

# To the Editor: Re: The Price of Fear: An Ethical Dilemma Underscored in a Virtual Residency Interview Season

**T**he Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) shares the community's concerns about the unbridled growth in residency applications. We are working actively with others in academic medicine to promote a holistic solution to this complex challenge. To date, these improvements include making better information available to applicants through the AAMC's diminishing returns data<sup>1</sup> and the Residency Explorer tool, which was developed in partnership with 8 other organizations. In addition, the AAMC is working to improve the information available to programs by evaluating new supplemental questions for the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) application, upgrading our ERAS software, and investing in research to identify solutions in conjunction with other organizations. While application caps and early Match pilots may hold promise, considerations of fairness and equity must remain paramount. With more than

50 000 students who submit residency applications via ERAS to more than 4800 programs each year (according to AAMC ERAS data), improvements will require the collective input of the entire medical education community.

As we pursue this important work, we want to assure the community that, contrary to the assertion in this article,<sup>2</sup> we are driven only by the imperative of finding a holistic approach that is fair to both students and residency programs.

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## References

1. Association of American Medical Colleges. Apply Smart: Data to Consider When Applying to Residency. <https://students-residents.aamc.org/apply-smart-residency/apply-smart-data-consider-when-applying-residency>. Accessed July 16, 2021.
2. Antono B, Willis J, Phillips JW Jr, Bazemore A, Westfall JM. The price of fear: an ethical dilemma underscored in a virtual residency interview season. *J Grad Med Educ*. 2021;13(3):316–320. doi:10.4300/JGME-D-20-01411.1