

# Total Wellness Program



## Career Guidance

Choosing a medical specialty is one of the most important decisions you'll make, and the process can be daunting. The Office of Student Affairs offers a four-year curriculum of presentations, workshops, resources, and the AAMC's Careers in Medicine (CiM) program to help you identify your career goals, explore specialty and practice options, choose a specialty, select and apply to residency programs, and make good career decisions.

### Careers in Medicine

To access the CiM four-step career-planning process, log into [www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine](http://www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine) using your AAMC log-in and password that you used for registering for the MCAT or submitting your primary application for medical school.

### UND SMHS Match Lists

Residency sites and programs of recent graduating classes are posted on the [Student Affairs and Admissions](#) website.

### Additional Resources

The [UND Counseling Center](#) (UCC) offers individual career counseling and career assessments.

[ExploreHealthCareers.org](http://ExploreHealthCareers.org) is a free, interactive website that includes information about a wide variety of health careers.

[The Undifferentiated Medical Student](#) (TUMS) is a free podcast of interviews with physicians from 120+ specialties and subspecialties to help you choose a medical specialty and plan a career in medicine.

### Schedule an Appointment

For individualized conversations about specialty choice, residency planning, and career development, set up an appointment with Dr. Dorscher, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, or Dr. LaPierre, Director of Student Advisement and Admissions, by contacting the Student Affairs Office at 701-777-4221, [saa@med.und.edu](mailto:saa@med.und.edu).

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## CiM Timeline

Download or print the [Careers in Medicine Timeline](#) and use it to help you stay on track in the career-planning process.

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## Career Guidance Year 1

Nothing is more important than studying and doing all you can to have a successful first year of school. But this is also a good time to begin to think about your future career without the stress of needing to make a decision. Studies show that you're more likely to be satisfied in your professional life if your career matches your interests, values, personality, and skills. So begin your career exploration by understanding yourself. While understanding yourself is a lifelong process, the better you understand yourself now, the more efficiently and effectively you'll determine the specialties that fit you best.

### Understand Yourself

Begin completing online self-assessment exercises available on the CiM website to help you identify the values, interests, skills, personality, and practice needs that can help guide your specialty choice. Some good ones to start with are:

- Specialty Indecision Scale (SIS), 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- Medical Specialty Preference Inventory, Revised Edition (MSPI-R)
- Physician Values in Practice Scale (PVIPS)

As you complete the assessments on the CiM website, results will be saved in your online Personal Profile. The Profile is a helpful way to organize information and can be printed out to discuss with an advisor.

### Interest Groups

Attend as many meetings as possible to learn more about specialties you are interested in and expose yourself to fields not yet on your radar. Meetings are included on the Medical Student Events Calendar.

### Events

Learn about career planning and different specialties at events sponsored by the [Office of Student Affairs](#). Check for dates of upcoming events on the Student Affairs and Admissions website.

### Summer Plan

Use the break to continue your exploration of specialties. Keep in mind that some specialties recommend research or other experiences to be competitive.

### Advising

To discuss assessment results to date and your summer plans, set up an appointment with Dr. Dorscher, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, or Dr. LaPierre, Director of Student Advisement and Admissions, by contacting the Student Affairs Office: 701-777-4221, [saa@med.und.edu](mailto:saa@med.und.edu).

## Preparing for The Match

### Year 1

- Track your actions/projects/honors/awards/scholarships
- Careers in Medicine

### Year 2

- Prepare for USLME Step 1
- Track your actions/projects/honors/awards/scholarships
- Careers in Medicine

# Career Guidance

## Year 2

Your second year of medical school is a good time to continue to gather information about specialties that match your interests, values, and skills. Most students make their final career decision in their third or even fourth year, so keep shopping around.

### Explore

You may be ready to start narrowing your search and gather more in-depth information on specialties of interest.

- Explore the Careers in Medicine (CiM) Specialty Pages, which provide extensive career information on more than 100 medical specialties. To log into [www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine](http://www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine), simply use your AAMC log-in and password that you used for registering for the MCAT, submitting your primary application for medical school, or other AAMC systems.
- Follow the CiM series featuring lesser-known specialties on [www.Facebook.com/careersinmed](http://www.Facebook.com/careersinmed) or [www.twitter.com/careersinmed](http://www.twitter.com/careersinmed). The series features a different specialty each week, including a brief description of the work, workforce demographics, salary data, the training path, and more.
- Use the library and other online resources to gather general information on specialties.
- Do focused research on two or three specialties and schedule informational interviews with practitioners in those fields. See the CiM website for strategies for a successful information interview and a list of questions to ask: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/career/professionaldevelopment/networking/339744/informationalinterviews.html>.

