

## ONTPD ERAS Demonstration- Popular Questions from Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine Programs October 26, 2007

### *Who can use ERAS?*

Subspecialty programs in participating specialties with current ACGME accreditation are eligible to use ERAS Fellowships. Applicants who have graduated from an accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical school are open to use ERAS Fellowships, including international medical graduates.

### *How much does it cost to use ERAS?*

ERAS is free to fellowship programs. Costs to individual programs may include computer hardware and the program's connection to the Internet. Given the latest technological advances employed by institutions, most already meet ERAS system requirements.

ERAS is supported by fees paid by applicants based on the following tiered billing structure:

- \$100 for up to 10 programs
- \$10 each for 11-20 programs
- \$15 each for 21-30 programs
- \$25 each for 30 programs or more.

Example: An applicant applies to 23 Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine programs for a total fee of \$245 ( $\$100 (10 * \$10) + 3 * \$15$ ).

### *Will ERAS verify the authenticity of documents sent as part of the ERAS application?*

ERAS does not verify the authenticity of documents transmitted in applications; however, there are certain supporting documents that are from source and do not require verification including:

- Exam score transcripts received directly from the NBME and NBOME (thus assuring this information is complete and accurate)
- ECFMG Certification information for international medical graduates from the ECFMG.

Although ERAS will not review supporting documents for authenticity, we are still dedicated to ensure the accuracy of the application. The ERAS Integrity Promotion Program was designed to discourage fraudulent activity. For more information on the Integrity Promotion Program visit our Web site and select *ERAS Policies*.

### *How will applicants know to apply to Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine programs through ERAS?*

ERAS sent out an informational e-mail to the core residency programs to announce Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine will be using ERAS this season. We encouraged program directors to share this information with residents interested in applying to NPM subspecialty training programs.

### *How will applicants know about any special requirements for applying to Neonatal-Perinatal programs (i.e. NPM Standardized Letter of Recommendation)?*

While the ERAS Web site provides a list of participating programs, we advise applicants to contact individual programs directly to find out specific information about the program including: a description of program offerings, application documents required, application deadlines, and interview dates.

It is the responsibility of individual programs to outline and communicate to applicants which documents you will require for a complete application as well as any deadlines specific to your program. We encourage you to review and update applications requirements on any applicant marketing materials you may have about your program, like:

- Brochures
- Web sites
- Welcome/Informational Letters
- Follow-up E-mails, etc.

The NPM Standardized Letter of Recommendation is unique to Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine. ERAS has subsequently provided a link to the ONTPD Web site which details information about application guidelines for Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, including the NPM Standardized Letter template. However, it is ultimately up to the applicant to ensure their letters of recommendation are submitted in the correct format and that they follow application guidelines. Should you not want to accept letters that do not conform to the template; you will need to communicate this directly to applicants.

*My program did not fill all its spots in the NRMP Match, how will I receive applications for those open slots?*

The ERAS PostOffice will close May 31, 2008 before the NRMP Match Results are released on October 1, 2008. Although the ERAS PostOffice will be closed on Match Day, you will still have access to any of the applications you received prior to May 31<sup>st</sup>, and you may want to review those applications for possible post-Match applicants. Otherwise, applicants will need to send you their application materials outside of the ERAS system (likely in the same fashion you received applications prior to joining ERAS).

*I missed the ERAS Demonstration at the Fall ONTPD Meeting, how can I get some tips on using the ERAS software?*

The ERAS software is designed to be user-friendly and intuitive; however, if you want detailed information on ERAS tools and features, reference the PDWS Manual available electronically in your software. If you want a quick summary of ERAS software, try our online PowerPoint tutorial; a quick and easy way to walk through some of the most popular PDWS tools and features right from your own desk. Visit the ERAS Training information Web page for more details:

<http://www.aamc.org/programs/eras/programs/training/start.htm>.

Additionally ERAS has developed a special page for new programs that includes expanded PowerPoint tutorials designed to introduce you to ERAS tools and features as well as important information about how to make ERAS work for you! Please visit the ERAS- Did You Know? Web page for information: <http://www.aamc.org/programs/eras/programs/didyouknow.htm>.

*Will the In-Training Exam scores be available?*

In-Training Exam (ITE) scores for Pediatrics are not currently available as part of the ERAS application. ERAS is exploring the option of including the ITE score transcript as an ERAS document for the future based on collaboration with Council of Pediatric Subspecialties (CoPS) and the American Board of Pediatrics.

