

EARLY SPECIALIZATION PROJECT (ESP)

The RRC-Surgery voted to consider applications for the Early Specialization Project as a pilot project. Institutions having a pediatric surgery and/or a vascular surgery program and a general surgery programs sponsored by the same institution are eligible to apply for participation in the Early Specialization Program (ESP). The application criteria and required documentation follow:

- 1) A letter of support from both the program director of the surgery residency program and the pediatric/vascular surgery program, and
- 2) A letter of support from the designated institutional official (DIO).
- 3) Both the surgery and the subspecialty programs must be in substantial compliance with the Program Requirements as judged by the RRC, ie, the program accreditation history, the program's ability to correct areas cited on the last program review, and the breadth of operative experience available for education including the defined category data will be evaluated and addressed.
- 4) Both programs' passing rates on the Qualifying and Certifying Examinations must meet or exceed those listed in the Program Requirements.
- 5) The procedure outlining the resident selection process must be submitted.
- 6) The first 4 years of surgery education justifying resident preparation for ESP must be completely described. NB: Normally, no more than 4 months of the first 36 months of the surgery residency may be spent exclusively on the applicable subspecialty service, ie, the pediatric or vascular surgery service.
- 7) Operative data should be submitted and should reflect that the program can provide sufficient operative experience during the PG1-4 years in the principal (essential) content areas.
- 8) The program director must document sufficient resources to provide all other residents and subspecialty residents with a sufficient breadth and balance of operative experience in the principal (essential) content areas.
- 9) A block diagram of the proposed clinical assignments for the PG3, 4, and 5/ ESP - 1 year and the ESP 2 years in the applicable subspecialty must be submitted.
- 10) A narrative statement describing the implementation and sequencing of the chief resident experience is required. NB: The program will be required to track the resident's operative experience and provide the RRC with an annual progress report of these data. When the resident completes the ESP, the resident must meet or exceed these requirements: the defined category data, the chief year data, and the data in aggregate for the 4 years of general surgery experience.

11) Both program directors must stipulate in writing that she or he and the faculty will comply with the Program Requirements regarding resident evaluation, ie, documenting a written, semiannual evaluation; and a written, summative evaluation at the completion of each PG year, including the PG4 and the ESP years.

12) The program may submit a proposal for only 1 position per subspecialty during the duration of the ESP pilot project. Early identification of residents interested in ESP is encouraged.

13) The program may, at its discretion, apply for a temporary increase in categorical positions per current RRC policy. However, the program is not encouraged to request approval for additional nondesignated preliminary positions.

Proposed Evaluation Process for the Early Specialization Program:

1) At each RRC review, the program must justify the volume and breadth of operative experience available for all residents in the program, including the ability to provide the ESP resident with sufficient cases in the essential content areas by completion of the PG4 year. Areas of insufficiency and noncompliance with the Program Requirements may be reason to discontinue the ESP.

2) The passing rate of candidates on both the QE and CE for surgery and the subspecialty examinations will serve as one evaluation measure.

3. The faculty evaluation of the educational quality of the program should play an integral role in the implementation and development of the program and this should be documented.

4. Employer and graduate evaluations of the quality of the graduate and the educational program should also prove helpful.

Submission date:

Applications may be submitted beginning October 2003 for those residents who wish to begin the early specialization program during their PG 4 year beginning July 1, 2004.