# Table of Contents

NYU Residents – Most Common Interview Questions 1

NYU Residents – Questions to Ask your Interviewers 2

Residency Interview Organizer 3

Residency Evaluation Checklist 4

AAMC Website

Acing the Interview 5-7

Frequently Asked Interview Questions 8

What to Ask During the Residency Interview 9-11
NYU Residents – Most Common Interview Questions

1. What is your background–birthplace, type of education, occupation of parents?
2. What individual(s) do you consider to have been most influential in your life?
3. How did you become interested in medicine?
4. How did you become interested in your specific discipline?
5. How did you counter the arguments of those who told you this was not the best career choice because of erratic work hours and high malpractice liability?
6. What strengths will you bring to a residency program? Conversely, what are the personal weaknesses that you would like to correct?
7. What are your plans after residency? i.e., private practice, fellowship training, academic medicine, research?
8. What activities do you pursue outside of medicine to maintain balance in your life?
9. What role did you play in the research project(s) cited in your C.V.? What is your understanding of the purpose and major findings of this research project?
10. How do you spend a typical weekend day? (Tells about hobbies/passions)
11. What solutions or ideas would you offer to solve a social problem – aids epidemic, universal health care?
12. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
13. Any question relating to your personal statement, CV, research etc.
14. Why do you see yourself at our residency program?
15. Why this program? Why this city?
16. What was most memorable moment of medical school?
17. What specialty would you pursue if it was not this one?
18. Besides our clerkship rotation, what were your favorite rotations? Least favorite rotations?
19. Describe an ethical dilemma that you noted in medical school and state the pertinent ethical principals.
20. What was your biggest challenge in life?
21. If you didn’t get accepted into this specialty, what other career/field would you choose?
22. What is your best/worst quality?
23. Please describe the particular qualities that you think make a good member of this specialty.
24. Ethical cases - 1) if you were an intern scrubbed into a surgical case with your attending and he/she started making racial jokes how would you respond? 2) if you were an intern and you felt that your chief resident was not responding appropriately to your concerns about a patient who was SOB with decreased oxygen saturation because your chief wanted to "just hurry up and sign out to the night team" how would your respond? 3) give an example of a time that you made wrong medical assessment of a patient and how you handled that situation.
25. Why are you choosing your specific specialty?
26. What was one of you most challenging moments in medical school, and how did you handle it?
27. What do you think of current issues in healthcare (drug stores opening up clinics
28. If you could go back in time and meet with one famous person who would it be and why?
29. If you wanted to do research how would you fund it?
30. How would you approach a senior in a conflict, and if you could not resolve the issue internally how would you proceed?
31. Explain a challenging situation in your life, and how you handled it.
NYU Residents – Questions to ask your interviewers

1. How have previous residents performed on the CREOG In-service Training Examination and the written and oral board examinations? (For PD or senior administrator).

2. What is your overall fellowship match rate?

3. Do all members of the faculty participate actively in teaching the residents?

4. Are there both teaching and non-teach services?

5. Is there protected didactic time for residents?*

6. Does the department provide an allowance for purchase of textbooks or attendance at medical meetings? *

7. Does the department require that a research project be completed during residency training? What type of administrative and laboratory support is available for resident research projects? *

8. Is a night float system in operation? *

9. How frequently are the residents on call? (for residents, PD)

10. Do the residents and faculty members have good camaraderie?

11. What are the strong points of the program?

12. What are the weak points of the program?

13. Is any faculty turnover expected, particularly at senior administrative levels (i.e., chairperson, program director, or division director)? If so, what impact will these personnel changes have on residency training?

