



Pulse

Students' confidence in residency-matching system grows

The proportion of medical students who say they're prepared for the residency-matching process continues to rise. In the 1998 Canadian Residency Matching Service postmatch survey, 78% of respondents said they were fairly well or very well prepared to make a PGY-1 training choice, compared with 46% in 1993 and 63% in 1996.

The actual 1998 match results, included in the survey report, reveal that students who decided before medical

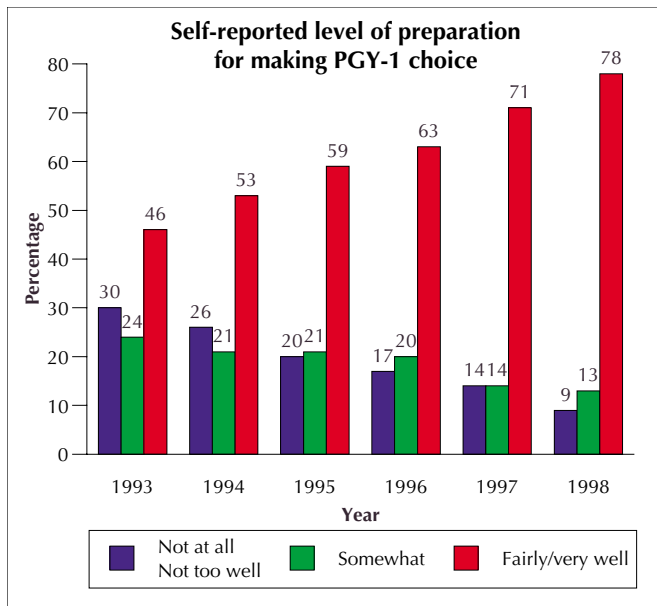
school which field of medicine they wished to pursue were more successful at obtaining their first choice of discipline than those who made the decision later.

Graduating students who applied to only a single discipline were 97% successful in being matched to it. Students who applied to a variety of programs (13 to 15) were more likely to achieve their desired geographic area of training (93%) than those who limited their application to only a few program locations (74%).

Students who chose family medicine as their first choice had a 96% chance of being matched to that discipline in 1998, and of those matched 38% indicated that they planned to complete a third year of training. Another 57% had not yet decided if they would pursue the extra year. Among those intending to take an extra year of training, emergency medicine was the overwhelming choice (71%).

Students from McMaster were most likely to be matched to their first-choice discipline (89%) followed closely by the University of Ottawa (86%). Those least likely to match to their first selection graduated from the University of Alberta and the University of Saskatchewan (both 76%).

This column was written by Lynda Buske, chief, physician resources information planning, CMA. Readers may send potential research topics to Patrick Sullivan (sullip@cma.ca; 613 731-8610 or 800 663-7336, x2126; fax 613 565-2382).



Cool sites

agingwell.state.ny.us/index.html

As baby boomers creep into their golden years, they will no doubt turn to the Internet for help in coping with the problems that will be making the trip with them. *Aging Well* is a health and wellness "village" for mature adults sponsored by the New York State Office for the Aging and GlaxoWellcome. The site has 5 main sections. In *Health and Safety First*, seniors are provided with a comprehensive home-safety checklist

and warned of medical quackery. This section also deals with preventive medicine, including immunization and screening for breast cancer. *Eating Well* addresses nutritional concerns for older citizens and dispenses sensible advice, while *Fitness* advocates exercise, particularly walking, and range-of-motion routines. *Healing Place* is the weak link in the chain. It includes many references to alternative medicine. The section called *Pharmacy* is more pragmatic — readers are informed of the latest OTC medica-

tions and encouraged to print forms that will help them keep track of drugs and dosage schedules, a potentially complex task for many seniors. This site will be useful to primary care physicians and geriatricians, who in turn can pass the address on to their older patients. It might be wise to bookmark the site — that way you won't need to remember it as your own memory starts to fade. — *Dr. Robert Patterson, robpatterson@email.msn.com*