



## Exploring the Relationship Between Program Signaling & Interview Invitations Across Specialties

**2025 Analysis**  
**Fellowship - December Cycle**  
**Data as of October 31, 2025**

# Program Signal Overview



## Program Signals

What is a program signal?

- Program signals *offer applicants the opportunity to express interest* in a fellowship program at the time of application.
- Program signals are *intended to be used by programs as one of many data points* in deciding whom to invite to interview.

# Goals of Signal Approaches

## Goal

### Small # of Signals

- Top programs only.

### Large # of Signals

- Distributes signals more evenly.

### Two-Tier

- Distributes signals more evenly.
- Greater flexibility for applicants

## Examples

From ERAS 2024-2025 Fellowship

- Pediatrics (5)
- Child Neuro and NDD (3)

- Orthopedic Surgery (30)
- Otolaryngology (25)

- Anesthesiology (5 gold, 10 silver)
- Dermatology (3 gold, 25 silver)

# Pros & Cons of Signal Approaches

## Pros

### Small # of Signals

- True top programs.
- Guards against use of program signals as interview invitation criteria.

### Large # of Signals

- Distributes signals more evenly.

### Two-Tier

- Distributes signals more evenly.
- Gold identifies top programs and silver gives flexibility.

## Cons

- May be insufficient for representing all applicant preferences.
- High concentration in a small number of programs.

- Tempting to use as a threshold.
- Value of the signal may be diluted.

- Tempting to use as a threshold.
- Explanation more challenging.

# Consider Key Questions & Review Data



## Conceptual

- What are we trying to learn from signals?
- What goals are we trying to accomplish with signals?
- How much risk do we want to ask applicants to bear?
- How much change can our community tolerate?
- How much evidence do we need to support a change?



## Data

- Did we accomplish our goals? Were there any unintended consequences?
- How did applicants react to small, 2-tiered, and large number signals?
- Did specialties that used a different approaches accomplish goals that we didn't?
- Did specialties use signals similarly regardless of # of signals?

# Sample of 2025 ERAS Applicants in the Following Specialties:

- Maternal-Fetal Medicine
- Pain Medicine

# Analysis

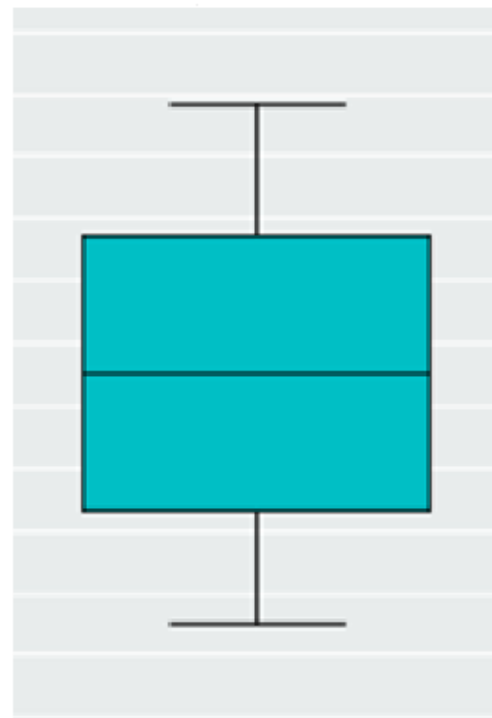
- **Predictors:**
  - Program signal.
- **Outcome:**
  - Scheduled to interview PDWS or Thalamus Interview Scheduler as of October 31, 2025 (Main Fellowship only).
- **Analysis:**
  - Results analyzed separately by program.
  - Computed signal to interview conversation rates by program.
  - Summarized the distribution of conversion rates programs using boxplots.

# What information is provided by a boxplot?

Boxplots show the distribution of signal to interview conversion rates for all programs in a specialty.

The colored box shows the signal to interview conversion rates for the bulk of the programs. The bottom of the box is the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile, the horizontal line is the median or the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, and the top of the box is the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile.

The whiskers represent the 10<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of programs' interview invitation rates.