14. Have any residents left the program in recent years? If so, what was the explanation for their departure?

15. Does the program have a parental leave policy?

16. Do residents have an opportunity to voice concerns about rotations, faculty members?
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
<th>PHONEx</th>
<th>FAXx</th>
<th># of Interns</th>
<th>STATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>NYU</td>
<td>Nov 15</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Latoya.bishop@nyumc.org">Latoya.bishop@nyumc.org</a></td>
<td>(212) 562-6453</td>
<td>(212) 263-8251</td>
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<th>Scheduled Interview</th>
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Available Dates:
- Dec 12, 19
- Jan 9
### Residency Evaluation Checklist

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<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
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<td>Adequate Numbers</td>
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<td>Availability</td>
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<td>Good Rapport with Each Other</td>
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<td>Someone Interested in Education</td>
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<td>Sufficient Subspecialists</td>
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<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
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<td>CREOG Scores</td>
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<td>Job Opportunities for Spouse</td>
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<td>Friends &amp; Family Proximity</td>
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<td>Spouse Organization</td>
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A Guide to Residency Interviewing

Acing the Interview

The residency interview is a critical piece of the application process – it’s where all your efforts and preparation have been leading and it’s finally your chance to see how compatible the program is with your goals and expectations. It’s also their chance to gauge how well you will fit in their program. Your first impression, how you answer common questions, and the questions you ask your interviewers will all help you make the most of this opportunity.

First Impressions

Know where you’re going and arrive early. Arriving a few minutes early shows you are prepared and organized. Nothing is more stressful than trying to find parking or other transportation at the last minute. If possible make a trial run.

You may have the opportunity to go to dinner or lunch with residents or attend a reception before your formal interview. Alcohol may be offered at any of these functions and you should imbibe in moderation or not at all.

You will probably be nervous and that’s to be expected. Look your interviewers in the eye, greet them by name, smile and offer your hand for a firm handshake. Be polite to everyone – you never know who has a say in this process and you will get better information if you are friendly and open.

Frequently Asked Questions

There are a number of fairly common questions including why you chose the specialty, why you applied to the program, your strengths and weaknesses, what you are looking for in a program, an interesting case you were involved in, etc. There is a list of Frequently asked interview questions you should use to practice ahead of time. If you can answer most of the ones on this list effectively, you should be well prepared for your interviews. Make sure you keep answers brief and to the point and be consistent – from question to question and from interviewer to interviewer. Enthusiasm is frequently half the battle – stay upbeat and positive.

A common stumbling block for many students is also one of the most common questions – “Tell me about yourself.” Your answer should have a medical and specialty focus, be about one or two minutes long, and should let your personality shine. Make sure you prepare a statement, as students caught off guard with this question tend to ramble on or sound disorganized.

Your Turn: Questions to Ask

Keep in mind that you are interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you. Your goal is to broaden and deepen your knowledge of the program to assess how compatible you are. You are seeking a program that will live up to your expectations and assist you in meeting your professional goals, so you will need to put some thought into what types of questions you want to ask your interviewers. Everyone has different priorities and ideas about what they want in a program, so you should make a list beforehand of the types of information you want that will help you make your decision.
Almost every interviewer will ask you what questions you have for them so be prepared with many thoughtful questions. The Organization of Resident Representatives created the following brochure, Don’t Forget to Ask: Advice from Residents on what to Ask during the Residency Interview that should be helpful to you in formulating your list of questions.

Do not ask about salary, benefits, vacation and competition, even though they are important questions to you. This information can usually be found in the materials they provide and you don’t want them to think you are only concerned with the fringe benefits rather than the educational experience. Keep in mind that nothing is off the record. Even when you are talking informally with residents make sure you are careful about what you ask. You don’t want to be the candidate who told the housestaff that they are “looking for the most cushy program possible.”

Handling Difficult Questions

Try to anticipate areas of concern and devise plans to overcome them. Do not be surprised if something does not go as planned or if you are posed a difficult question. For example, be prepared to openly discuss a disappointing semester, grade, or having to re-take the USMLE Step 1. Your answers to questions about those experiences should be open and non-defensive.

