

# ERAS | THE FUTURE IN FOCUS

## ERAS® Updates For Orthopaedic Surgery

Cynthia Hutchinson, M.Ed., BSW  
February 12, 2025

# Agenda

1. ERAS Strategy Updates
2. Fee Assistance Program Outcomes
3. ERAS System Data
4. Outreach and Engagement
5. What's Next

# ERAS Strategy Updates

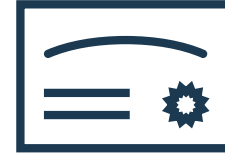
# The AAMC

Founded in 1876, we are a **not-for-profit association** dedicated to transforming health through medical education, health care, medical research, and community collaborations.



**173**

Accredited US & Canadian  
Medical Schools



**97,000+**

Medical Students



**490+**

Teaching Hospitals & Health Systems,  
Including Veteran Affairs Medical Centers



**158,000+**

Residents and Fellows



**70+**

Academic Societies



**201,000+**

Full-Time Faculty Members

# The AAMC

We are **built to serve** the academic medicine community in all that we do.

The work of the AAMC can be broadly categorized into three groups, each of which is funded by the services & support we provide and are critical to supporting our advocacy, research, and mission-related work.

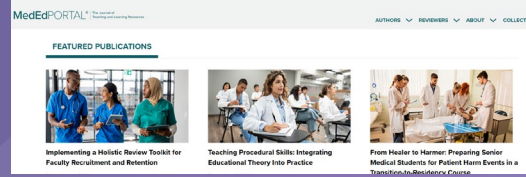


# What services & support do we provide?

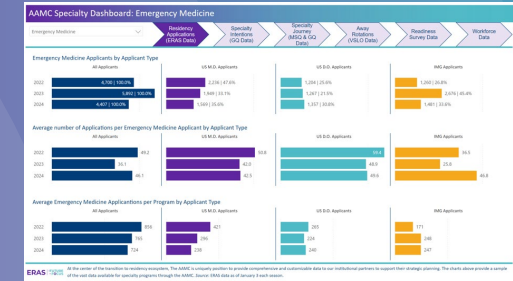
Partnerships with specialties, programs, and institutions make it possible to empower the Academic Medicine community with an **ecosystem** of **free** tools and resources.



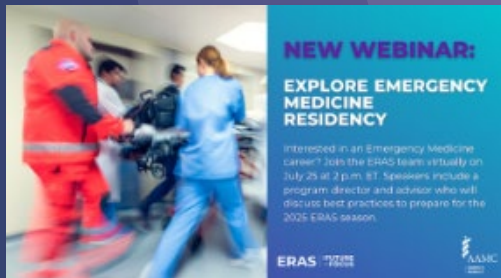
The Careers in Medicine® Website  
350,000 Users  
90% of MD Students



MedEd Portal  
Thousands of papers and ready-to-go workshops



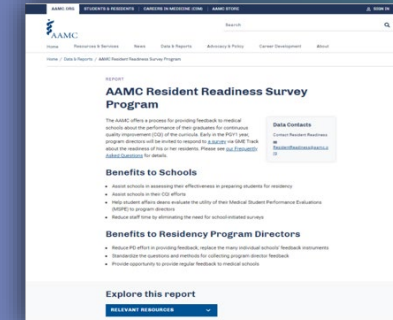
ERAS Data Reports, Statistics, & Dashboards  
Data sharing for applicants, advisors, Deans, Programs, and Institutions



Specialty Outreach  
Specialty-Specific  
Recruitment Webinars



The Residency Explorer™ Tool  
100,000+ Users



Resident Readiness Survey  
72% of all GME Programs  
Invited to Participate



# ERAS Strategic Focus

The ERAS system supports the development, recruitment, and selection of the future physician workforce



**Adaptable to the changing needs of the transition to residency**

- Cortex
- Thalamus Core
- Updated MyERAS Application



**Driving informed decision making by all parties**

- Cerebellum
- Residency Explorer Tool
- Careers in Medicine Website



**Innovating to address the biggest challenges**

- Specialty Spotlight Series
- Signaling Research
- Diminishing Returns



Combining People,  
Processes, and  
Proven Technology  
for Better  
Outcomes



# Our efforts make a positive impact on recruitment

- Reduced costs by 60% (\$2,031 to \$810) for Orthopaedic Surgery applicants between 2023 and 2025
- Reduced the average number of applications submitted by applicants to Orthopaedic Surgery by 22% between 2024 and 2025
- Increased ease of access for program management
  - Integrated EAM into PDWS (EPM tab)
  - Implemented a Single Sign On (SSO) between PDWS and Thalamus
- Piloted complementary Thalamus Cortex access for ERAS-participating Orthopaedic Surgery programs



# Fee Assistance Program Outcomes

# The AAMC Fee Assistance Program (FAP)



The AAMC and its members nurture and support over 97,000 medical students and 158,000 resident/fellow physicians through their medical education journey and beyond.

**\$27  
Million**

Annually to fee assistance to medical school, residency, and fellowship applicants

School Type	Total Ortho Sx Applicants	Total FAP Applicants	% FAP
DO	395	17	4.30%
IMG	177	6	3.39%
MD	1,262	128	10.14%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,834</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>8.23%</b>

As of January 15, 2025

AAMC's Fee Assistance Program provides up to \$558 in savings for FAP applicants

# ERAS Preliminary Data

As of January 22, 2025 unless otherwise noted

# Four Areas to Review



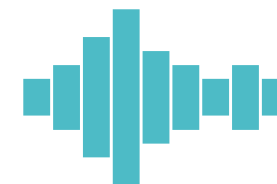
Geographic  
Preference



Program  
Signals



Application  
Volume



Survey  
Feedback

# Geographic Preference



## Geographic Preference

- A process to share geographic preferences that enhances accuracy and fairness.
- Communicates the importance of geography for an applicant to programs in applicant-selected region(s).
- Provides an opportunity to share preferences at a divisions and location settings.

AAMC is exploring changes to the geographic preferences in Jan-Mar 2025.  
Please let us know if you'd like to participate in focus groups by emailing  
[selectionresearch@aamc.org](mailto:selectionresearch@aamc.org).

# Applicant Use of Geographic Preferences

	#/Applicants	3 Divisions	2 Divisions	1 Division	No Preference
<b>DO</b>	395	61%	7%	5%	25%
<b>IMG</b>	172	43%	6%	6%	38%
<b>MD</b>	1,262	35%	3%	2%	56%
<b>Overall</b>	1,829	42%	4%	3%	48%

As of December 2, 2024

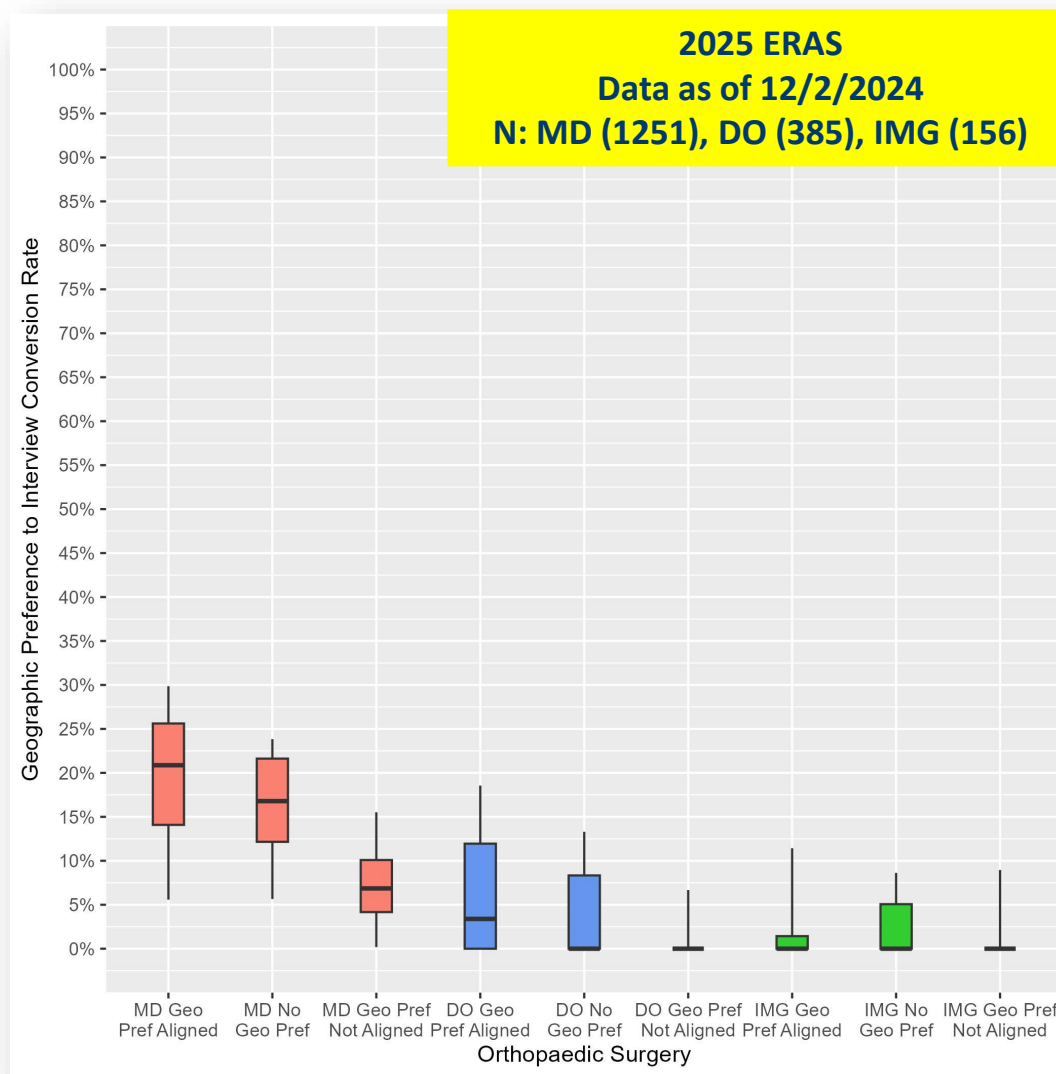
# Interview Rates by Geographic Preference & Applicant Type

