Canadian Residency Virtual Promotion Guide

September 2020

Contents

1. BACKGROUND AND PREAMBLE

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unique challenges for all stakeholders involved in the 2021 R1 match. Unsanctioned electives including weekend site visits, observerships and virtual electives (including new virtual research electives) will not be allowed. As all stakeholders adjust it is important that equity remains a core principle of the match process.

As there will not be in-person activities for the class of 2021, it is essential for applicants to have the opportunity to find out more about different residency programs so that they may have a better understanding of which programs may be best for their career and life goals. In addition, residency programs need to be able to promote themselves in order to highlight the strengths of their programs and communities as they look to select residents who will be the best for their programs.

To satisfy stakeholder needs in an equitable fashion the following document outlines general guidelines that pertain to virtual program promotion and applicant engagement for the 2021 R1 match cycle.

WHAT IS THE NEW WEB TOOL FOR RESIDENCY PROGRAM PROMOTION?

The web tool is a centralized program promotion platform designed to be a "one stop shop" where any applicant to a Canadian Residency Program can access information on any Canadian Residency Program. The system will allow programs to create a brief, multi-media profile which applicants can view and subsequently use to decide if they wish to pursue further information via links to websites (e.g. program, university, CaRMS) and/or by attending virtual promotion events. The immediate benefits include universal visibility for programs and the ability for students to easily search disciplines and program offerings to support informed decision making and replace as best as possible the in-person experience.

The web tool will include:
➢ A "profile page" for each program to promote content about their program and community with links to other information such as CaRMS and program websites or other virtual promotion materials (existing videos, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc).
➢ Mechanisms for prospective applicants to learn more about each program and engage with residents, faculty and program directors, through content such as Q&As, videos, podcasts and testimonials.
➢ A national events calendar promoting virtual social and informational events taking place across programs.
➢ A "How To" Handbook for the web tool to assist program directors and applicants with the process.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR VIRTUAL PROGRAM PROMOTION

The ARMC supports the development of general guidelines for students, faculty and programs in order to foster a fair and equitable process that enables applicants to explore programs while avoiding the hidden curriculum or practices that circumvent approved Board decisions.

Virtual promotion endeavours to be equitable, accessible and flexible. It is assumed that, despite the move to virtual promotion, programs will continue to adhere to the recommendations of BPAS (Best

Practice of Assessment and Selection). As well, all stakeholders should thoroughly review the CaRMS Match Violation Policy as well as AFMC board decisions.

By ensuring that all programs and applicants adhere to the same policies and board decisions, both programs and applicants will have the best experience possible during the 2021 R1 Match cycle and beyond.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

AFMC – Responsible for approving match timelines and supporting Canadian Medical Schools in undertaking national consensus-building on policy and procedural administration of the transition from medical school to residency. Will be providing the web tool to support residency programs and students.

Undergraduate Programs – Responsible for the oversight of policies and processes that regulate student participation in electives (home and visiting). Determine policies around student attendance in core program activities as it pertains to student participation in extra-curricular activities such as program promotion.

Student Affairs – Responsible for providing career counselling services to learners and ensuring supports for learner wellbeing are in place.

Residency Programs – Responsible for fair and equitable selection process in alignment with BPAS, providing regularly updated information about their programs and positions, responding to student inquiries and undertaking virtual promotional activities locally as well as through the national career exploration tool.

CaRMS – Responsible for administering the application and matching service for postgraduate medical training in Canada through the R-1 match and subspecialty matches. CaRMS supports applicants and faculty throughout the application and match process, but does not play a direct role in policy, assessment or selection decisions.

4. PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Unsanctioned electives, and other clinical/non-clinical experiences should not be offered by programs or undertaken by students in the class of 2021.

While programs will strive to hold virtual events to showcase their unique strengths and opportunities, applicants should not feel pressured to attend all events put on by all programs in their desired specialty(s). Applicants are expected to remain actively engaged and immersed in their clinical clerkship experiences whether on core rotations or local electives.

Applicants must be aware of all AFMC decisions regarding the R1 Match and have a responsibility not to participate in activities that may circumvent these decisions. While program directors, faculty and community preceptors are being informed of decisions there may be instances where an applicant is offered an opportunity that is not supported by the board decisions regarding the 2021 match. While programs would also be responsible in this case, among applicants, creating a culture

of support as you all navigate through these unprecedented changes are critical to preserve the integrity of the match process.

By ensuring that all programs and applicants adhere to the same policies and board decisions both programs and applicants will have the best experience possible during the 2021 R1 Match cycle.

APPLICANT ENGAGEMENT

All <u>APPLICANTS</u> will have the opportunity to inform themselves about programs in a fair and equitable manner.