Tips for Handling Difficult Questions:

- Brainstorm a list of possible questions you may be asked.
- Concentrate on areas that worry you most, and solicit help in preparing responses.
- Think before responding; there is nothing wrong with pausing briefly first.
- Be brief and respond in a factual way. Do not give more information than is necessary.
- Ask the interviewer to restate the question if you do not understand it. Try to determine what information the interviewer seeks.
- Never fabricate or overstate information.
- Anticipate difficult questions, prepare responses in advance, and rehearse.

Not all of the people you interview with will be skilled at conducting interviews. The law prohibits some types of questions that you are not obligated to answer. Restrictions exist to prevent employers from unfairly eliminating you from consideration. Most illegal questions fall into four broad categories: disabilities and physical skills; personal history; race, ethnicity, or creed; and family and relationship issues. How you handle these types of questions is a personal decision.

First, remember that, in general, these questions are more ignorant than malicious. There is a fine line between questions that are illegal and those that are simply inept, curious, or friendly. Do not approach these questions in a hostile manner. You should consider carefully whether or not you want to answer. Refusing to answer may reduce your opportunity to make a positive impression. A better option may be to smile, remain pleasant, and answer the question, focusing your comments (for example, for women, on family plans) on the seriousness of your commitment to your training. Some version of “I’m pleased with the job I’ve done thus far balancing my personal and professional life. There shouldn’t be a problem with it in the future” should suffice.
After the Interview

As soon as you can, write down all your impressions of the program. After you have gone on a few interviews, everything and everyone will start looking and sounding alike, so it is best to capture this information as soon as possible. You may not remember much later.

The Residency Program Evaluation Guide may be helpful in recording your impressions. Fill one out for each interview so you have a good basis for comparison when the time comes to prepare your rank order list.

Send personalized thank you letters or notes to each person involved with the interview. Emphasize the points about the residency and site that were particularly appealing, and restate how your background and/or personal qualities make you a good match for the program. You should tell them of your continued interest and enthusiasm for the programs but do not tell every program that they are your number one choice – program directors talk to each other.

Make the most of Your Interviews

You should be relieved to know that most residency interviews are fairly pleasant. They want you to learn about them as much as they want to learn about you. A compatible match is in everyone’s best interest so you shouldn’t encounter too many adversarial interviews. Most students who interview poorly, do so because of the following:

- Inadequate preparation
- Not providing appropriate or consistent answers to the questions asked
- Showing a discouraging, condescending, abrasive or evasive mood
- Seeming flat, nervous or uninterested
- Using inappropriate humor
- Making disparaging remarks about other people or programs
- Rambling on and incoherent answers

The interview process, while grueling, is an important part of making a good decision about your residency training. Sell yourself, be confident (not arrogant), and make the most of this opportunity.

http://www.aamc.org/members/osr/residencyquestions.pdf
Frequently Asked Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why did you become a doctor?
3. How would your friends describe you?
4. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
5. Why are you interested in our program?
6. What are you looking for in a program?
7. Why should we choose you?
8. Can you tell me about this deficiency on your record?
9. Why are you interested in this specialty?
10. Tell us about your research experience.
11. If you could not be a physician, what career would you choose?
12. What do you see yourself doing in the future?
13. What leadership roles have you held?
14. What do you do in your spare time?
15. What was your favorite course in medical school?
16. Why did you choose this specialty?
17. What are your goals?
18. Are you interested in academic or in clinical medicine?
19. Do you want to do research?
20. What was the most interesting case that you have been involved in?
The process of applying and interviewing for a residency position is complicated and can be stressful. This process involves both “selling” yourself to a program, as well as collecting the information that you will need in deciding how to rank the various programs you visit. Programs that you consider will all have unique strengths and weaknesses—some of which may not immediately apparent. The following list of questions was created by residents and students from various backgrounds as a guide to assist you in identifying and assessing those strengths and weaknesses. Use this guide in constructing your own more specific questions, and in exploring your own expectations and preferences. Your residency training is an important experience. Identifying the program that is best suited to meet your educational and professional expectations is paramount. Some questions are best answered by other residents in the program, and some questions you will need to ask yourself. Ask the program administrators and residents for specific examples that give a true understanding of the program.