## Median Interview Rates

Applicant Type	Aligned	No Geo Pref	Not Aligned
MD	21%	17%	7%
DO	3%	0%	0%
IMG	0%	0%	0%

As of December 2, 2024

Interpret results with caution: (a) small DO and IMG sample sizes at the program level and (b) analyses do not control for all factors considered in the selection process





# Program Signals



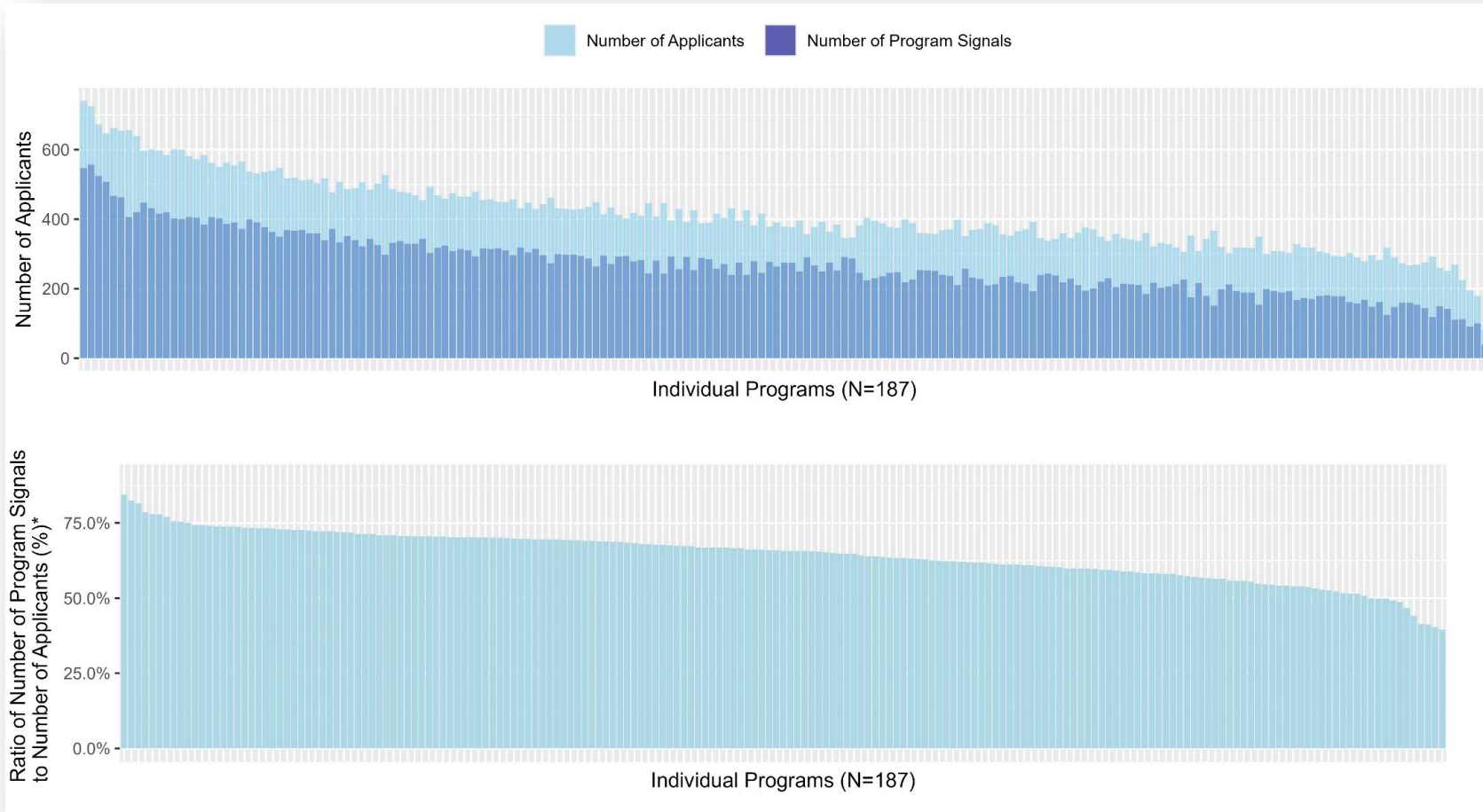
Geographic  
Preference



Program  
Signals

- A process to share interest in a program that enhances interest and fairness.
- Applicants to Orthopaedic Surgery programs can signal up to 30 programs
- 187 of 199 Orthopaedic Surgery programs participated in Program Signaling in 2025 ERAS Cycle
- 105 of these programs were included in the following analysis

