



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures

# Navigating the Residency Match as an LGBT Applicant

**August 22, 2016**

## **Presenters**

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Joseph Langham, MD  
Kaitlyn McCune, MD  
René Salazar, MD  
Chelsea Dawn Unruh, MD

## **Moderator**

Brian Hurley, MD, MBA, DFASAM

## **Discussant**

Kelly A. McGarry, MD, FACP

# Session Faculty

## PRESENTERS

### Jeffrey Eugene, MD

Pediatrics Resident  
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

### Dre Irizarry, MD

Surgery Resident  
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

### Joseph Langham, MD

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Past Director of Diversity, Office of Graduate Medical Education  
University of California, San Francisco School of Medicine

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## DISCUSSANT

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Division of GIM, Rhode Island Hospital  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

## MODERATOR

### Brian Hurley, MD, MBA, DFASAM

Immediate Past Chair  
AMA LGBT Advisory Committee  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar  
University of California, Los Angeles  
David Geffen School of Medicine



# Learning Objectives

By the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Describe the rules governing questions that can be asked of program applicants during the residency interview process.
- Discuss concerns related to openly sharing one's identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender during the residency interview process.
- Compare and contrast the experiences of 5 LGBT residents who recently went through different match processes, including the individual NRMP match, the couples match, and the military match.

# Match Rules

René Salazar, MD



- Assistant Dean for Diversity  
University of Texas at Austin Dell  
Medical School
- Former Director of Diversity,  
Office of Graduate Medical  
Education, University of  
California, San Francisco



# Match Communication Code of Conduct

- Respect an applicant's right to privacy and confidentiality
  - *Program directors (PDs) and an other interviewers shall not ask identifying information about other programs.*
- Accept responsibility for the actions of recruitment team members
  - *PDs shall assume responsibility for the actions of the **entire interview team.***

# Match Communication Code of Conduct

- Decline to require visiting rotations or second visits
  - *PD's shall not require visiting rotations/second visits or imply that second visits are used in determining applicant placement on a rank order list.*
- Discouraging unnecessary post-interview communication
  - *PD's shall not solicit or require post-interview communication from applicants or engage in disingenuous post-interview communication.*

# Match Communication Code of Conduct

- Refraining from asking illegal or coercive questions
  - *Age*
  - *Gender*
  - *Religion*
  - *Sexual orientation*
  - *Family Status*

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# Match Rules

- Federal and state laws **prohibit** non-job related questions
  - *Race*
  - *Ethnicity*
  - *Gender*
  - *Religion*
  - *Marital status*
  - *Age*
  - *Sexual orientation*

# Match Rules: The Reality

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

## Potentially Discriminatory Questions During Residency Interviews: Frequency and Effects on Residents' Ranking of Programs in the National Resident Matching Program

SALLY A. SANTEN, MD, PHD  
KEVIN R. DAVIS, JD, PHD  
DONALD W. BRADY, MD  
ROBIN R. HEMPHILL, MD, MPH

### Abstract

**Background** Medical students rank residency programs as part of the selection process in the National Resident Matching Program, also known as the match. Applicants to medical residency positions are protected against discriminatory employment practices by federal employment laws.

**Objectives** To explore students' recall of being asked potentially illegal or discriminatory questions during the selection interview, and whether these questions affected students' ranking of the programs in the match.

**Methods** Fourth-year medical students from a single medical school were surveyed after the match. Students were questioned about their recall of the frequency of potentially illegal or discriminatory interview questions and their effect on the program's rank.

**Results** Ninety percent of the 63 respondents in the study remember being asked at least one potentially discriminatory question. Among these, students were asked about their marital status (86%), about children (31%), about plans for pregnancy (10%), where they were born (54%) and/or about their national origin (15%), and about religious and ethical beliefs (24%). The majority of students did not think the questions changed their decision to rank the program, although the questions changed the way some students ranked the program, either lowering or raising the rank.

**Conclusion** Nearly all students reported that they were asked at least one potentially discriminatory question, although these questions for the most part do not appear to affect whether they ranked the programs.