DO:
- Visit the centralized web portal to see a central calendar of program promotion events and participate in those that interest you.
- Attend, as able, virtual presentations/learning opportunities that programs are hosting.
- Speak with residents and medical students from other training programs who are available to answer questions that you may have.

DO NOT:
- Undertake new research projects with faculty outside of your institution.
- Arrange electives, clinical or non-clinical experiences that are not sanctioned by your current program.
- Arrange in person site visits or one-on-one meetings with a program even though you may be in a certain community for personal reasons.
- Feel pressured to attend all events put on by all programs in their desired
- specialty(s).
- Expect to receive time off from core or elective clinical rotations to participate in program promotion events.

PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT

All <u>PROGRAMS</u> will have the opportunity to promote their programs in a fair and equitable manner.

DO:
- Adhere to the recommendations of Best Practice of Assessment and Selection (BPAS)
- Provide virtual opportunities for candidates to learn about your program such as virtual presentations and "town halls".
- Provide opportunities for candidates to get a sense of your culture by offering interactive teaching sessions and/or virtual learning opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for candidates to interact with residents via virtual "fire-side chats" or other virtual means. Understanding the culture of a program from the resident perspective is critical to applicants' decision making.
- Consider providing opportunities for virtual group discussion with the program director.
- Consider recording sessions so that students may access at any time.
- Consider the difference in time zones across the country when scheduling activities.
- Ensure accommodations for those applicants who may be unable to access virtual promotion material due to visual, hearing or other impairments.
- Develop creative and relevant material to be placed on the centralized web portal.

DO NOT:
- Arrange unsanctioned electives with learners including observerships or virtual electives.
- Invite applicants to give a special presentation at academic day, to an audience of those who are involved in file reviews and on the selection committee, just to the program director and other similar scenarios.
- Ask potential applicants to submit documents or learning portfolio items outside of those formally requested as per their application requirements.
- Arrange site visits or have "informal" in-person meetings with potential applicants. If an applicant is visiting another city/province for leisure, personal, family or other reasons programs should not accept requests for students to meet with them in-person.
- Undertake new research projects with medical students outside of your institution.
- Use applicant attendance as a surrogate measure of program interest. If applicants are required to register for an event (so that they may be sent a link to a virtual meeting or otherwise) programs should not use this information as part of the file review and ranking process.
- Place responsibilities of program promotion on one trainee (or any one person as it would be overwhelming)

5. PARTICIPATION IN NEW WEB TOOL

HOW WILL MEDICAL STUDENTS INTERACT WITH THE TOOL?

- The aim is to launch the web tool for use immediately in advance of Match 2021, and be accessible to all students by November 2020.
- The web tool will be disseminated/promoted widely to candidates including via Associations, CaRMS, social media, IMG Associations, university websites, etc.
- Candidates will be able to access the portal via web browser (mobile friendly) and search by program, by university, etc.
- As development progresses, the web tool will be enhanced to include more functionality. This may include things like candidates having a "Save in Favourites" function that allows them to collect their favourite sites.

PROGRAM CONTENT TO PROVIDE FOR THE NEW WEB TOOL

The following broad content description is provided as a starting point for planning purposes. The AFMC will reach out directly with more details on the specific format once the web tool is built. This section will provide step-by-step instructions for programs to build their profiles and maximize virtual promotion. This will include "how to" tips for technical and creative support.

For now, we imagine that a "profile" will be made up of a small number of "pages" which may include:
- The "Landing Page" (main page to access all information for a program)
- The Program Page (Visuals, videos and key information about the program)
- The People Page (e.g. with testimonials) and,
- The Place Page (e.g. with virtual tours) and with Optional "Distributed Sites" Page(s).
- Quick Links to more fulsome program information available elsewhere including program faculty website and CaRMS.
- Events Calendar where programs can include information about their upcoming virtual promotion events and applicants can easily choose what interests them and schedule it into their week.

Prototype and preliminary design thinking for the web tool are <u>available</u> for information.

Because the content is intended to be appealing (i.e. concise and visual-oriented) maximum word allowances and suggested video lengths will be provided. Content could be provided in English or French or both at the program's discretion. Programs should anticipate a need to develop this content between September to November 2020.

Programs can immediately begin thinking about/working on the following:
- Bullet point highlights about what sets their program apart
- Photos and SHORT videos that capture their culture and community (especially with resident participation). [high tech, professional grade not necessary]
- Planning virtual events: town halls, chats with residents, "meet the PD" sessions etc.
- Ensuring University website is updated and CaRMS website is accurate and up to date