# Distribution of Signals



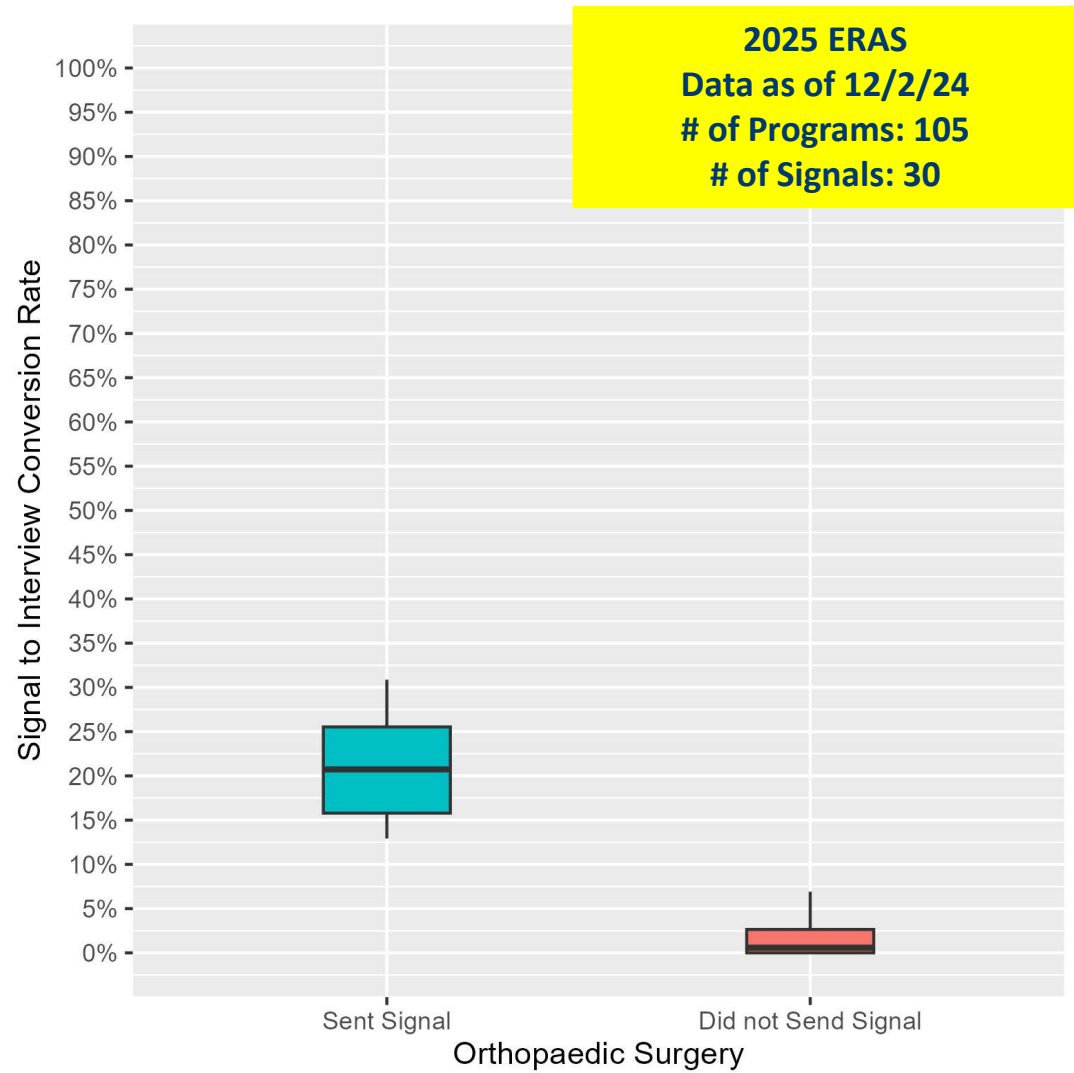
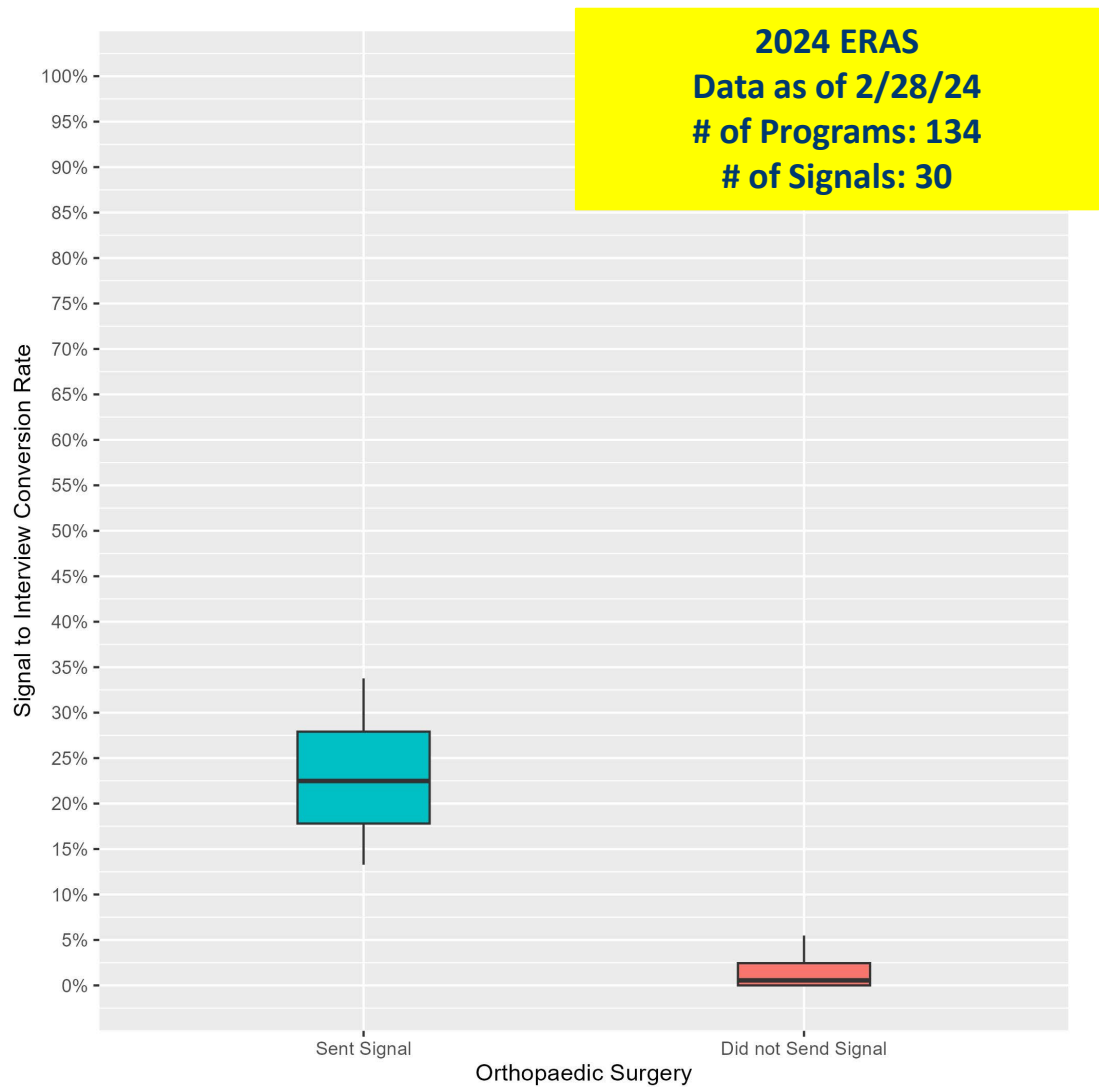
**Signal Distribution Statistics:**  
Signals (Total: 30)

- Mean: 269.5 (SD = 89.8)
- Range: 39 – 557

18 programs received 16% of all signals

As of December 2, 2024

# Interview Rates by Program Signal Status Year Over Year Comparison



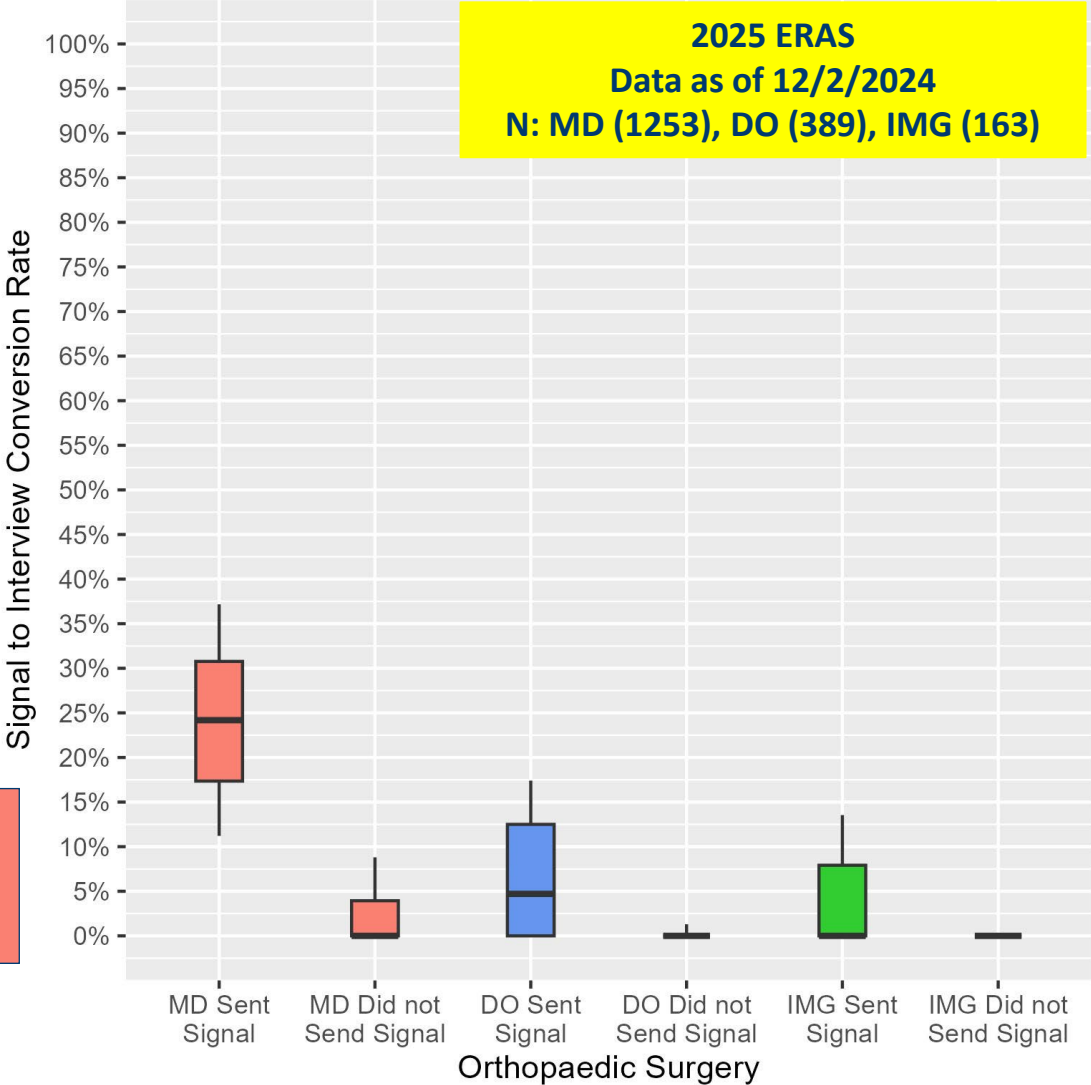
# Interview Rates by Program Signal Status & Applicant Type