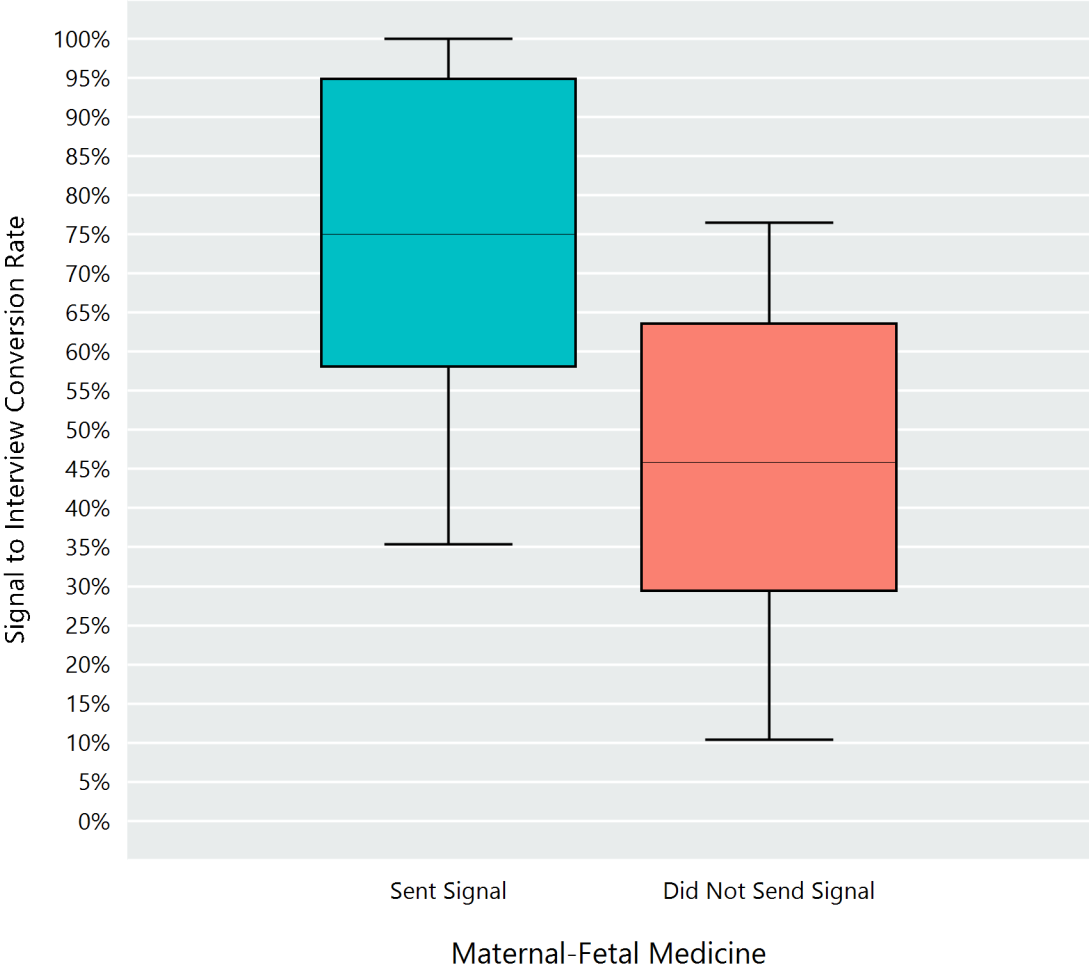


# Maternal-Fetal Medicine Program Sample & Inclusion Criteria

	N of Programs for Program Signals
Total programs participating in ERAS	110
Total programs participating in program signaling	107
Programs included in this analysis have sent at least 10 interview invitations and have submitted interview offer data via Thalamus Core. Applicant types (DO, IMG, MD) with N < 50 unique applicants are not shown.	47
<b>Total analytic sample</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Total % of programs participating in program signaling</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Total % of all Maternal-Fetal Medicine programs in 2025 ERAS cycle</b>	<b>43%</b>

