

Best Practices for Applying to Residencies, Fellowships, and Entry-Level Positions in Managed Care Pharmacy

AMCP wants to ensure student pharmacists and new practitioners are prepared for applying to residencies, fellowships, and entry-level positions in managed care pharmacy. The process can be complicated and confusing, so here are tips, best practices, and key timelines to consider so you don't miss the perfect opportunity!

After Attending the AMCP Residency and Fellowship Showcase

- Determine follow-up questions from interactions with residency and fellowship programs and reach out to those you are most interested in pursuing
- Confirm the type(s) of residency and fellowship programs that best match your career goals (e.g. pharmacy benefit manager, health plan, integrated delivery network, pharmaceutical industry)
- Identify and engage a mentor to support you with questions and insight as you begin the residency/fellowship application process
- Explore opportunities to gain hands-on managed care/industry experience (e.g. APPE rotations, shadow experiences, assist faculty with research, join local/regional AMCP chapter)
- Create a professional profile on LinkedIn; be sure to use a professional headshot for your profile
- As soon as possible, identify and contact 3-5 individuals to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf. When selecting, choose preceptors, faculty, etc. that can speak well on your past performance and accomplishments; specific examples about your potential as a resident/fellow are very helpful to program decision makers
- Make sure your CV presents you in the best way possible; have it reviewed and edited by multiple sources (preceptors, faculty, mentors, peers)
- Set aside plenty of time to develop a thoughtful personal statement and have it reviewed by multiple sources. It is to your advantage to tailor your personal statement to the program you apply to with specific examples and reasoning behind your interest in their residency
- Stay very organized! Keep a planner with pertinent deadlines for the entire application process and stay ahead of them; procrastination can be extremely detrimental

Residencies: Signing up for PhORCAS/Match:

- Register for the Match via PhORCAS as soon as possible and become well-oriented with the application process, including key requirements/deliverables and deadlines
 - <https://portal.phorcas.org/>

Important Match Deadlines

- **November 2018:** Programs participating in the Match will be available online. Applicants will be able to register for the Match.
- **December 31, 2018:** Recommended date by which applicants should register for the Match

- **March 1, 2019:** Final date for submission of applicant and program Rank Order lists for Phase I of the Match
 - *When ranking residency programs, keep in mind that your first choice may not be the program you match with. Make sure you envision being successful and happy with each program you choose to rank.*
- **March 15, 2019:** Results of Phase I of the Match
- **March 19, 2019:** Beginning at 9:00am EST, applicants who did not obtain a position in Phase I of the Match or who did not participate in Phase I of the Match will be able to submit applications using PhORCAS to programs participating in Phase II of the Match
- **April 3, 2019:** Phase II Rank Order list deadline
- **April 10, 2019:** Results of Phase II of the Match
- **April 11, 2019:** Beginning at 12:00pm EST, applicants who did not obtain a position in either Phase of the Match, or who did not participate in either Phase of the Match, will be able to submit applications using PhORCAS to programs with available positions

Fellowships: Signing up for PPS

- Beginning **October 23, 2018**, the Personnel Placement Service (PPS) opens for registration. PPS is held in conjunction with ASHP and is where many of the fellowship programs conduct their interviews for potential candidates
 - <https://midyear.ashp.org/PPS>
- Make sure to upload your CV early and reach out to the programs you're interested in to request interviews
 - Within the PPS system you can also organize your calendar to show your availability. Give yourself 30 minute breaks between interviews so you can relax, review notes, and arrive on time/early for your next interview
- There isn't a set number of interviews one person should have, but be realistic! Look through all of the PPS postings – there may be programs that you hadn't heard of before that could be a great fit
- Set aside plenty of time to review the programs, look up information on the company, etc so you are well prepared for interviews. Some companies will conduct only one interview at PPS, while others will conduct multiple rounds. Most interviews take place between Sunday and Wednesday of the conference week. Some programs allow for earlier in-person-only sign-ups starting on Saturday. Do your research!
- Stay very organized! Keep a planner with all pertinent deadlines, who you interviewed with, and the entire application process. Stay ahead of things!

Preparing for ASHP Midyear Showcases

- Come to the showcase with prepared questions! You may have only a few minutes to speak with program directors and/or current residents. Ensure the answers to these questions cannot be easily located on the program website/marketing materials
- If participating in PPS at Midyear, a schedule of your interviews is not provided; be sure to have your interview times and program materials well-organized
- Create business cards prior to the meeting to give to programs at the showcase. Have copies of your CV printed and ready on professional paper; however, not all programs request these at the showcase.
- Dress professionally. You want to be remembered for being a great candidate, not your clothing.

Fellowship Interview: Timelines Post-PPS

- Most fellowship programs, if not all, do not participate in PhORCAS or standardized application and interview process timelines. Many programs make requests for onsite interviews during or immediately following PPS, so be prepared to reflect quickly on which programs have resonated with you!
- Typically, onsite interviews will occur anytime from mid-December through early February. Turnaround timeframes for official offers are also usually very quick and requests to make decisions even quicker (24-72 hours). If you decide to pursue a fellowship opportunity rather than a residency through PhORCAS, you may need to retract your PhORCAS application post-decision

Pre-/Post Residency and Fellowship Interviews

- Seek out opportunities through your school to participate in mock-interviews
- Review your school and work experiences, both positive and negative, during your pharmacy school career. Write down talking points that speak to these: what you learned, what was successful, actions and results taken in the situation, reflection on how to improve your performance moving forward if unsuccessful
- Many programs require a 15-30 minute presentation during the interview. Choose a strong presentation you developed within the past year for a rotation, class, etc. Make sure you check with the program to determine if they require a specific topic, or if you can choose your own
- Ensure professionalism throughout the time you are on-site for the interview. Every person you meet at the program is paying attention to you and likely providing input
- Remember that not only is the program interviewing you, but you are also interviewing the program; focus on whether the culture and atmosphere is a good fit for you and where you can see yourself being successful
- Collect business cards from each person you interview with and be timely with sending thoughtful thank you notes; be as unique as you can in thanking each person at the program

Post Fellowship/Match and Alternative Routes

- If you match for a residency or are selected for a fellowship: Congratulations!
- If you do not match: It may seem like the end of the world at first but truly, it is okay! You have many options.
 - Participate in subsequent match rounds by reviewing available programs and submitting required materials as soon as possible
 - Engage your professional contacts for potential job opportunities
 - Reach out to pharmacy school faculty, mentors, rotation preceptors, contacts you have in managed care and inquire about available entry-level roles
 - Maintain regular follow up with key contacts – new opportunities come up all the time!
 - Utilize resources like LinkedIn, job posting sites to identify available roles
 - Attend meetings like AMCP Annual, AMCP Nexus, and network, network, network!

AMCP wishes you the best of luck!

Visit www.amcp.org/residencies for more resources