I. Interview Structure, Timing & Administrative Logistics

Platform: Zoom; Thalamus | Interview Length: 15 – 20 minutes| Timing: Early morning time slots for east coast applicants, later time slots for west coast applicants.

- **Identify an Appropriate Environment.** Find a quiet, well-lit space where you can conduct the interview.   The space should be free of distractions, make sure you have control over the background noise.
- **Make the most of virtual platform features.** Utilize breakout rooms for interviews and/or small group info-sessions. Use 'Pin Video' function to keep video on applicant as opposed to the person who is talking. Disable 'Automatic Stop' of scheduled meetings to prevent an abrupt stop to interview.
- **Build in breaks between interviews.** The most organized interview days build in 5 – 10 minutes between each interview. Administrator should prompt interviewer(s) and applicant at 5 min. and 1 min. mark.
  - Tip: Maximum number of back-to-back mini interviews: 6 – 7 per applicant.
- **Include multiple interviewers per session.** This helps to build rapport and creates a dynamic interview experience. The recommended ratio is 2 – 3 interviewers to 1 applicant.
  - Tip: Have current residents/trainees ask pre-interview questions.
- **Implement real-time scoring.** Use a platform such as Google Sheets to allow for real-time scoring in a centralized location.
  - Tip: Administrator should black out scores immediately after entry to maintain interviewers' impartiality.
- **Plan ahead and practice.** Weekly administrative test runs leading up to your program's interview season minimizes technical difficulties and make interview days as seamless as possible.
  - Check your microphone and camera to make sure they're working well and that both the picture and sound are good quality.
  - Check your internet speed.
  - Note how the camera and microphone are positioned so you can recreate a setup that works when you log in to the system to complete your actual interview.
  - Make a trial call to someone you know to practice using the software program you will use for the interview and collect feedback on your audio and video.

  Tip: Dedicate 1 – 2 administrators to run point behind the scenes.

II. Integrating Diversity, Inclusion & Equity into Interview Day

- **Standardize interview questions and evaluation criteria.** Interview committee should discuss and agree on criteria to be used for selecting trainees (holistic review). It is also best practice to articulate concrete examples for positive and negative evaluations.
  - Review any documents relevant to how you will run the interview, including an interview script, possible or required interview questions, any competency definitions, or descriptions of rating scales.
  - Be sure the following materials are available to you:
    - Login information (if applicable).

- ▪ Welcome script.
- ▪ Interview questions.
- ▪ Applicant's contact information (as a backup option if you are disconnected

Tip: Provide a facilitator/referee who does not vote on candidates but ensures agreed upon steps are implemented.

- **Get familiar with your unconscious bias.** We all have it, but preempting biases ensures a more equitable selection process.
  - o Tip: Watch the AAMC's unconscious bias [video](#) with your team prior to interview season.
- **Interview committee should reflect diversity of desired residency class.** This includes diversity of age, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, personality style, professional focus and level of training.
- **Use interview space to demonstrate a visual commitment to diversity and equity.** This can be something as simple as adding the pride flag in camera's view. Additionally, consider offering a standardized background for all interview candidates.
  - o Tip: Add your pronouns into your Zoom title. Learn how to do so by following the instructions [here.](#)
- **Build DE&I information and resources into interview day.** Discuss what your program is currently doing to enhance its' commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism. MGH and BWH Center for Diversity & Inclusion (CDI) will offer drop-in hours for applicants throughout the interview season. Additionally, CDI will provide DE&I resource packets to be distributed to all applicants.

III. Enhancing the Virtual Interview Experience

- **Host a pre-interview event.** As an applicant, a pre-interview event is crucial to getting a good feel for a program. 7 – 9pm EST is an ideal time to accommodate west coast applicants and those who may be coming off their day shift.
  - o Tip: Host a virtual pre-interview dinner. If possible, consider providing UberEats/GrubHub/etc. credit for applicants in advance – food is always a nice touch!
- **Build out an agenda.** A mix between structured time to talk about your program and unstructured time for applicants to ask questions works best. Arranging dedicated time with current residents/trainees, such as a post-interview Q&A, has also worked well.
- **Conducting the Interview**
  - o Welcome the person in a friendly manner.
  - o Confirm the applicant can both see and hear you.
  - o Introduce yourself, giving your name and title.
  - o Acknowledge the unusual circumstance and thank the applicant for being flexible. This may be the applicant's first virtual interview, and this simple acknowledgement may help them feel more comfortable.
  - o Remind the applicant how long the interview will take.
  - o If you plan to take notes during the interview, tell the applicant before you begin the interview. Explain that taking notes helps to ensure you remember responses

accurately. You might also note that taking notes may limit your eye contact, but they should not interpret this as a lack of interest in their response.

- o If you know you might be interrupted during the interview by a call or urgent matter, tell the applicant about that possibility before you begin the interview.
- o Allot time for the applicant to ask questions

Thank the applicant for their time, and tell them about next steps, if appropriate

- o Tip: Ask applicants to submit questions prior to interview day.

- **Add a video tour.** Program-specific video tours help applicants to envision the hospital campus and Boston area. These can be formal or informal depending on the amount of time and resources available to you. The GME
- **Invite applicants to attend CDI's Virtual Receptions.** MGH and BWH Center for Diversity & Inclusion (CDI) will host virtual receptions throughout the interview season catered toward applicants who are underrepresented in medicine (URiM). More information forthcoming.