*Are ERAS and the NRMP related services?*

ERAS is a distinctly different service from the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP). ERAS is a service of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and was created to streamline the application process for graduate medical education ([www.aamc.org/eras](http://www.aamc.org/eras)). ERAS transmits candidate's application and supporting credentials to residency and fellowship program directors. The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) is a private, not-for-profit corporation established to provide a uniform date of appointment to positions in graduate medical education (GME), and is governed by its board of directors ([www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org)).

Although programs that participate in ERAS may also participate in the NRMP, participation in one service does not obligate your participation in the other. For example, programs may choose to use ERAS to receive applications, but not participate in the NRMP Specialty Matching Service. Conversely, programs may participate in the NRMP Match, but opt to not use ERAS to receive applications.

*Will I need support from my institution's Information Technology Office?*

We recommend involving your IT staff in your ERAS implementation and installation. They will be an excellent resource in helping you evaluate your current computer equipment and Internet connection to assess your ability to accommodate ERAS equipment guidelines. They can also assist with installing the ERAS PDWS software and getting all necessary parties online. ERAS recommends installing the PDWS software on a network drive to allow multi-user access. We also recommend discussing with your IT office backup procedures and recovery for ERAS files, so that if there's ever an issue with your software your local data will not be completely lost.

If your program is interested in accessing the ERAS PDWS software off-site, you may want to talk with your IT staff about establishing a Virtual Private Network (VPN) or other connection that allows you to access the network drive containing the ERAS software while you are not in the office. There is a wealth of information for IT staff to help them support you with the ERAS process, have them visit our technical support page on the Web at:

<http://www.aamc.org/programs/eras/programs/techsupport/start.htm>

*What information is available as part of the ERAS application?*

This is a list of supporting documents that may be provided by the applicant when applying to your program. All of these documents may be downloaded into the Program Directors Workstation Software.

MyERAS 2008 Application Worksheet (CAF)  
LoRs (applicants may assign up to four letters to your program)  
Personal Statement  
Medical School Transcript  
Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)/Deans' Letter  
Wallet Size Color Photograph  
USMLE Transcript (transmitted by the NBME)

COMLEX Transcript (transmitted by the NBOME)  
ABSITE Transcript  
ECFMG Status Report (International Medical Graduates (IMGs) only)  
California Application Status Letter (International Medical Graduates (IMGs) only)

For more information on what information is available in the MyERAS Common Application Form (CAF), review the CAF worksheet provided on our Website which outlines for applicants the information they may provide to programs about their demographic information, education, previous residency experience, publications, exam history, and licensure information. The worksheet may be located at: <http://www.aamc.org/programs/eras/programs/about/downloads/worksheet2008.pdf>

*What's the advantage of using the PDWS provided e-mail feature over my own e-mail service?*

The ERAS PDWS e-mail feature was specifically designed to help programs communicate more efficiently with applicants. The PDWS e-mail tool allows you to e-mail applicants based on any filter/sort and send the e-mail in blind copy format so applicants do not know who else received the e-mail. Additionally, e-mails sent through the PDWS are automatically logged and archived in the "Correspondence" tab of the PDWS, helping you track your communications with applicants.

Most importantly every e-mail sent through the PDWS is sent not only to the applicant's e-mail address, but is also stored in a secured MyERAS Message Center for the applicant to view. This functionality ensures your e-mails to applicants will not be lost in a SPAM or bulk mail folder.

*Why do I need to periodically contact the ERAS PostOffice, and how often should I contact the PostOffice?*

ERAS is made up of four components: the applicant Web site MyERAS, the Dean's Office Workstation (DWS), the Program Director's Workstation (PDWS), and the ERAS PostOffice. The ERAS PostOffice is the hub that communicates information and application materials to ERAS users. ERAS will not push down new information to your software; you must proactively contact the PostOffice to update the information in your PDWS.

We recommend contacting the PostOffice at least twice a day to ensure you get not only new applications, but any updated information for applications already received. Therefore, even after you are done accepting applications, you should still contact the PostOffice to make sure any information from previously received applications is kept current.

*The ERAS PostOffice closes May 31<sup>st</sup> but I will be conducting interviews over the summer; will I lose access to the applications I received?*

Although the ERAS PostOffice closes May 31<sup>st</sup> you will not lose access to any application information you received before the closure. The PostOffice closure simply means you can no longer receive new applications or updated information for applications received through ERAS this season. Towards the end of the season ERAS will send out season closing instructions for programs that wish to archive their ERAS information for retrieval anytime in the future.

Programs can therefore review any applications received before the PostOffice closing, even after May 31<sup>st</sup>. ERAS even allows you to attach documents to the applicant file that may have been received

outside of the ERAS PostOffice. For instance late letters of recommendation received over the summer may be attached to an applicant's ERAS file.

We will also provide instructions for those programs who wish to transfer any customized filter/sorts and local data fields to next season's PDWS software.