

Career-Planning Checklist



This checklist will help ensure that you are taking all the necessary steps and using all available resources as you choose a specialty and transition to residency. Note: You may need to adjust the order and timing of these activities so that they correspond with your school's calendar and curriculum. The **highlighted terms** indicate a CiM resource (sign in required).

	✓ Action item
M1	Get Started
	Attend your school's orientation to Careers in Medicine.
	Connect with a preclinical advisor or mentor to start exploring your career goals and ask any questions you may have.
	Start documenting the experiences that you will use to build your curriculum vitae (CV). See the CV samples .
	Understand Yourself
	Attend career-oriented workshops offered by your school.
	Work with your advisor to plan your second-year schedule.
	Work with your advisor to determine whether you'll use your upcoming summer to gain experience or take a break. If using your summer to gain experience, search the Clinical and Research Opportunities database for opportunities. Note all application requirements and deadlines.
	Take the Physician Values in Practice Scale (PVIPS) to assess your values. Review results with your advisor.
	Take the Medical Specialty Preference Inventory (MSPI) to assess your interests. Review results with your advisor.
Take the Physician Skills Inventory (PSI) to assess your skills. Review results with your advisor.	
Take one of the personality type self-assessments—Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or Keirsey Temperament Sorter (KTS). Review results with your advisor.	
M2	Explore Your Options
	Review your assessment results and use the recommended specialties as a place to start your specialty research.
	Start researching specialties by reading the specialty profiles and compare specialties using the specialty comparison tool .
	Consider the competitiveness of specialties that interest you to optimize your medical school career and maximize your residency candidacy.
	Attend specialty interest groups and panels at your school.
	Interview physicians who practice in specialties that interest you to get more information.
	Participate in a preceptorship.
	Narrow your search to a workable list of specialties as you gather more information and become more assured about which specialties would be a good fit.
Work with your advisor to plan your third-year schedule.	

M3	Begin clinical rotations and record your reflections about your experience in each specialty using the Clinical Rotation Evaluation .
	Retake MSPI, PVIPS, and PSI self-assessments to track any changes in results after gaining clinical experience.
	Choose Your Specialty
	Review the competitiveness of specialties to realistically assess your qualifications.
	Meet with a trusted advisor to discuss your 1–3 preferred specialties.
	If you're having trouble identifying your preferred specialties, complete the Specialty Indecision Scale (SIS) .
	Identify and meet with a trusted advisor in your preferred specialty or specialties.
	Find out if a research year is recommended for your preferred specialty. If so, seek opportunities.
	Finalize your specialty choice; decide whether you'll use a parallel plan.
	Work with your advisor to plan your fourth-year schedule.
	If completing away rotations, note application process, requirements, and deadlines.
	Apply for away rotations, if applicable.
	Prepare for Residency
	Learn about the residency application and match process—including the application materials and services used—for your chosen specialty. Note requirements, deadlines, and parties responsible.
Learn about your school's Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) process.	
Register for each of the residency application and match services you'll use.	
Finalize plans for securing letters of recommendation for your residency application.	
Identify your career and training goals and discuss them with a trusted mentor or advisor.	
Complete the Residency Preference Exercise (RPE) and review with a trusted mentor or advisor.	
Write your personal statement. Ask trusted mentors and advisors to review it and suggest improvements.	
Search for residency programs using the residency and fellowship program search to identify those that best fit your education and career goals.	
Conduct further research about residency programs to determine your competitiveness. Review your list of desired programs with a trusted mentor or advisor in your chosen specialty.	
Finalize the list of residency programs to which you'll apply.	
Finalize all residency application materials.	
M4	Submit your residency application materials to your chosen programs.
	Monitor and keep your advisor informed of the number of interview invitations you receive.
	Strategically schedule interviews. Cancel professionally, as needed.
	Prepare and practice for interviews using the guidance and tools on the CiM website.
	Schedule a mock interview through your advisor or student affairs office.
	Attend residency interviews and use the Residency Program Evaluation Guide to create your personal review of each program.
	Evaluate and compare residency programs using your personal reviews of each program and your Residency Preference Exercise (RPE) .
	Create an initial rank order list of all the programs you're willing to attend, in the order you'd like to attend them.
	Finalize your rank order list and submit it to the matching service.
	Participate in your school's Match Day ceremony and find out where you matched.
	If you're without a residency position after the Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP) concludes, work with your advisor or student affairs dean to explore your options.
	Sign the contract with your residency program.
	Attend session or workshop about transitioning to residency.
	Attend a residency or specialty boot camp.
Graduate and transition to residency training.	