Residency Start Dates

Richard J. Shemin, MD

Chair, ABTS
• 80% GS residents transition to fellowships
• Proposed: Shift in the Fellowship start dates from July 1 to August 1 2016 Start
• Allows GS Chief Residents to complete their final year
• Allows time to move
• ABS written exam will be given on July 19, 2016
• Allows study time for the exam
• GS residents support this initiative
• Salary and COBRA
• July 1-31, 2016 transition
• ABTS Directors have given provisional support for this initiative
• Resident’s ABTS applications will probably change to September 15 from August 15
Draft Proposal for August 1 Thoracic Surgery Resident Start Date

- The American Board of Surgery at the request of the Surgery program directors has moved the Surgery Qualifying Exam date to July (July 19, 2016 for 2016). This change was initiated to allow Surgery residents to remain in their training programs until the required June 30 end date for the majority of programs. Additionally, with the change in the Qualifying Exam date, trainees will have the opportunity to study and take the ABS Surgery Qualifying Exam before the start of their fellowship, to move to their new training city in a more leisurely fashion, to fully participate in orientation in their new hospital, and potentially to offset patient safety concerns that have been noted with transitions to new trainees during the month of July. Orthopedics has adopted and executed this policy for many years with favorable results for residents and programs. Multiple informal surveys of residents have been very positive regarding this change in fellowship start dates. In response to this change, most postgraduate surgery fellowship start dates have been moved to August 1 (starting in 2016).
The American Board of Thoracic Surgery recognizes the potential value of this change by the American Board of Surgery for our residents and encourages thoracic surgery program directors to consider changing their program start dates to August 1. The American Board of Thoracic Surgery will therefore move the application deadline for the Qualifying Exam application to mid-September and the Qualifying Exam to December (starting in 2016). Before committing to this change multiple logistic considerations need to be decided at the local level and must include thoughtful discussion with the institutional Designated Institutional Official (DIO). Consideration needs to be given to the resident’s salary gap (from July 1 to August 1), healthcare coverage (typically COBRA coverage will cover a 1 month gap readily), and those residents that have a visa that requires continuous training as a prerequisite.
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