

To all Educational Supervisors and trainees interested in Rheumatology

Thursday, 03 February 2011

Dear all,

CSAC (Rheumatology) met recently and we reflected on this year's Grid process. We thought it would be helpful to feedback a few key points to all trainees and their educational supervisors about the Grid process which is quite complex and has changed considerable in the last few years.

1. The increasing number of applicants to the rheumatology Grid, year on year, is very positive for specialty.
2. The Grid application, short listing and interview process is organized centrally by the College (and not CSAC).
3. Successful appointment to the Grid is dependent on applicants reaching a minimum "standard" preset by the College with assessment being made by short listing and interview.
  - a. The appointment panel comprises a non-rheumatology specialty Chair who has voting rights and a lay observer (non-voting) appointed by College to oversee the process and clarify that the standard for each Grid appointment panel is appropriate and comparable with other specialties. The CSAC Chair and two training advisors also sit on the panel.
  - b. The applications for short listing are anonymised and assessed independently by the voting panel members using the domains and marking schemes used for all Grid specialties and preset by College.
  - c. All interview scores are made independently by voting panel members and collated by College on the day with the short listing score contributing to the final ranking.
  - d. Only those above the preset standard are offered places on the Grid – the aim is not to fill all available posts but appoint high quality applicants to the national training [Grid] programme. The number of appointments made is determined by the number of posts available nationally, the applicant scores being above the standard set by College and the choices made by the applicant - it is worth pointing out that applicants who restrict their choice to one centre may not be appointed (even if they are above the standard) as a higher ranked applicants will get their first choice if more than one applicant chooses the same centre. Therefore candidates should consider this carefully in their application process and give as many choices as possible.

4. The appointment panel have “no say” in where successful applicants are placed on the Grid – this is the choice of the applicant; (top ranked gets their first choice) - and the panel has no knowledge of the applicants choice of rotation at the time of interview. CSAC finds out the result of the placements from College after the day of the interview, usually only a few days before the applicants get to know - College target is to inform candidates within 2 weeks after the interview.

5. For centres where posts were not filled on this occasion, we are sorry that we have not been able to match a trainee with available programme posts. We do hope that the post will be submitted to the programme again next year, as we definitely need to continue to expand paediatric rheumatology training opportunities. There is always variation each year regarding where trainees choose to want to train - the best way to ensure that a programme is filled is to enthuse local trainees into applying and supporting them in their application and preparation for interview.

6. For those applicants who were not appointed to the Grid, the process for feedback is firstly to approach College and then CSAC. However CSAC is not able to comment on individual applications received as these were anonymised. It is advisable that unsuccessful candidates get further advice from their Regional Advisor and Educational Supervisor. Unsuccessful applicants may reapply to the Grid the following year if they have the required time remaining before CCT date and after consultation with their Educational Supervisor. They will not be able to transfer Deaneries to take up unfilled Grid posts based on training needs.

7. Once the appointments are made, College has responsibility to inform the Deanery Head of School, Regional advisor and Programme Director about placements and where positions were not appointed to. CSAC does recommend however that trainees and their educational supervisors also ensure that the Regional Advisors are aware and especially if they are to rotate to another Deanery for their second placement.

CSAC is meeting all Grid trainees and other trainees interested in rheumatology shortly at the annual trainees meeting in Edinburgh.

We will be holding a Q&A session and emphasise the points made above.

We hope that these comments are helpful and if there are any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch with any member of CSAC or Ms Emma Jones, Grid administrator on behalf of the College [emma.jones@rcpch.ac.uk].

Best wishes and yours sincerely,



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