Santen, et al. J Gr Med Ed, 2010

# Individual Match

Dre Irizarry, MD



- Jefferson Medical College
- General Surgery Resident at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
- Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Stanford University Medical Center

# My Application and Interviews

- President of LGBTQ group
- Spoke about partner during interviews
- No essays specifically discussing sexual orientation/gender identity

# What I looked for in programs

- “Out” people in program
- General sense of residents and attendings
  - Night before dinner, second look
- State laws
- Hospital/university resources

# Advice/Lessons Learned

- Decide what is most important to you
- Do not sacrifice comfort or happiness, residency is challenging enough
- Think about hospital/university/city/state climate
- Think about timeline – it will likely not be easier or more convenient to come out "later"

**“And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.”**

**– Anaïs Nin**

# Individual and Military Match

Kaitlyn McCune, MD



## Lessons Learned

- Don't be afraid to be yourself
- Be honest and realistic about where you want to end up
- Be realistic about what you want and need out of residency

# Military Match

- Similar to civilian: one application, then interviews
- More standardized interview process
- Three outcomes
  - Match military program
  - Civilian deferment
  - No match, or prelim year

# Don't be afraid to be yourself

- DADT and DOMA are gone
- Scope out the residents

# Be honest and realistic about where you want to end up

- They take your preferences into account
- Urban/rural, type of program
- Family circumstances

# Don't put all your eggs in one basket

- Don't bank on civilian deferment or military match
- Have a Plan B that you are also excited about

# Individual Match

## Chelsea Dawn Unruh, MD



- Poznań University of Medical Sciences in Poznań, Poland
- International Medical Graduate (IMG)
- US citizen
- Chief Resident at Providence St Peter Family Medicine in Olympia, Washington

# Influences on my application process:

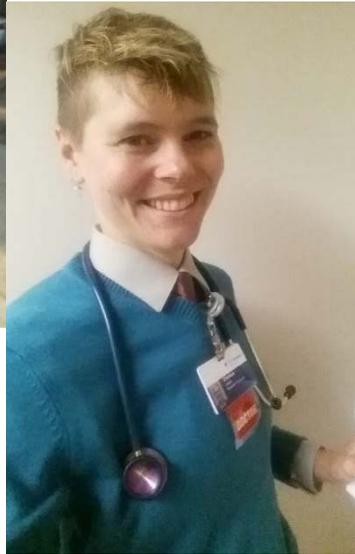
- International Medical Graduate
- Desire for full spectrum Family Medicine with OB
- Location preference (Pacific Northwest)
- LGBTQ friendly community

# Things that influenced my interviews:



- Single during interviews and match
- Moving from very gendered country (Poland)
- Nothing mentioned in personal statement

# Things that influenced my choice:



- Location
- Program
- Feel of the program, people, and night before dinner
- Feel of the city/queer scene or proximity to queer scene

# Lessons Learned



- Follow your gut.
- You don't get what you don't ask for.

# Couples Match

Jeffrey Eugene, MD and Joseph Langham, MD



Our Story

# Negotiating the Couples Match

- Mentors
- Learning about the Couples Match
- The decision to be “out” in the Match

# Interviews

- What we looked for in a program
- Scheduling interviews
- The “feel” of the program
- Talking openly about each other

# Rank List and The Match

- Feel of the program
- Where we would feel accepted
- Location
- Program that met our career goals

# Lessons Learned



- Make the decision for yourself to be “out”
- Prioritize your wants for a residency program
- Follow the “feeling”
- \*Being out in the workplace\*



**Jeffrey Eugene  
Joseph Langham**

**Brian Hurley**

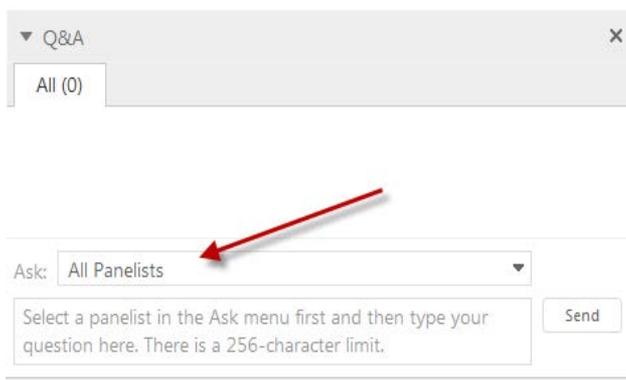
**Dre Irizarry**

**Kaitlyn McCune**



Please use the **Q&A panel** located on the right side of your screen to submit your questions. Send your questions to “All Panelists.”

**Kelly McGarry Chelsea Unruh René Salazar**



# Contact Information

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Association of  
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