## Median Interview Rates

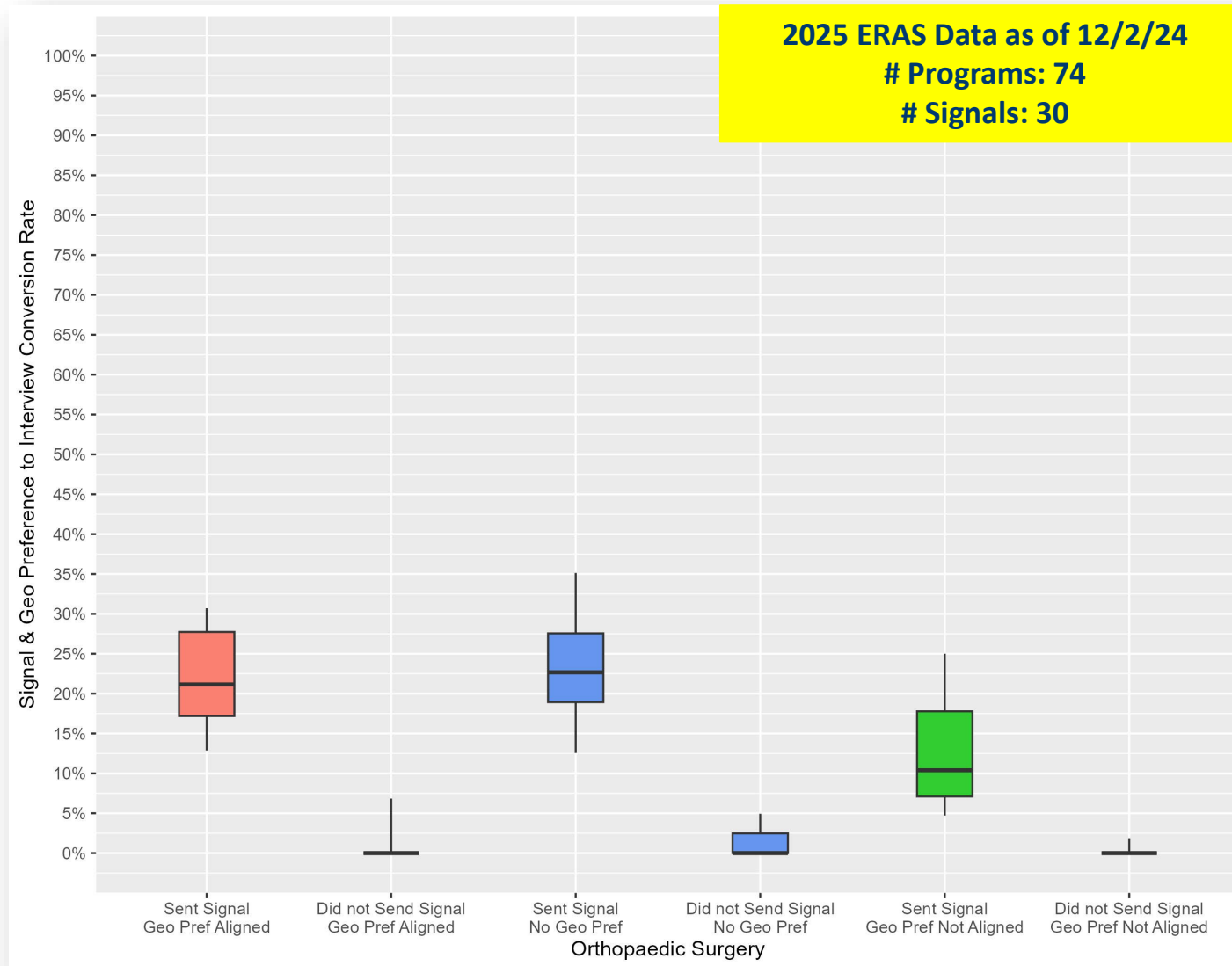
Applicant Type	Signal	No Signal
MD	24%	0%
DO	5%	0%
IMG	0%	0%

As of December 2, 2024

**CAUTION:** Interpret results with caution: (a) small DO and IMG sample sizes at the program level and (b) analyses do not control for all factors considered in the selection process.



# Interview Rates by Program Signal and Geographic Preference



# Key Takeaways

## Signal Effect

Interview invitation rates are significantly higher for applicants who signaled compared to those who did not (21% vs 1%). In Orthopaedic Surgery, non-signaling applicants were particularly unlikely to receive interviews.

## Applicant Type

The signaling effect is strongest for MD applicants (24%), with a smaller effect for DO applicants (5%). IMG applicants show no clear benefit from signaling, though small sample sizes warrant careful interpretation.

## Signal x Geographic Preference

Applicants who signaled and had either aligned geographic preferences or no preference were interviewed at the highest rates (21-23%). While unaligned preferences with signals still achieved notable rates (10%), non-signaled applications received near-zero interview rates regardless of geographic alignment.

# Application Volume



Geographic  
Preference



Program  
Signals



Application  
Volume



Survey  
Feedback

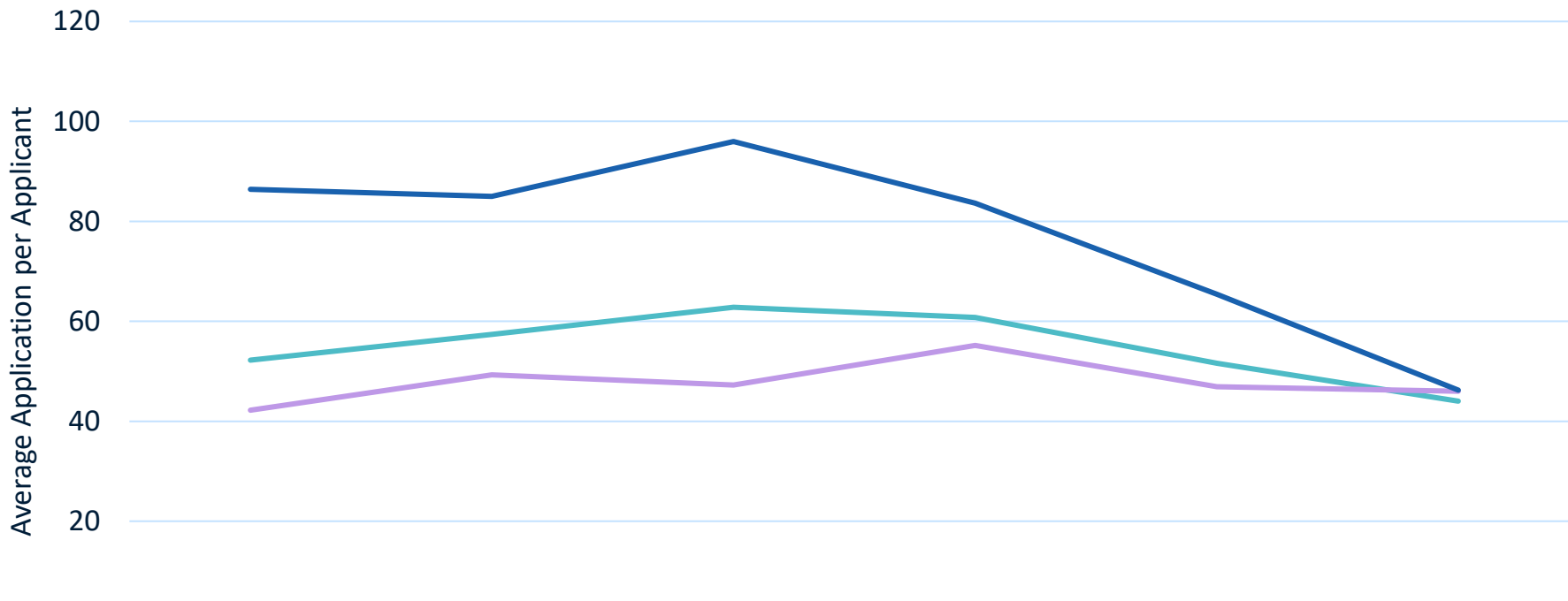


# Applicant and Application Totals by ERAS Season

ERAS Season	Total # of Applicant	Total # of Applications	% Difference, Total Applications
2020	1,465	110,095	N/A
2021	1,528	117,127	6% ↑
2022	1,739	149,490	28% ↑
2023	1,763	128,564	-14% ↓
2024	1,764	107,384	-16% ↓
2025	1,834	83,874	-22% ↓

