

# Internal medicine residency, fellowship applications up during pandemic

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(HealthDay)—The number of applicants and number of applications

submitted per applicant to internal medicine (IM) residency and most subspecialty fellowships for 2021 were higher than in previous application cycles, according to a research letter published online April 28 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Laura A. Huppert, M.D., from the University of California at San Francisco, and colleagues used Electronic Residency Application Service application data (2016 to 2021) for IM [residency](#) and 11 subspecialty fellowships to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic compared with the five prior application cycles.

The researchers found that for IM residency, the number of applicants increased every year, from 21,947 applicants in 2016 to 24,509 applicants in 2021. There was a 6.0 percent annual increase from 2020 to 2021, which was more than twice the rate of [annual increase](#) in any prior year studied. With the exception of gastroenterology for 2020 to 2021, the number of applicants for IM subspecialty fellowships increased for all subspecialties between 2016 and 2021 (with year-to-year variation) and between 2020 and 2021. In 2021, the mean number of applications submitted per applicant increased for all programs, except geriatric medicine.

"We hypothesize that the increase in the number of applicants may be associated with a lower barrier to apply because of decreased time and costs related to virtual interviews or because fellowship training offered more short-term job security in the setting of widespread hiring freezes," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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