### Understand Yourself

If you haven't already, complete the online self-assessment exercises available on the CiM website and complete your Personal Profile.

### Interest Groups

Continue to attend interest groups meetings, which are included on the Medical Student Events Calendar.

### Events

Attend career planning and specialty exploration events sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs. Check for dates of upcoming events on the [Student Affairs and Admissions](#) website.

### Campus Lottery Process

The lottery will be conducted in the fall to determine third- and fourth-year campus assignments. Each student will draw a numbered card that identifies their random place in the lottery. At a specified time and

## Preparing for The Match

### Year 1

- Track your actions/projects/honors/awards/scholarships
- Careers in Medicine

### Year 2

- Prepare for USLME Step 1
- Track your actions/projects/honors/awards/scholarships
- Careers in Medicine

place, class members will gather to select their campuses in order. You must be present to participate in the lottery or have made arrangements to delegate the responsibility for making a choice to someone else. You will receive more information from the Student Affairs Office prior to the lottery.

### **Year 3 Rotation Schedule**

You will meet with your Year 3 campus dean and administrative staff early in Block 8 to determine your rotation schedule for your third year. You will choose your rotation schedule in reverse lottery order (pick schedule first if you picked your campus last).

### **Getting Ready for Third Year**

There will be a presentation on preparing for Year 3 during Block 7. We will let you know about this and other possible small group meetings regarding Year 3 and encourage you to participate as much as possible.

### **Summer Plan**

Use the break to continue your exploration of specialties. Keep in mind that some specialties recommend research or other experiences to be competitive.

### **Advising**

To discuss your self-assessment Personal Profile, set up an appointment with Dr. Dorscher, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, or Dr. LaPierre, Director of Student Advisement and Admissions, by contacting the Student Affairs Office at 701-777-4221, [saa@med.und.edu](mailto:saa@med.und.edu).

## Career Guidance Year 3

During this year, use the data you collected about yourself and physicians in various specialties to find the best fit. Aim to choose your specialty late in your third year or early in your fourth year at the latest. This will give you time to review and compare residency programs and narrow your choices before you start the application process. In the spring of your third year, you also will want to plan your fourth year so that you can best position yourself for the specialty and residency of your choice.

The following is general information and resources for all medical students. The dean's office on your campus will provide you with more information, counseling, and guidance.

### Year 3 Elective Experiences

Students may use up to two non-consecutive days during weeks 2-7 of each third-year clerkship for elective experiences *except* during the Neurology clerkship and during the block of time the student is assigned to a rural community. The purpose of these experiences is to allow you exposure to specialties in which you might be interested other than the required clerkships. Contact your campus office for more information.

### Choose a Specialty

Whether you're still exploring specialty options or ready to make a decision, the following opportunities, strategies, and resources can help lead you to the right specialty choice:

- **Careers in Medicine (CiM) Specialty Pages** has information pages on over 100 specialties and subspecialties that include the nature of the work, personal characteristics (including interests, values, and personality), training and residency information, match data, workforce statistics, salary information, and links to more than 1,000 journals, publications, and specialty and academic societies. CiM also has articles with helpful information on researching and evaluating specialties and strategies for making a decision. To log into [www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine](http://www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine), simply use your AAMC log-in and password that you used for registering for the MCAT, submitting your primary application for medical school, and other AAMC systems.
- Conduct **informational interviews** to obtain more detailed specialty information. See the CiM website for strategies for a successful information interview and a list of questions to ask:  
<https://www.aamc.org/cim/career/professionaldevelopment/networking/339744/informationalinterviews.html>.
- Review **Charting Outcomes in the Match** to assess your qualifications and competitiveness for the specialties you are interested in:  
<https://www.aamc.org/cim/download/337908/data/chartingoutcominginthematch2011.pdf>  
You might want to discuss USMLE Step One results and what impact they may have on specialty choice with an advisor.

- As you complete each of your rotations, record your reflections on each specialty as a possible career choice for you on the **Clinical Rotation Evaluation**: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/download/337670/data/clinicalrotationevaluation.pdf>.
- Having trouble making a specialty decision? Complete the **Specialty Indecision Scale**: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/profile/337672/specialtyindecisionscale.html>. This tool will help you identify barriers that may be preventing you from effectively making a specialty decision and learn strategies to overcome the identified problems. You can discuss the results with an advisor to develop a plan to address your indecision.

