NAVIGATING INTERVIEW SEASON DURING COVID 19

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2020 1:00 - 2:00 PM

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Dr. Sapna Kuehl, Program Director, Ascension St. Agnes Medical Center

Moderator: Dr. Janaki Deepak, Assistant Program Director, Pulmonary and Critical Care Fellowship, University of Maryland Medical Center/VA

Hosted by Maryland Chapter of the American College of Physicians
Introductions

- Dr. Sanjay Desai, Program Director, Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Dr. Sapna Kuehl, Program Director, Ascension St. Agnes Medical Center
- Moderator: Dr. Janaki Deepak, Assistant Program Director, Pulmonary and Critical Care Fellowship, University of Maryland Medical Center/VA
Agenda

- Preparing for virtual interviews
- The interview day
- Question and answer session
From the candidate perspective

- Lack of experience with virtual interviews
- Unclear what to expect
- Inability to observe residents and faculty interactions
- Decreased time spent with program faculty and others
- Different expectations of different programs
Preparing for virtual interviews

Goals:

- Reduce unease
- Make the process as familiar as possible
- Control what can be controlled
- Practice to showcase yourself as you intend

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.”

Abraham Lincoln
Reduce Unease and Get Familiar with Process

- Prepare for each program extensively
- Review the timeline of recruitment event carefully
- Send program any questions about timing/logistics well in advance
- Know your application very well
- Prepare questions that do not seem generic

- Read references (e.g. AAIM)
- Talk to colleagues who have experience
- Get insight on how you come across on virtual platform
Control what you can

- Charge all devices
- Have a backup device and phone
- Deliberate background
- Avoid (minimize) distractions
- Have an emergency number for technical difficulty
- Lighting
- Check video and audio
- Confirm camera position

27. Your ZOOM experience!
Typical Webcam Set-up
Not Optimal
- Candidate looking down
- Webcam too low
- No flattering lighting

Optimal Webcam Set-up
- Webcam is elevated
- Two clip lights on either side
Looking Down = Unflattering angle and can put lights behind your head

Eye Level = Much nicer angle and has a more conversational look.
Practice

- Mock interviews
- Record yourself
- Be ready for common questions and behavioral interviews
- Try to schedule most preferred programs mid to late

“There is no glory in practice, but without practice, there is no glory.”
Interview Day

- Setting of Interview
  - Virtual Background
  - Lighting
  - Audio
  - Interruptions

- Appropriate Attire
Conversation

Not Different than usual

Prepare questions

Know your program and your interviewer
Other thoughts

- Close other programs on your computer or laptop
  - Easy to forget
  - Avoid a slow down of your operating system that could affect video/audio feed
  - Avoid interruptions by alert chimes or popups
- Have a professional profile name and profile image
- Keep a cheat sheet
- Know how to mute (in case of emergency)
- In case of Bluetooth headsets make sure they are paired to only one device (not phone and laptop)
Examples of virtual interview distractions

- Adjusting glasses, tie or hair
- Minimize eyeglass glare
- Swiveling or fidgeting
- Touching or scratching face
- Interruptions or noise - phones, watch with alerts
- “Loud” background artwork
- Too close or too far from camera
Where to look?

- Practice looking at the webcam and back at screen
- Don’t forget to smile; be upbeat
- Speak a little slower
Interviewing

- Behavioral questions
  - Teamwork Oriented
  - Problem Solving
  - Initiative/Leadership
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Challenge/Stress/Pressure
- Avoid overly long stories-high level summary vs. comprehensive presentation
- Speak clearly, avoid mumbling
Tips for IMGs

- Look for IMG friendly programs
- Apply early
- Do your homework about visas
- Be ready to explain your training/work experience
- Gaps in training
- Self promotion--high context (collective focus) vs low context cultures (individual focused)
- Language barriers/accents--slow down and clarify

Don’t let time zones trip you up
Community Programs

● Synchronous vs Asynchronous Interviewing
  ○ Variations
  ○ Videos, social media variability

● Be flexible and stay organized with times
  ○ Food and water available

● Faculty availability/resources
  ○ Covering patients/interruptions
  ○ Covid outbreak
Virtual Interviewing

- Preparation and planning are essential!
- Be yourself
- Learning curve for everyone
ANY QUESTIONS?