As of January 22, 2025

# Average # of Applications per Applicant by ERAS Season

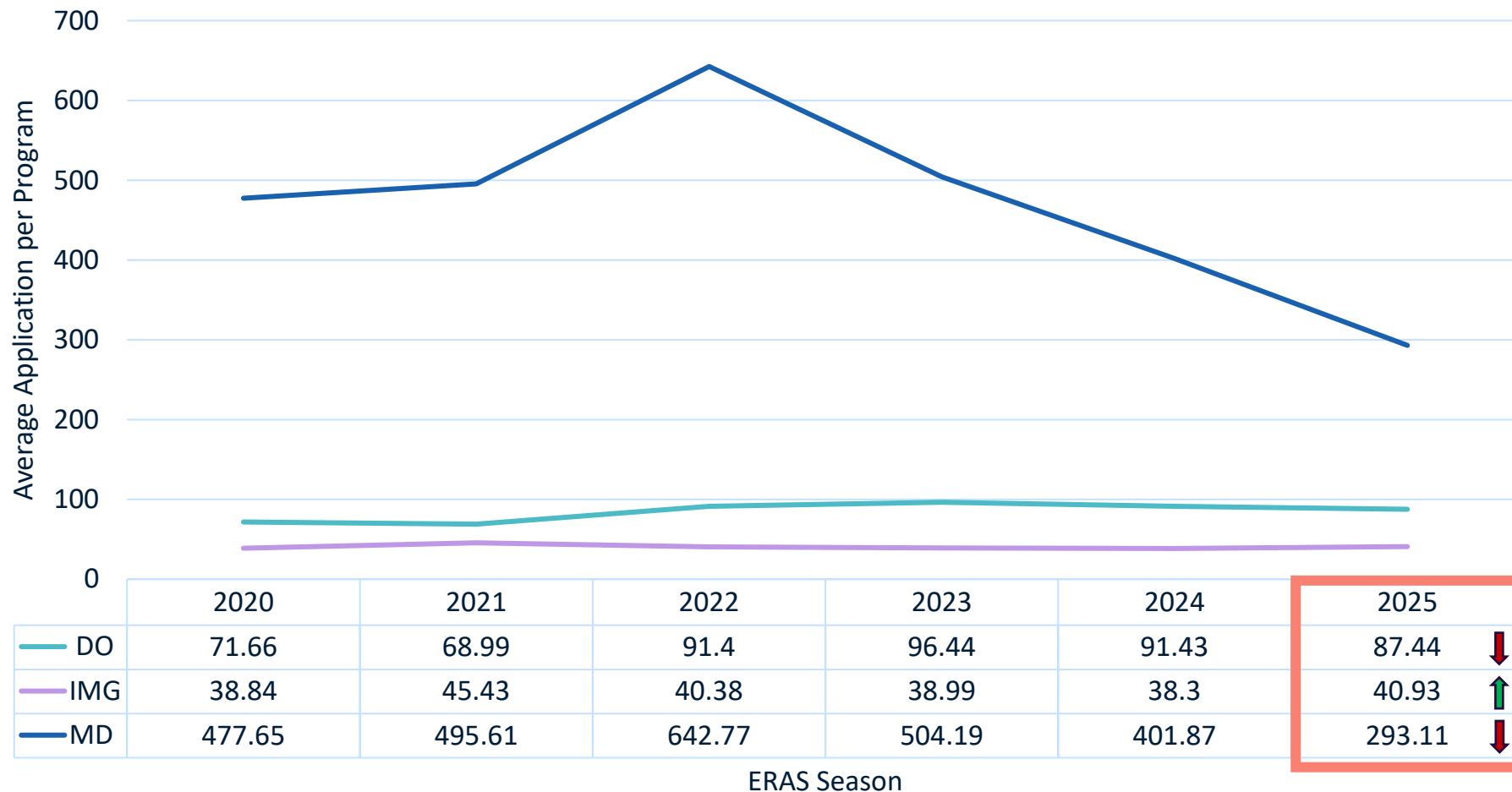


	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
DO	52.22	57.35	62.78	60.77	51.59	44.05 ↓
IMG	42.21	49.28	47.24	55.18	46.89	46.02 ↓
MD	86.38	84.96	95.94	83.62	65.41	46.22 ↓

ERAS Season

As of January 22, 2025

# Average # of Applications Received by Programs



As of January 22, 2025

# Cross-Specialty Applicants

Specialty	#/Cross-applied Applicants
Orthopaedic Surgery	1829
General Surgery (Cat)	243
General Surgery (Prelim)	205
Internal Medicine (Cat)	128
Transitional Year	96
Family Medicine	93
Emergency Medicine	91
Anesthesiology	63
Internal Medicine (Prelim)	60
Diagnostic Radiology	50
Physical Medicine & Rehab	40
Pediatrics	17
Psychiatry	16
Neurology	13
Dermatology	6
Otolaryngology	6
Pathology	5
Radiation Oncology	4
Internal Medicine/Pediatrics	3
Public Health/Preventive Med	2
Nuclear Medicine	0

As of December 2, 2024

The most common specialties that Orthopaedic Surgery applicants cross-applied to during the 2025 ERAS Cycle were:

1. General Surgery (Categorical and Preliminary)
2. Internal Medicine (Categorical)
3. Transitional Year
4. Family Medicine
5. Emergency Medicine