## Explore Residency Programs

After selecting a specialty, it's time to start looking into residency programs that will be the best fit for your goals and personality. The following resources can help with this process.

- **Careers in Medicine (CiM) Residency Programs pages** is a systematic approach to researching and considering residencies to find programs that fit your individual needs and eventually match to a program.
- **AMA's FREIDA** (Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access) **Online** provides statistical information about each specialty, as well as information about ACGME-accredited residency programs and institutional offerings by specialty and geographic location.
- Complete the CiM's **Residency Preference Exercise** to help you assess your desired characteristics for a residency program: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/profile/337676/residencypreferenceexercise.html>.
- Use the **Residency Program Evaluation Guide** to rate residency programs in which you are interested: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/download/338984/data/evaluationguide.pdf>.

## Plan Your Fourth Year

The spring of your third year is also the time to plan your fourth-year electives that will enhance your performance in residency and broaden your knowledge base. You can use your fourth-year electives to confirm your career interests and experience institutions you're considering for residency. If you're still considering a few specialties, schedule those electives in the summer or fall or your fourth year to help you make a final decision as early as possible. Most residency interviews will occur October through January, so keep that in mind when planning Year 4. See **Planning Your Fourth Year** for more strategies to help you maximize your last year and best position yourself for the residency of your choice:

<https://www.aamc.org/cim/specialty/skillsandexperiences/clinicalexperience/338812/planningfourthyear.html>.

### *Away Rotations*

You may choose to do away rotations as a way to learn more about a particular program or specialty. Some specialties expect medical students to participate in away rotations prior to applying for residency. You will likely apply for your away electives through VSAS (Visiting Student Application Service). For a collection of helpful resources to assist you in using VSAS, visit the **VSAS Resources for Students pages**. If the institution does not participate in VSAS, look for visiting student information on the medical school's website.

For campus-specific help in applying for away electives, contact your campus administrative office.

## Prepare for the Match

Though you won't be applying to residencies until next year, it's not too early to start familiarizing yourself with the application and match process and begin preparing. It's a good idea to begin requesting letters of recommendation from faculty in your chosen specialty(ies). You should also document your medical school accomplishments and activities in preparation for writing your curriculum vitae (CV) and personal statement. Lots of good information can be found in the following online resources:

- **Careers in Medicine (CiM) [Match Pages](#)** contain information on how the residency match works and how students can best position themselves to land a residency position, from applying through creating their rank order list.
- **[The Match](#)**. The AAFP (American Academy of Family Physicians) provides this valuable website with information about selecting and applying to residency programs, including a residency application timeline, residency selection tips, and preparing for interviews. You also can download *Strolling Through the Match*, an 80-page guide from start to finish of the Match process.

## ERAS

In the spring, you will receive an email from ERAS that includes your individual token ID that will allow you to register for the residency application season. You will also receive instructions and resources from the Office of Student Affairs. [ERAS](#) information for applicants, including tutorials, PowerPoints, and other resources to get you through the application process is available at their website.

## MSPE (Dean's Letter)

The Office of Student Affairs will send you two forms in the spring:

- Unique Characteristics form: Please fill it out and return; you may include a CV if you have one.
- Release of Information form: Please print, sign, and return as soon as you receive it.

## Advising

Students on each campus will be advised regarding their specialty choice following this process:

- Students will meet with their campus deans at campus orientation to begin group advising.
- Later in the year, students will meet individually with their campus dean to discuss their specialty choice, competitiveness for this specialty, and best fourth-year schedule, including recommended away electives for residency application to this specialty.
- A group meeting on each campus will be held following the Match with current fourth-year students to discuss the match process and for the third-year students to gain guidance regarding applications, interviews, and the Match from the students who have most recently completed the process.

- Once a student has identified the specialty in which they plan to match, they will be expected to arrange a meeting with the department chair or other designated advisor for that specialty for specialty-specific advising (please contact your campus dean's office to facilitate this meeting).
  - Please sign a release of information form from your campus dean's office or the Office of Student Affairs for your academic information to be released to the department chair or advisor prior to these meetings.

## Career Guidance Year 4

In the first part of Year 4 you will complete all the hard work and preparation you've undertaken so far on the way to a successful match to a residency program. Once the Match has taken place, you can focus on the transition from undergraduate to graduate medical education and your future medical career. The following is general information and resources for all medical students. The dean's office on your campus will provide you with more information, counseling, and guidance.

