

# Milestone Match Day shows record highs

**BY JENNIFER LUBELL**

**U**nifying allopathic (MD) and osteopathic (DO) applicants for the first time in a single matching program, 2020's Match Day results underscored the continuing growth of DOs in the field, boosting numbers in primary care medicine and the Match as a whole.

The 2020 Main Residency Match bested 2019's record as the largest in the history of the National Resident Matching Program, with 40,084 applicants submitting program choices for 37,256 positions. This compares with 38,376 applicants vying for 35,185 positions last year.

It's the seventh consecutive year in which overall match numbers are up, according to the NRMP. Although the number of applicants increased, so did the number of positions, resulting in a slight drop in the percent of positions filled during 2019-2020.

Available first-year (PGY-1) positions rose to 34,266, an increase of 2,072 (6.4%) over 2019. "This was, in part, due to the last migration of osteopathic program positions into the Main Residency Match," Donna L. Lamb, DHSc, NRMP president and CEO, said in an interview. An agreement the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, American Osteopathic Association, and American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine reached in 2014 recognized ACGME as the primary accrediting body for graduate medical education programs by 2020.

This led to the first single match for U.S. MD and DO senior students

and graduates and the inclusion of DO senior students as sponsored applicants in 2020, Dr. Lamb noted.

## **Primary care benefits from DO growth**

DO candidates helped drive up the numbers in primary care.

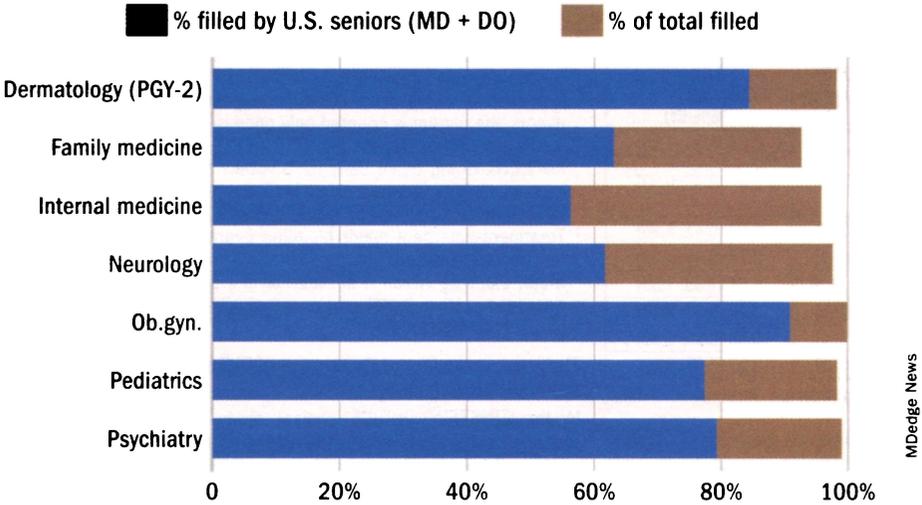
Internal medicine offered 8,697 categorical positions, 581 more than in 2019, reflecting a fill rate of 95.7%. More than 40% of these slots were filled by U.S. MD seniors, a category that's seen decreases over the last 5 years, due in part to administrative and financial burdens associated with primary care internal medicine.

"In addition, the steady growth of internal medicine has increased the overall number of training positions available, and with the growth of other specialties in parallel, it has also likely had some effect on decreasing the percentage of U.S. graduates entering the field," Phil Masters, MD, vice president of membership and global engagement at the American College of Physicians, said in an interview.

However, fill rates for U.S. DO seniors reached 16% in 2020, a notable rise from 6.9% in 2016. "As the number of osteopathic trainees increases, we are happy that more are choosing internal medicine as a career path," Dr. Masters said, adding that the slightly different training and practice orientation of osteopathic physicians "complements that of their allopathic colleagues, and add richness to the many different practice settings that internal medicine encompasses."

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# Match Day 2020: Residency positions filled (PGY-1)



**Note:** Overall, 32,399 (94.6%) of 34,266 available PGY-1 positions were filled this year.

**Source:** National Resident Matching Program