Be honest with yourself about how you want your residency experience to be structured. Good luck! And remember, always be yourself.

**Education**
- Is there an orientation program for incoming residents?
- Is there a formal didactic curriculum, and what is its structure?
- What are the informal learning opportunities (i.e., besides rounds, etc.)?
- What programs exist for resident education (e.g., lectures, journal clubs, grand rounds, board review courses)?
- Is there a feedback structure that allows for the resident to evaluate the program’s curriculum?
- Is attendance at regional and national conferences encouraged? Is it funded, and if so, to what degree?
- What are the required rotations for the first year? Subsequent years?
- Are there any required rotations that take place outside of the city?
- Are there opportunities to do “away” rotations?
- Is there a formal mentoring program for new residents, and do faculty serve as mentors?

**Research Opportunities**
- Are research opportunities provided to residents? Is this a required experience?
- Is there a possibility of “protected” time for research?
- How are fellowships handled?
Teaching Responsibilities

- What teaching responsibilities for medical students are expected of residents?
- If residents have teaching responsibilities, how much time per week is spent with students? Is it “protected”?
- Is there any formal training for residents on how to teach students and other learners effectively, and how to provide feedback?

Clinical Duties

- What is the general call schedule?
- What provisions are made for back-up call or sick-call coverage?
- What type of structure for supervision is in place?
- Do your residents express that there is an appropriate balance between independence and supervision?
- How does the resident’s autonomy change as he/she progresses through the program?
- What type of ancillary support is available (phlebotomy, respirator therapy, social workers, etc.)?
- Does the general volume of clinical responsibility support a balance between service and education?
- Do your residents express they are involved in too much non-educational activity (i.e., “scut work”)?

Resident Performance

- How often are residents evaluated?
- What is the structure of the evaluation (forms, face-to-face, etc.)?
- What other forms of feedback does the resident receive (in-training exam, etc.)?
- What support structures are in place for residents in academic need?

Program Performance

- What is the status of the program’s accreditation?
- If there were any citations at the LSAT review, what has been done to correct them?
- When is the next Residency Review Committee (RRC) review?
- Are there any plans for changing the program size or structure?
- What is the status of the last Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Institutional Review?
- How solid is the financial status of the sponsoring institution?
- How committed is your institution to resident education and graduate medical education in general? How is this evidenced?
- What percent of your residents complete your program?
- What percent of your graduates pass the specialty boards on their first attempt?
- Where do your graduates go (e.g., fellowship, academics, private practice)?

Employment Issues

- What are the basic resident benefits?
- Is parking a concern for residents at your program?
- Are meals paid for when on call?
• What is your family leave policy?
• Is there reimbursement for education supplies and books?
• Are moonlighting opportunities available?
• What are the rules for moonlighting?
• How are residents represented at the institution level? How is the resident member of GMEC selected?
• Is there a union? Is membership mandatory? Are there dues?
• Is there a House Officers Association?

Questions to specifically ask other Residents
• What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
• Would you consider the same program if applying again?
• Is there an appropriate balance between service obligations and the educational program?
• Is there enough ancillary support to minimize “scut”?
• What has changed since you came to the program?
• Is the program responsive to suggestions for change?
• How accessible is the faculty?
• Is the relationship with faculty collegial?
• Do the residents get along with residents in other programs?
• In what activities are you involved outside of the program?
• How does your spouse/significant other like the city/area?

Questions to ask Yourself
Finally, you will likely find yourself facing a decision between one of several programs which are all extremely similar from academics and patient-care standpoints. At this time, it is very important to consider factors relating to your personal happiness and comfort for the duration of your residency.

• Can I be happy working in this program and with these people?