

APM Fellowship Match Proposal

With much input and a healthy discussion from the group of Fellowship Training Directors, the Fellowship Education Subcommittee developed [Recruitment Guidelines](#) which will be fully in effect this coming recruitment season. At our last Fellowship Directors' Forum there was interest expressed by some about participating in a formal match. This could be done through the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP). Following is a brief summary of the Specialties Matching Service Match Participation Agreement .

This is a binding agreement between the participants and the NRMP. We would have to designate a representative from the APM to oversee the process and serve as an official representative to the NRMP. This representative would also have to ensure annually that participation agreements are executed by the program directors that commit at least 75% of the eligible Psychosomatic Medicine programs and a minimum of 75% of available positions for that year. Only ACGME accredited programs are eligible.

Applicants may withdraw from the match **prior to the rank order list deadline**; the applicant **must** withdraw if they have accepted a position outside of the match. Applicants and programs are not authorized to release each other from the binding match agreement. A waiver to this agreement may be granted at the sole discretion of the NRMP and is not subject to arbitration. An applicant whose waiver is denied and does not accept the matched position will be barred from accepting a position in another NRMP-participating program.

A program which offers a position to an applicant who matched to a concurrent year position in another program (and was not granted a waiver) or to a barred applicant will be subject to penalties administered by the NRMP. Penalties for an applicant who violates the agreement include letters sent to their medical schools and residency training programs, the ECFMG if applicable, to the ABMS, and to the Federation of State Medical Boards. Penalties for Programs found in violation of the agreement include letters sent to their institution's GME committee and to the ACGME for distribution to respective RRC and Institutional Review Committees; the program may also be barred from future participation in the match.

The full agreement can be viewed at www.nrmp.org/fellow/user.html using the menu on the left of that page.

Advantages:

- Uniform time for both applicants and programs to make their selections without pressure.
- We can choose the timetable (this year in Child Psych, the only psychiatric subspecialty currently participating in the match, the match begins 9/2/09, the rank order list closes 12/16/09, and match day is 1/6/10).
- All participants are expected to act ethically and professionally with penalties for violations (some may also see this as a disadvantage).
- Fees are minimal. The program's institution pays one \$100 fee (which will already have been paid if the institution has other programs participating in the specialty match), \$20 fee for each specialty program and \$20 for each matched applicant (given the size of our programs that means an additional \$40-\$140 for your institution).

Disadvantages:

- Additional administrative responsibilities for each individual program, program director, and the APM.
- The match does not resolve the problem of too few applicants for the number of available positions.

- These are no longer our own internal guidelines but official, legally binding agreements administered by an outside group (some may also see this as an advantage).
- The match may tend to favor the larger programs leaving smaller programs unfilled when the total number of applicants is limited. (Last year in Child Psych, while 83% of positions were filled, only 62% of programs filled.)
- There are a few program directors who are not currently APM members and we would have to make sure they become a part of our “specialty group.”