# Survey Feedback



Geographic  
Preference



Program  
Signals

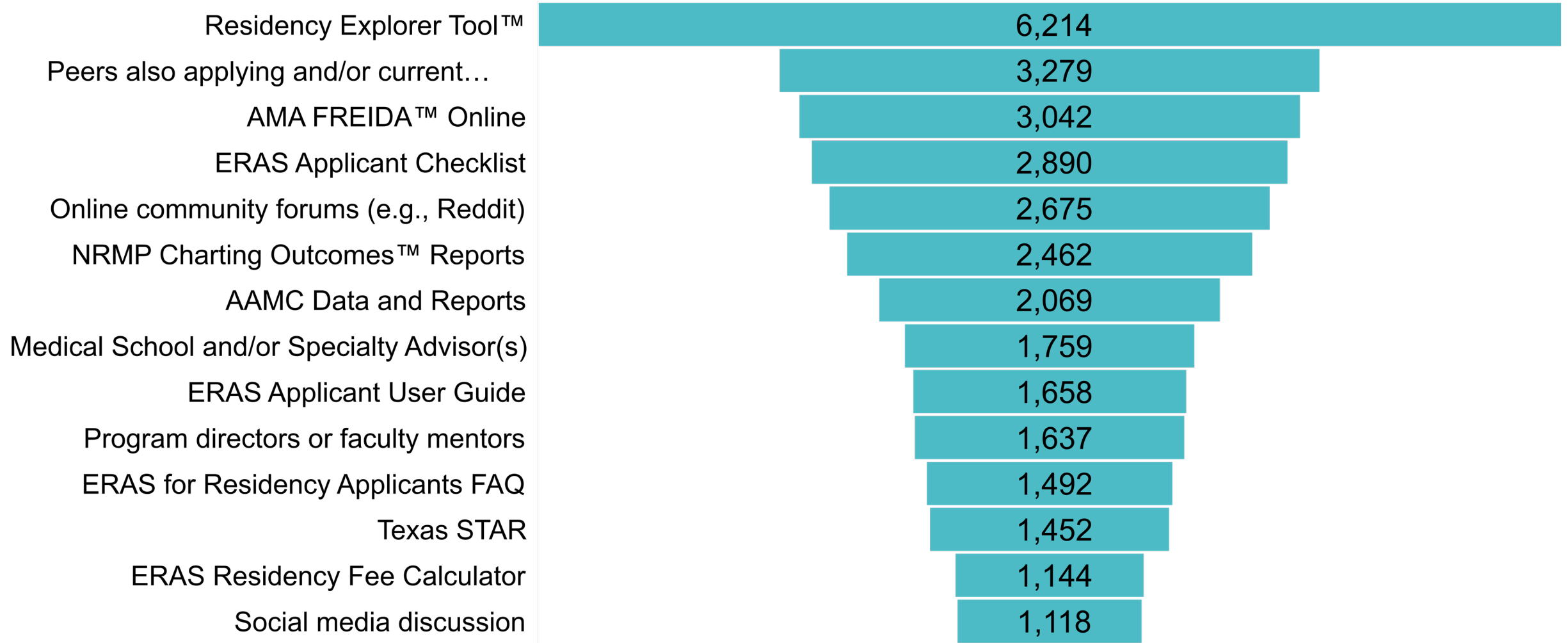


Application  
Volume



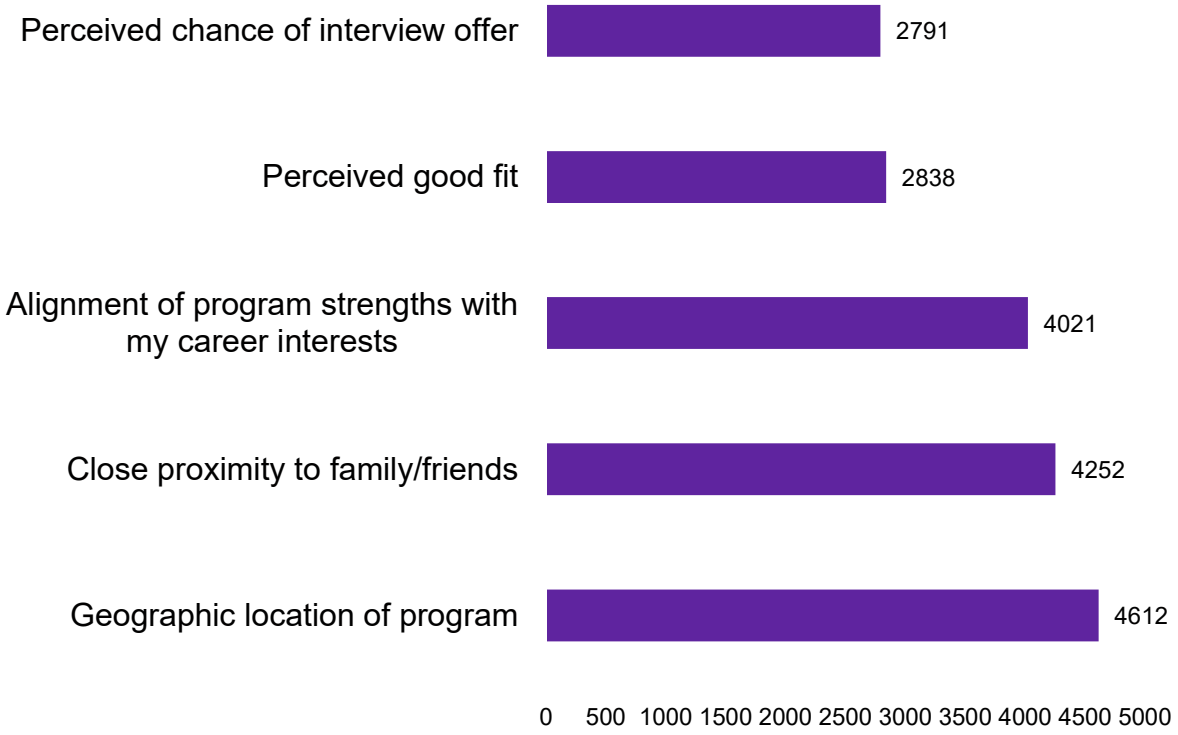
**Survey  
Feedback**

# What tools did applicants find most useful?

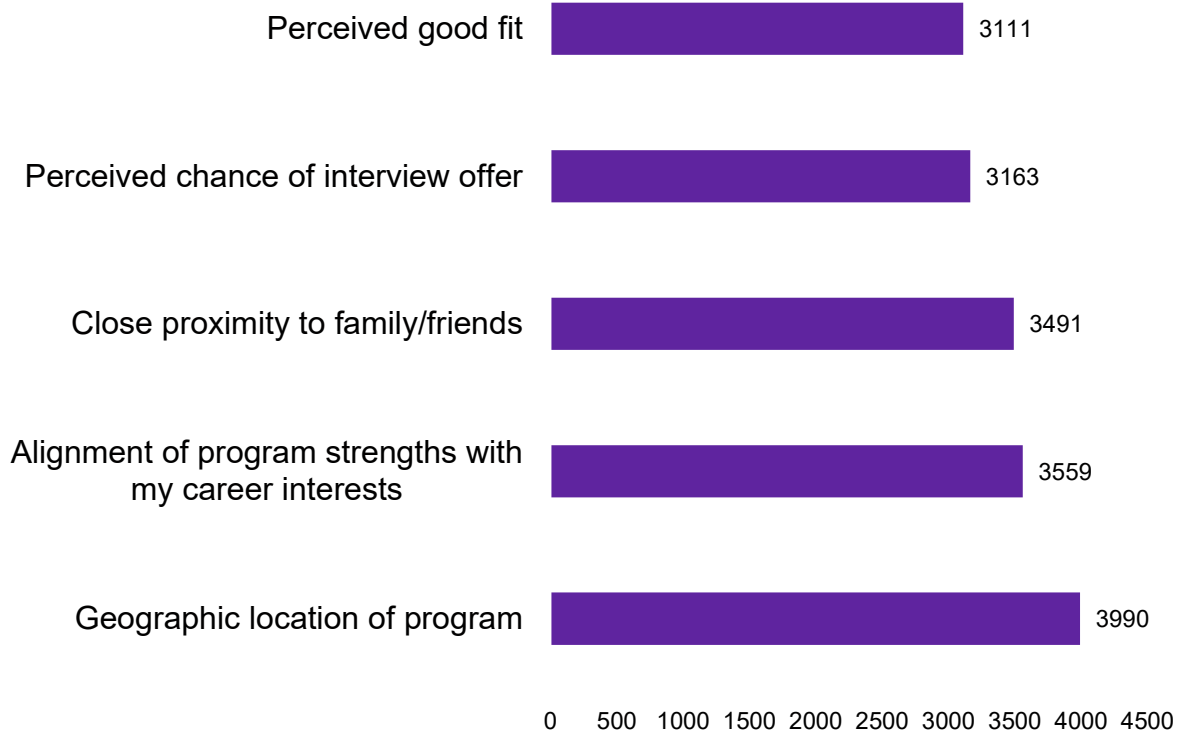


# What factors were most influential in choosing...

## Where to Apply

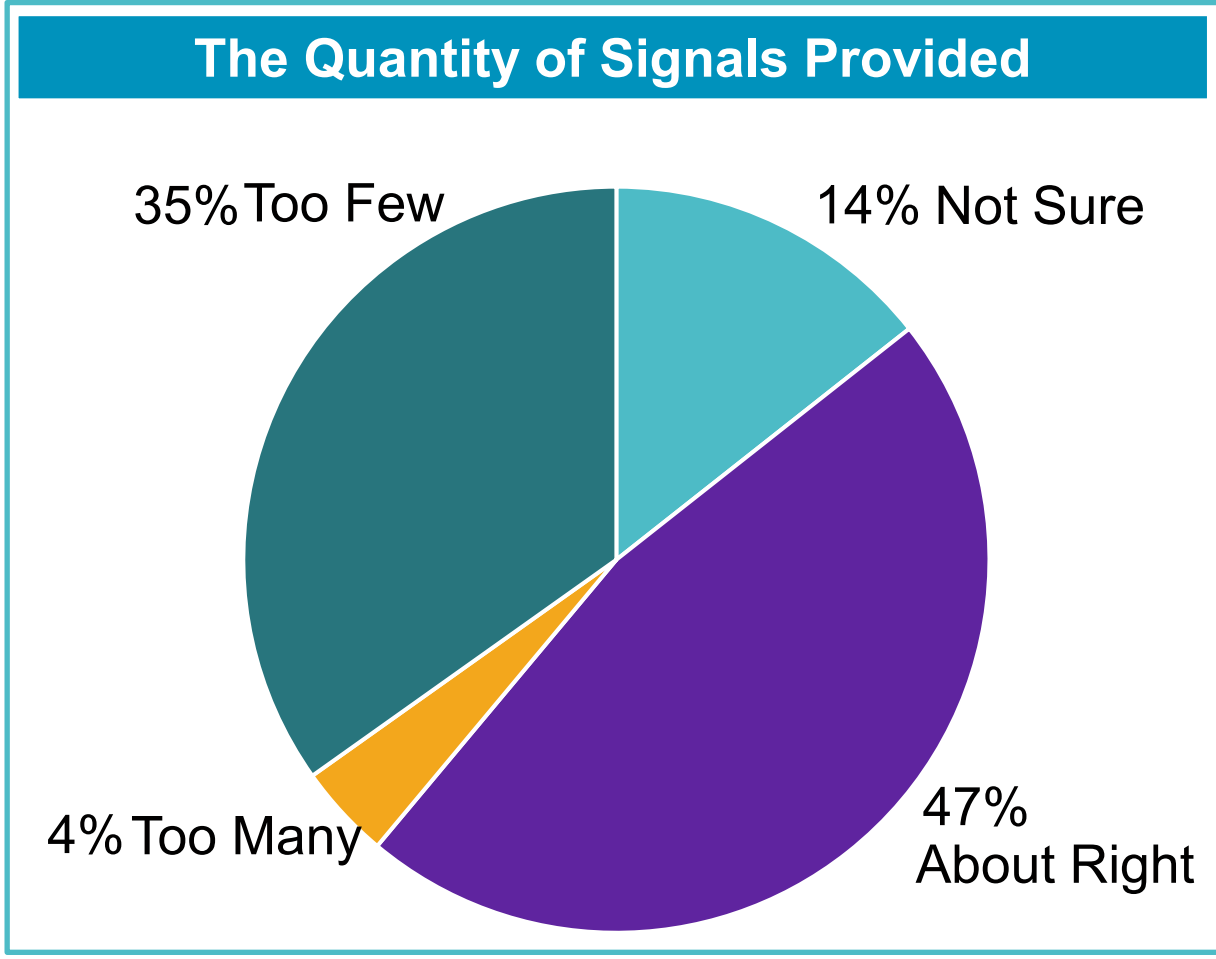
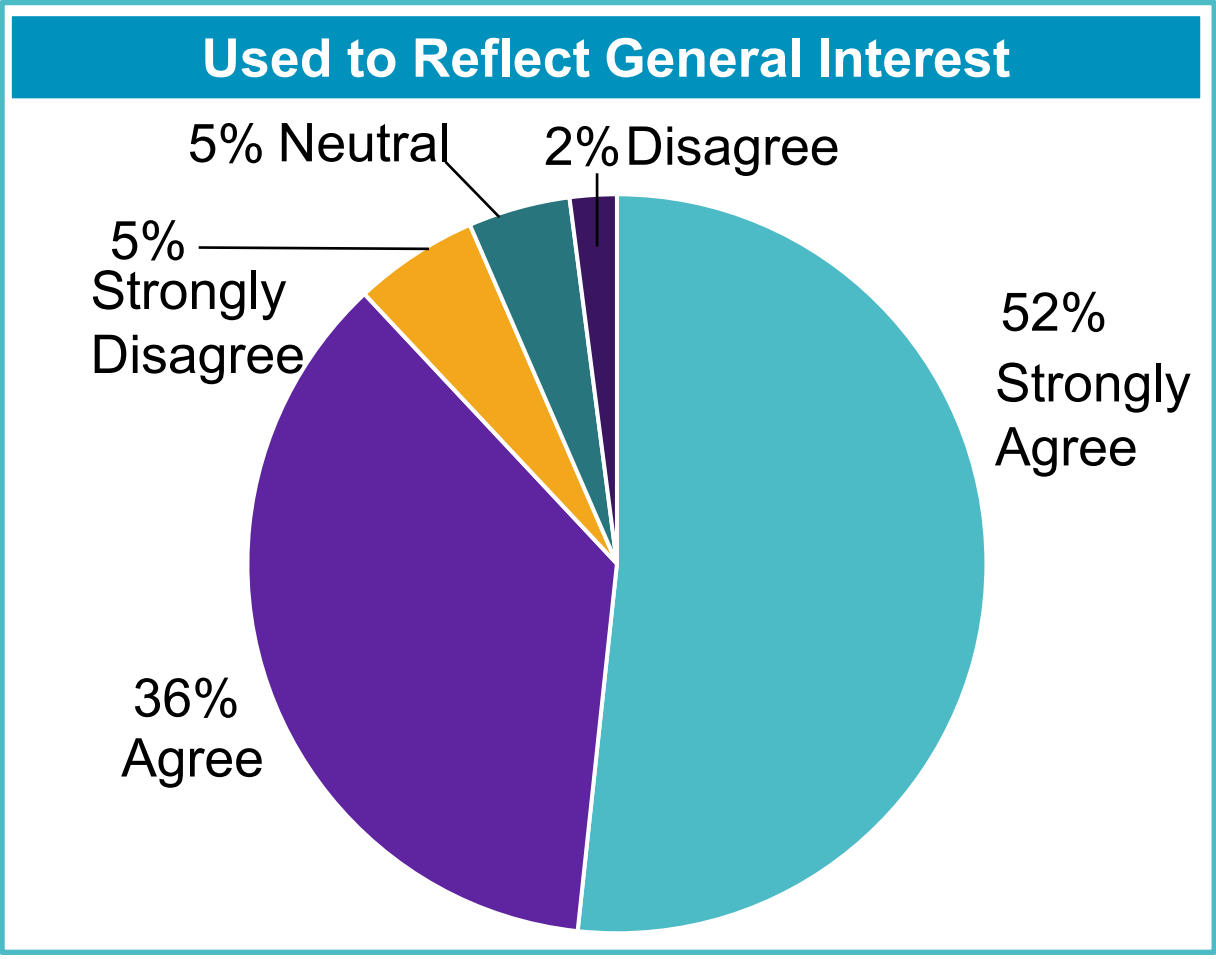