# Maternal-Fetal Medicine: Interview Rates by Program Signal Status Year Over Year Comparison

2025 ERAS - Date as of 10/31/2025 - # Programs: 47 - # Signals: 10



# Maternal-Fetal Medicine: Interview Rates by Program Signal Status & Applicant Type

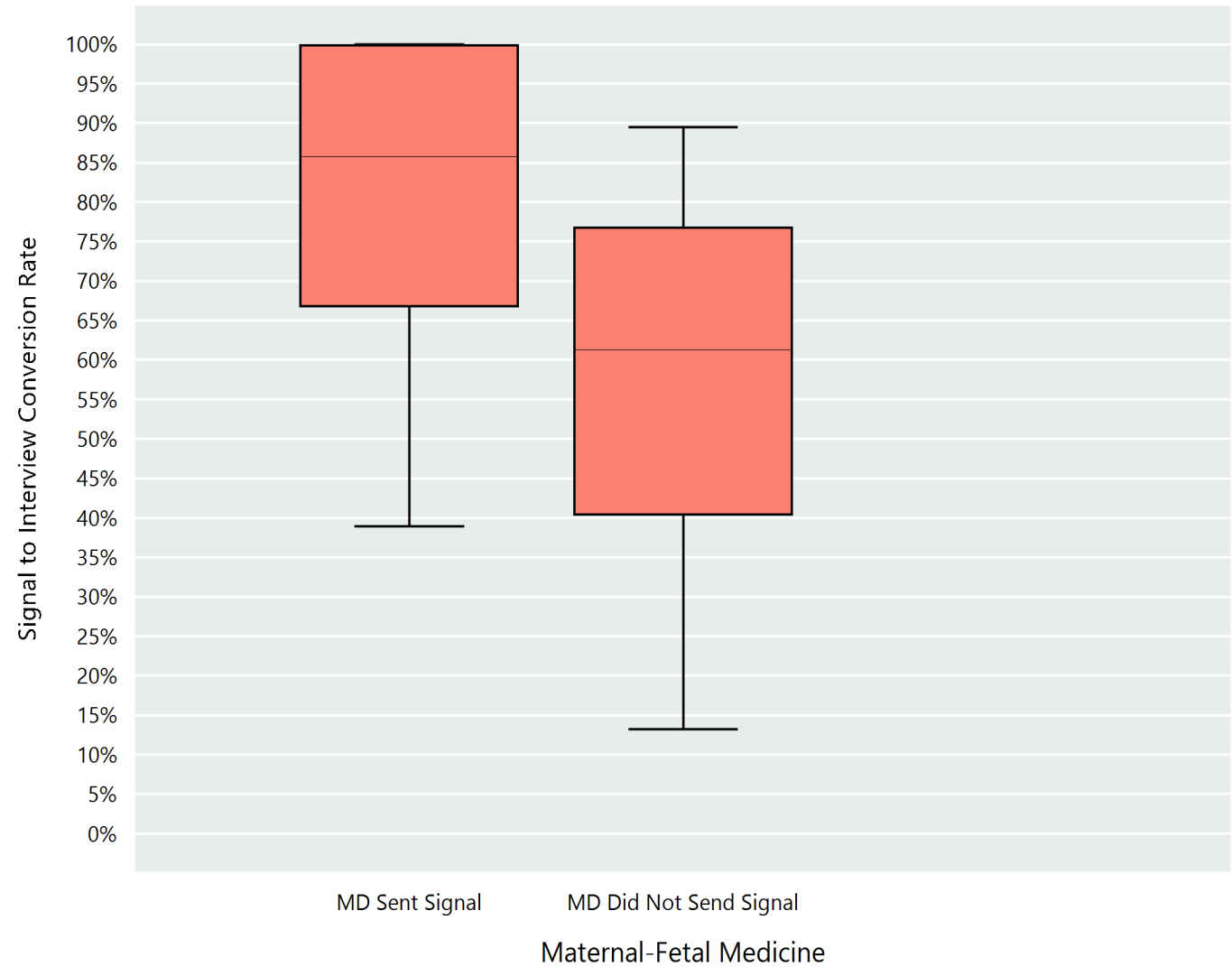
## Median Interview Rates

Applicant Type	Signal	No Signal
MD	86%	61%

*Applicant data were excluded from this analysis due to small sample size:*  
*Program N = 15: DO*  
*Program N = 20: IMG*

**CAUTION:** *Interpret results with caution: (a) small DO and IMG sample sizes at the program level and (b) analyses do not control for all factors considered in the selection process.*

