time frame do that, but consider the fact that you may hear back from places at diff times, can kind of be hard to plan during that time

John Macaulay: ^^100% agree. I applied to multiple rotations with overlapping time slots and then pulled the apps once I received the offers for specific rotations. I limited it to only a handful of rotations so that I didn't have to decline any if offered, since it's not a good look

Danielle Broussard: ^ same

Bendrick Wang: ^ I also did what John did and would recommend that strategy too

**Does the length of your away rotation have any impact?**

Kayleigh Crane: I would say no, a two week vs a four week are both valuable!

Ashley Thornton: Most are 4 weeks!

**What do you do if you haven't secured a rotation for July and August? Which I heard is important for a LOR.**

Ashley Thornton: Those are the more popular months for sure, but plenty of people do rotations in September (not too late for a LOR), even October and November can be a great time if you make a great impression, it's probably more about how you stand out not necessarily when you do one if that helps

John Macaulay: Definitely before late-Sept for LORs. Rotations after that are still great. I did all of mine from mid-Sept to mid-Dec and gave me plenty of opportunity to shine as an applicant.

Anish Rana: Doing an away rotation post-ERAS deadline is still helpful if you really want to match at that specific program, as rotating during interview season may increase your chances of getting an interview and thus potentially matching

**Besides away rotation, what are ways to stand out for programs without significant geographical ties/ ones with strong in-state preference?**

Bendrick Wang: I would add a little blurb in your PS explaining your reasoning for that specific geographical area!

Danielle Broussard: You get 3 geographical preferences on ERAS so if you apply to programs in those geographical areas but don't have ties, you can write about why you want to be in that area

**Given how variable away rotation availability can be, what would you recommend prioritizing if you're not able to secure as many aways as you hoped for.**

Ashley Thornton: Network network network! Go to conferences if you're able, local events, interacting with/staying in touch with people via email, medtwitter etc

Anish Rana: Personally, I would prioritize geographic location since if the one away is located in a city in which you're actively aiming to match into, then do that away instead of another away that may be potentially more "prestigious" but in a less favorable geographic location

**While waiting to hear back about away rotations, what is the best way to show interest in programs?**

Anish Rana: Kinda what Ashley was saying, networking !! Go to conferences if your budget allows, cold email program coordinators to set up meetings to get to know their program, interact with residents by reaching out to them via email or even insta DM

**For California programs, if you're not from California and are unable to do an away, will you be at a disadvantage/does it still make sense to apply there?**

Ashley Thornton: Hmm so I think this is where the geographic region section of ERAS will be important to explain to them your interest in a region you have no ties to. If you want to apply there go for it! you just might have to advocate for yourself slightly more than someone with ties there, certainly not impossible!

Bendrick Wang: I would make sure to put your California address on your permanent address on ERAS. Most programs review it holistically and can see you are from California

John Macaulay: Agree with Ashley and Bendrick^^. I don't think its a disadvantage as long as you can explain why you are drawn to the region/program well! I am originally from California and I have some ties to the area. but I know others who have matched previously without ties

**LOR**

**More generally - who did you get letters of recommendations from? How did you go about asking for them?**

Kayleigh Crane: Your SLOE is one, then I tried to get one in a field closely related to PM&R (neuro for me) and then one from a rotation that wasn't PM&R or related that I felt I really stood out on. Some places you can also have a 4th! Also be ware that some programs might ask for a "chair letter" and know what that process is like at your institution.

Ashley Thornton: Typically any attending who you work with clinically that can speak to you as a person/future resident, I was fortunate to have a home program and made a lot of connections with psychiatrists here, also psychiatrists from my away ,an internal medicine physician who I worked with closely and a geriatrician who I worked with closely

Bendrick Wang: I got it from 2x PMR, 1x FM, 1x Peds! Most schools require only 1 PMR letter, but if a school only wants 3 letters I would say no more than 2 PMR letters and have another specialty letter to supplement.

John Macaulay: I got 2 PM&R (1 SLOE), 1 research, and 3 internal medicine since I knew I would need them for Prelim/TY years

### **Is it okay to ask for a LOR during a 2-week rotation or should it usually be 4 weeks at least?**

Anish Rana: I would say if you really developed rapport with that attending and are confident that you showed off all your capabilities and work ethic, getting a LOR from that attending would be beneficial regardless of total length of rotation

Bendrick Wang: ^seconding Anish

### **Can a non-PMR physician write your SLOE, my program doesn't have PMR and geriatrics kind of functioned like PMR. Does it have to be an academic psychiatrist for the SLOE?**

Ashley Thornton: Yes! A geriatrician wrote one of mine and that rotation was super relatable to pmr

Danielle Broussard: But a psychiatrist must do the SLOE specifically

Kayleigh Crane: No, it can be a community psychiatrist! Just the one who can evaluate you best!

### **What website did you say lists what each school wants from your letter writers that we can refer to?**

AAMC Residency Explorer

### **Other Questions**

#### **Would anyone be able to discuss how they went about utilizing signals?**

Ashley Thornton: Idk if anyone already said this but you should def use all 20!

Bendrick Wang: I asked where I wanted to live (or ok living for 4 years) and applied my signals there! Also use all 20 signals that's the highest yield of interview invites

Kayleigh Crane: I went by the method, figure out 2-3 things that are important to you in a most residency program and the 2-3 things that are most important to you in your personal life. Then find programs that match close to that/you find yourself interested in and then go from there!

**For those that matched from a DO school, did you take step in addition to complex?**

Danielle Broussard: I did but I decided at the last minute. I was doing well enough on practice exams that I felt confident taking it. I don't think you NEED to take it to match though.

Bendrick Wang: I took both, but it depends. In general, I think COMLEX is enough! (You also save another \$700)

**Could you maybe elaborate more on the interview experience, like did you feel like the interviews were enough to display your character/work ethic/ personality etc.? Especially for interviews you did not do an away rotation at.**

Kayleigh Crane: Could you maybe elaborate more on the interview experience, like did you feel like the interviews were enough to display your character/work ethic/ personality etc.? You definitely have the time and opportunity! Both on your application and during your interview time!

John Macaulay: For me, I think it depended on the program. Some of the interviews are very quick (~10-15 min interviews) and some give you more time to talk about yourself than others. I think practicing how to efficiently get across your strengths and experiences is something that really shines as you go through more interviews.

**How much research do you think we should aim to have to be a competitive applicant?**

Bendrick Wang: I had 0 peer-reviewed research, but had 3 posters! So I wouldn't say it's very important and I was never asked about it during interviews. I was asked about things related pmr where I demonstrated longitudinal interest the most.

Anish Rana: Do as much as you're interested in doing. It helps doing research related to things that are of most interest to you - I would focus on that more than pure quantity