## Whom to Signal



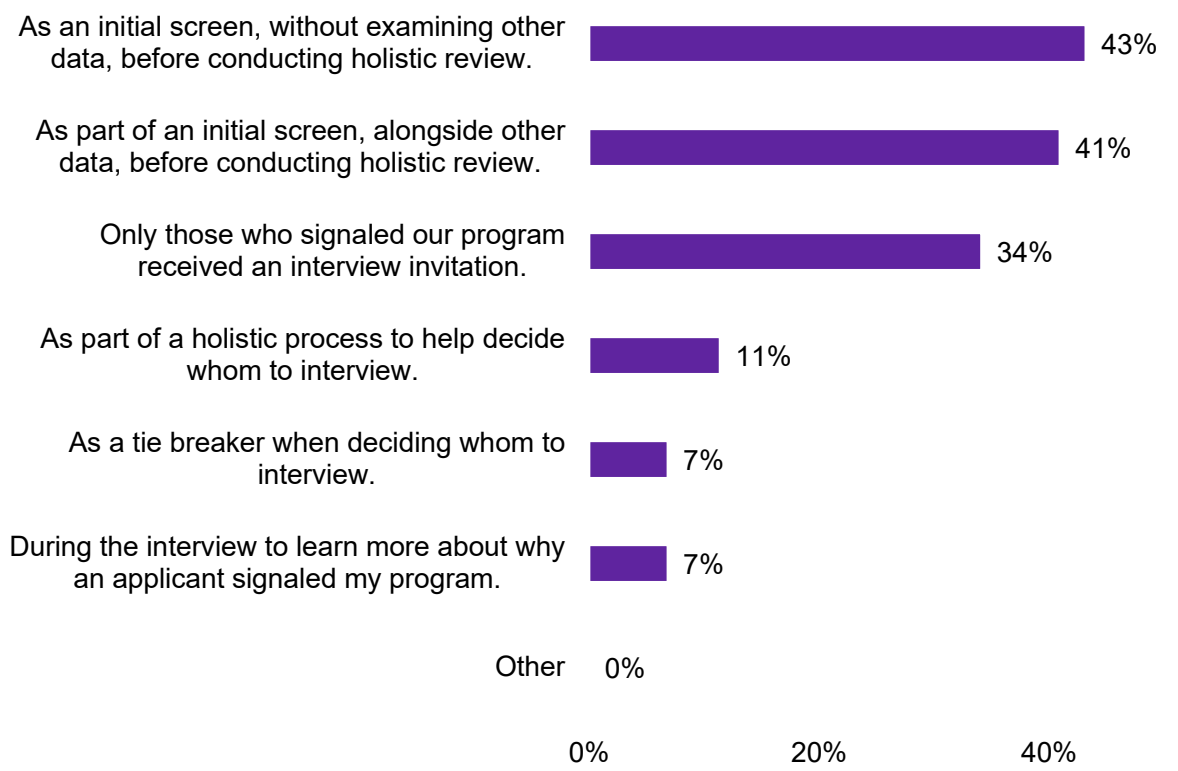


# Applicant Use and Perception of Program Signals

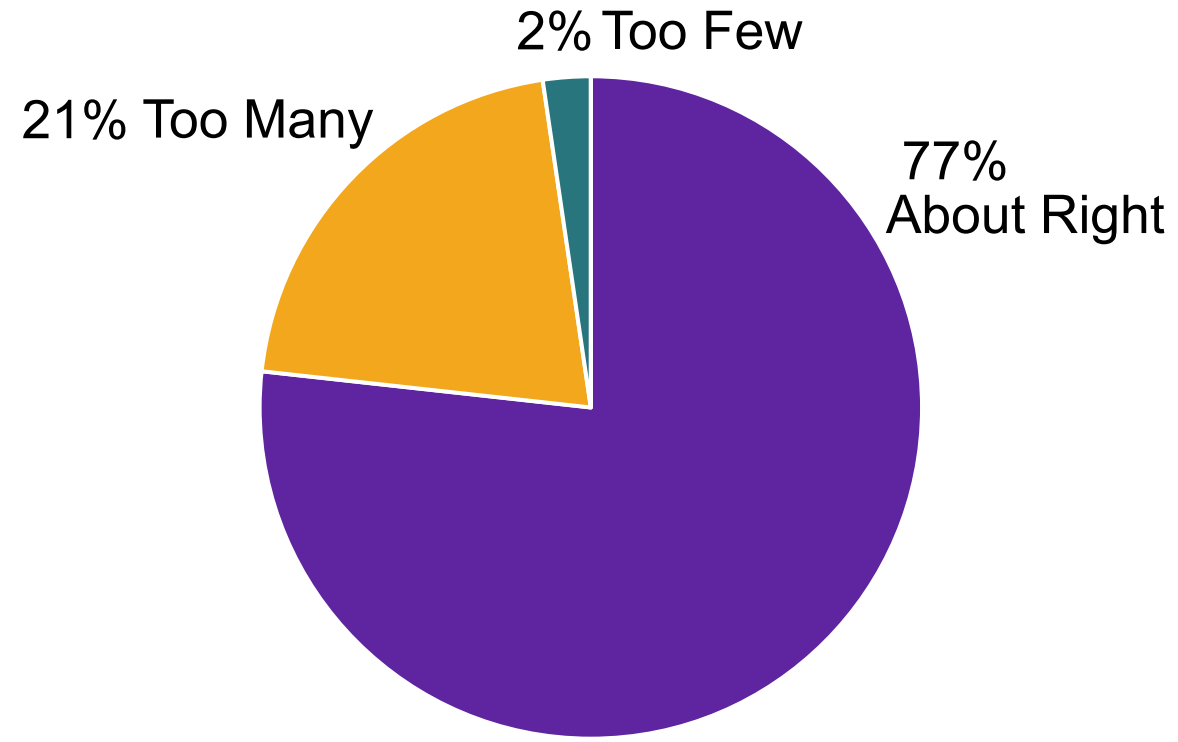


# Program Use and Perception of Program Signals

## How Signals were Used



## The Quantity of Signals Provided



# Outreach & Engagement

# Upcoming Opportunities

- **Now:** Drop by our booth in the Exhibitor's Hall
- **February 20-22:** Visit our booth at the ACGME Conference
- **February 25 @ 1pm ET:** Using the PDWS During SOAP® Webinar
- **Now through March 2025:** Geographic Preference Focus Groups
- **April 3 @ 6pm ET:** AAMC Virtual Specialty Forum for medical students and residents to view resources and live chat with AAMC staff and physicians in their fields of interest