### Choose a Specialty

Don't worry if you're still undecided. Use the first part of your fourth year to complete electives in the specialties you're considering. Review all the information you collected in Years 3 and 4 as you researched specialties to find the one that's the best fit for you. If you're having trouble making a final decision, complete the **Specialty Indecision Scale** at <https://www.aamc.org/cim/profile/337672/specialtyindecisionscale.html>. This tool will help you identify barriers that may be preventing you from effectively making a specialty decision and learn strategies to overcome the identified problems.

### Choose a Residency Program

You've likely already begun exploring residency options. The following resources can help narrow your choices to the programs you'd like to apply to and rank:

- **Careers in Medicine (CiM) Residency Programs** pages is a systematic approach to researching and considering residencies to find programs that fit your individual needs and eventually match to a program. To log into [www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine](http://www.aamc.org/careersinmedicine), simply use your AAMC log-in and password that you used for registering for the MCAT, submitting your primary application for medical school, and other AAMC systems.
- **AMA's FREIDA** (Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access) **Online** provides statistical information about each specialty, as well as information about ACGME-accredited residency programs and institutional offerings by specialty and geographic location.
- Complete the CiM's **Residency Preference Exercise** to help you assess your desired characteristics for a residency program: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/profile/337676/residencypreferenceexercise.html>.
- Use the **Residency Program Evaluation Guide** to rate residency programs in which you are interested: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/download/338984/data/evaluationguide.pdf>.
- The AAMC publishes **The Report on Residents**, a comprehensive collection of current and historical data related to residency training.

### Apply to Residency Programs

To land the residency you want, be sure that your residency application is on time and well executed. This will take time and careful consideration. Your first step should be to review the timeline for reviewing applications and setting up interviews for the residency program(s) you are interested in; some programs conduct interviews early in the process. Start gathering the necessary application materials—letters of recommendation, MSPE, personal statement, board

scores, transcript, curriculum vitae, photograph—at least two to three months before your application is due.

In May of your third year you received an email from the Student Affairs and Admissions Office with information about **ERAS**, as well as an email from ERAS that included your individual token, allowing you to register for the ERAS residency application season. You'll begin filling out your ERAS application for the Regular Match as early as July and submit your completed applications beginning September 15. Note that military, ophthalmology, and urology have an Early Match process. CiM [Residency Application pages](#) contain a variety of articles and resources to prepare you for and guide you through the application process, including information on writing your CV and personal statement, interview tips and questions, securing strong letters of recommendation, and applying through ERAS.

### Travel for Interviews

The [Office of Alumni and Community Relations](#) has a HOST (Housing Medical Students as they Travel) program that matches UND SMHS alumni across the country with fourth-year students traveling for residency interviews.

### The Match

CiM [Match Pages](#) contain information on how the residency match works and how students can best position themselves to land a residency position.

[The Match](#). The AAFP (American Academy of Family Physicians) provides this valuable web site with information about selecting and applying to residency programs, including a residency application timeline, residency selection tips, and preparing for interviews. You also can download *Strolling Through the Match*, an 80-page publication designed to help you make appropriate decisions about your professional career and learn more about the process of getting post-graduate training.

### Planning for the Future

For help finding healthcare positions in rural North Dakota, contact Stacy Kusler, the workforce specialist of the Center for Rural Health: 701-777-3300; [stacy.kusler@med.und.edu](mailto:stacy.kusler@med.und.edu); [www.ruralhealth.und.edu](http://www.ruralhealth.und.edu).

[CiM](#) has general information on practice options and settings, professional development, and alternative careers.

### Advising

All students meet individually with their campus dean to review their Clinical Skills Assessment and to discuss specialty choice, residency application plans, interview strategies, and other career

## The Match Timeline

### Year 4

- Register for The Match (Sept)
- MSPE (Oct)
- Interviews (Oct-Jan)
- Rank Order List (Jan)
- Certify ROL (Feb)
- Match Day (March)
- Download or print the [Match Timeline](#) and use it to keep yourself on track. The timeline includes all the steps you must complete in Years 3 and 4 to be ready to participate in the match, arranged by year and month.

counseling at the beginning of the fourth year. If you have not already done so, please contact the chair of the department or other designated advisor for your specialty of choice for specialty-specific advising (see the Advising section in Year 3 for more details).