Tips for Preparing for Residency

Jen Garber, PharmD
PGY2 Critical Care Pharmacy Resident

Jeff Fish, PharmD, BCPS
Critical Care Pharmacist
References

• Generally 3 references, have a fourth backup
  – One manager
  – One professor
  – One preceptor
• Don’t just ask if they would be willing to write you a letter of recommendation
  – “Would you be willing to write a positive letter of recommendation in support of me pursuing a residency?”
References

• Give them the timeline for what they need to do up front, and give them due dates

• Start thinking about who you might want to ask now and throughout rotations
  – They generally have a lot of letters they may be asked to write, so give them plenty of heads-up time

• Give the reference writer specific examples
Preparing for Midyear

• Consider going to MY your 3rd year of pharmacy school
• Think about what you might be interested in pursuing (~October/November)
  – PGY2 interests/early commit potential?
  – Big city vs. smaller town?
  – Level 1 trauma center vs not necessary?
  – Large vs. smaller residency class?
  – Geographic area?
  – Connections with SOP?
• There is a searchable database on the ASHP website – use this to your advantage!
Preparing for Midyear

• Prior to midyear (Mid/late November), a map will be posted for the residency showcase
  – Highlight where each program that you want to speak with is in the room for the different sessions
  – Recommend working from the back to the front
Residency Showcase

- Get there about 5 minutes late
- Have 3-5 stock questions that you ask every program
- Have a few personalized questions for each program you plan to speak with
- Make sure gut feel is something you evaluate
- Look at the personalities of the residents you speak with
- Keep track of who you talked to
- Don’t stress out!
After Midyear

• Narrow down choices based on your interactions at the showcase
• Create a stock letter of intent that you can then customize for different programs
• Make a checklist of the specified requirements for each application
• Make note of the due dates!
  – Less than a month!
Interviews

• Be confident
• Have answers to standard interview questions
• Think about patient cases or situations that you could use for behavioral questions
  – Could be from class, volunteer experience, rotations, internship, etc.
General Tips

• Keep your CV up to date as you go through rotations – don’t fall behind!
• Have *many, many, many* people look at your CV and letter of intent
• Keep track of good patient cases/interactions that you may want to speak about during an interview