# ERAS Updates and Resources



**Subscribe!**

**ERAS Insights Newsletter**



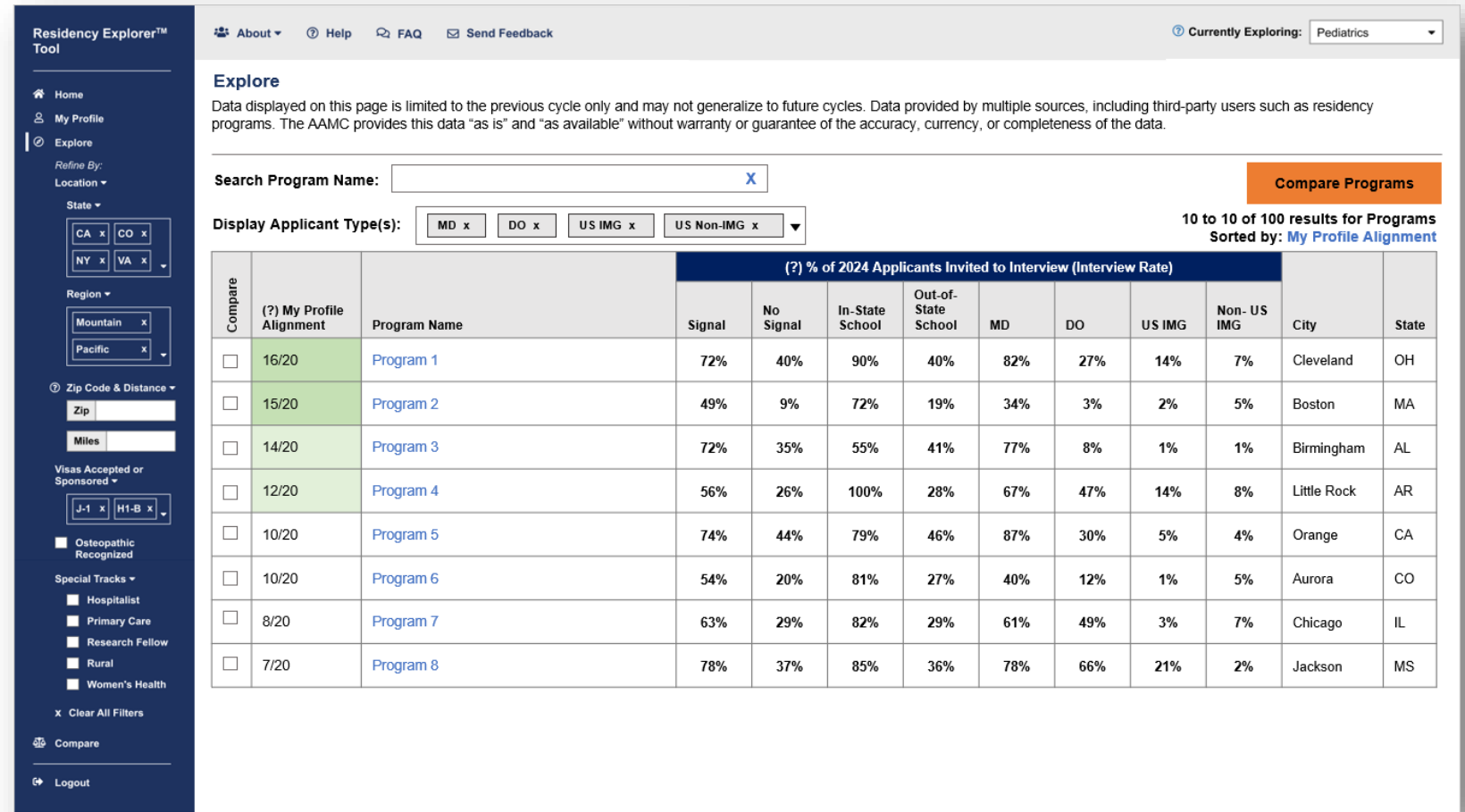
**ERAS Stats & Preliminary Data**

# What's Next?

# Residency Explorer Tool™

Co-sponsored by 9 different entities, this tool synthesizes data from AAMC, the AMA GMETrack Survey, NBOME, and Thalamus to provide applicants comparative analysis of program offerings.

With more information at their fingertips, applicants can apply selectively to programs that fit their specific needs.



**Residency Explorer™ Tool**

Home | My Profile | Explore

Refine By:

- Location
  - State: CA x, CO x, NY x, VA x
  - Region: Mountain x, Pacific x
- Zip Code & Distance
  - Zip: [ ]
  - Miles: [ ]
- Visas Accepted or Sponsored: J-1 x, H1-B x
- Osteopathic Recognized:
- Special Tracks
  - Hospitalist:
  - Primary Care:
  - Research Fellow:
  - Rural:
  - Women's Health:

Clear All Filters

Compare | Logout

About | Help | FAQ | Send Feedback

Currently Exploring: Pediatrics

### Explore

Data displayed on this page is limited to the previous cycle only and may not generalize to future cycles. Data provided by multiple sources, including third-party users such as residency programs. The AAMC provides this data "as is" and "as available" without warranty or guarantee of the accuracy, currency, or completeness of the data.

Search Program Name: [ ] X

Compare Programs

Display Applicant Type(s): MD x, DO x, US IMG x, US Non-IMG x

10 to 10 of 100 results for Programs  
Sorted by: My Profile Alignment

Compare	(?) My Profile Alignment	Program Name	(?) % of 2024 Applicants Invited to Interview (Interview Rate)								City	State
			Signal	No Signal	In-State School	Out-of-State School	MD	DO	US IMG	Non-US IMG		
<input type="checkbox"/>	16/20	Program 1	72%	40%	90%	40%	82%	27%	14%	7%	Cleveland	OH
<input type="checkbox"/>	15/20	Program 2	49%	9%	72%	19%	34%	3%	2%	5%	Boston	MA
<input type="checkbox"/>	14/20	Program 3	72%	35%	55%	41%	77%	8%	1%	1%	Birmingham	AL
<input type="checkbox"/>	12/20	Program 4	56%	26%	100%	28%	67%	47%	14%	8%	Little Rock	AR
<input type="checkbox"/>	10/20	Program 5	74%	44%	79%	46%	87%	30%	5%	4%	Orange	CA
<input type="checkbox"/>	10/20	Program 6	54%	20%	81%	27%	40%	12%	1%	5%	Aurora	CO
<input type="checkbox"/>	8/20	Program 7	63%	29%	82%	29%	61%	49%	3%	7%	Chicago	IL
<input type="checkbox"/>	7/20	Program 8	78%	37%	85%	36%	78%	66%	21%	2%	Jackson	MS



# Source-Verified Data from National Organizations

## ERAS Application Data

- Reported by applicants via the **AAMC ERAS application**

## USMLE and COMLEX Exam Data

- USMLE and COMLEX-USA data reported by the **NBME and NBOME programs**

## Interview Invitation Data

- Invitations documented by programs in **Thalamus Core**

## Match Outcomes

- Positions offered and filled reported by the **NRMP**

## Program Characteristics & Offerings

- Reported by programs and confirmed by institutions via the **ACGME ADS**
- Reported by programs via the **GME National Census Survey and Resident Roster Certification** jointly administered by the **AAMC and AMA**

# 2026 ERAS Updates

Automatic “Opt-In” to Program Signals



Automatic “Opt-In” to Thalamus



Complimentary Access to Cortex

“Matched” from Thalamus = “Will Start” in ERAS



# 2026 ERAS Cycle Pilots



Geographic Preference  
Opt-Out at  
Specialty-level



Short Answer Specialty-  
Specific Questions  
Integration



Standard Letters of  
Evaluation (SLOE)  
Integration

# ERAS Approach to Continuous Innovation



- Partnership with specialties around recruitment for pilot programs
- Focus groups with advisors, programs, applicants, and institutions
- Fee assistance to applicants and complimentary Cortex/Thalamus access to programs
- Many more innovations through the AAMC-Thalamus collaboration