2025 ERAS - Date as of 10/31/2025 - N: MD (136), DO (15) IMG (20)

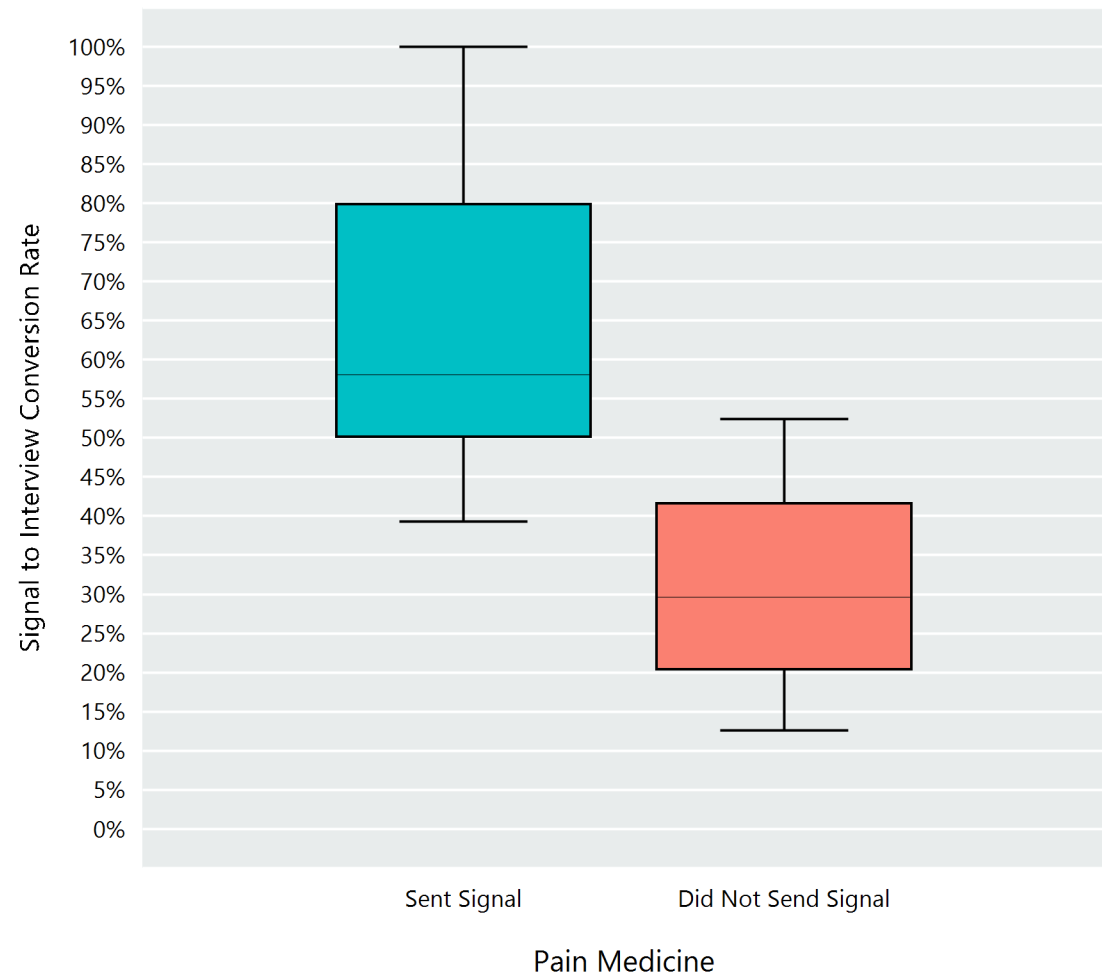


# Pain Medicine Program Sample & Inclusion Criteria

	N of Programs for Program Signals
Total programs participating in ERAS	110
Total programs participating in program signaling	110
Programs included in this analysis have sent at least 10 interview invitations and have submitted interview offer data via Thalamus Core. Applicant types (DO, IMG, MD) with N < 50 unique applicants are not shown.	59
<b>Total analytic sample</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Total % of programs participating in program signaling</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Total % of all Pain Medicine programs in 2025 ERAS cycle</b>	<b>54%</b>

# Pain Medicine: Interview Rates by Program Signal Status Year Over Year Comparison

2025 ERAS - Date as of 10/31/2025 - # Programs: 59 - # Signals: 5



# Pain Medicine: Interview Rates by Program Signal Status & Applicant Type

## Median Interview Rates

Applicant Type	Signal	No Signal
MD	71%	35%
DO	50%	29%
IMG	33%	16%

CAUTION: Interpret results with caution: (a) small DO and IMG sample sizes at the program level and (b) analyses do not control for all factors considered in the selection process.

