



Residency and Fellowship Deep Dive:

What it really takes to match

Disclaimer

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Learning Objectives

1. Describe the major career pathways within specialty pharmacy, including community, health system, industry, infusion, and payer settings.
2. Compare key responsibilities, work environments, and career opportunities across specialty pharmacy practice settings.
3. Evaluate personal interests, strengths, and career goals to determine potential specialty pharmacy career fits.
4. Develop an action plan for exploring specialty pharmacy careers during pharmacy school through networking, leadership, experiential learning, and professional development.

Meet the Presenters



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Learning Objectives

1

Differentiate the pathways

Differentiate between PGY1 residency, PGY2 residency, and fellowship opportunities, including their purpose, structure, and career pathways.

2

Know what drives selection

Identify key factors that influence residency and fellowship selection, including academic performance, experiences, application materials, interviews, and professional fit.

3

Strengthen your candidacy

Discuss strategies to strengthen candidacy and stand out in a competitive residency and fellowship landscape.

Polling Question

Are you interested in pursuing postgraduate training?

Yes

A

No

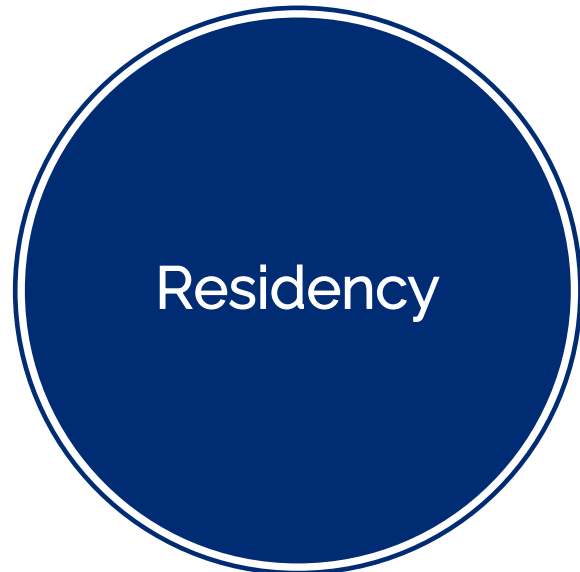
B

Unsure

C

Polling Question

What type of postgraduate training are you interested in?



A

or



B

Two Postgraduate Training Pathways



RESIDENCY

Hands-on, clinical training over one to two years — with mentoring, leadership, and research built in.

- Multiple clinical years condensed into one
- Started in the 1930s; ASHP-accredited since 1962
- Apply via National Matching Services + PhORCAS
- Team: RPD, aRPD, preceptors, project mentors
- Follows strict accreditation standards



FELLOWSHIP

Specialized training for careers in research, academia, industry, or professional organizations.

- Began in the 1970s; no formal accreditation
- More flexible — not bound to ASHP standards
- No prior residency required
- Less patient-care focus; often non-traditional
- Team: mentors and preceptors

Find programs: ACCP Directory of Residencies, Fellowships & Graduate Programs • ASHP Residency Directory

Purpose & Structure: PGY1

- **A foundational year**

Broad exposure across a chosen field — hospital, community, or managed care. Specialty is often listed under community.

- **Built around 12 months**

Multiple rotations, longitudinal projects, research, teaching
Staffing and on-call vary by program

2×

COMBINED PGY1 / PGY2

24-month programs — one Match, a two-year commitment from the start, and often a dual graduate degree (MBA, MS, MPH).

ACCREDITED COMBINED TRACKS INCLUDE

● Community-Based & Health-System Admin	● Health-System Pharmacy Administration & Leadership
● Specialty Pharmacy Admin & Leadership	● Drug Information
● Informatics	● Pharmacotherapy
● Investigational Drugs & Research	● Medication-Use Safety & Policy
● Palliative Care & Pain Management	● Medication Systems & Operations

Purpose & Structure: PGY2



A second, focused year in a chosen specialty

Increasingly expected by employers for specialized roles. Requires a completed PGY1.

SPECIALTY OPTIONS

● Ambulatory Care	● Cardiology	● Critical Care	● Emergency Medicine
● Infectious Disease	● Internal Medicine	● Oncology	● Pediatrics
● Psychiatry	● Geriatrics	● Neurology	● Solid Organ Transplant
● Pharmacotherapy	● Informatics	● Pharmacogenomics	● HSPAL
● Medication-Use Safety & Policy	● Pain & Palliative Care	● Population Health & Data Analytics	● Investigational Drugs & Research

Purpose & Structure: Fellowship



Scholarship-focused careers

Individualized and mentor-driven; research fellowships typically run 2+ years.

AT A GLANCE

1–2+ years

Typical program length, often research-intensive

Mentor-driven

One-on-one training with an experienced investigator

Scholarly output

Publications, posters, protocols, and grant work

WHERE FELLOWSHIPS LEAD

Independent research

Design and lead protocols, publish findings, and build an original body of work.

Academia

Faculty roles blending teaching, mentorship, and sustained scholarship.

Pharmaceutical industry

Medical affairs, clinical development, and regulatory or outcomes roles.

Scholarship-focused roles

Health policy, outcomes research, informatics, and specialized consulting.

What are you actually spending your time doing?

Breadth

PGY1

-
- Patient care
 - Broad clinical exposure
 - Staffing
 - Teaching
 - Leadership
 - Research
 - Projects (business plan, quality improvement, etc.)

Depth

PGY2

-
- Specialized patient care or administrative work
 - Leadership
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - Projects

Scholarship

FELLOWSHIP

-
- Research & scholarship
 - Data analysis
 - Manuscript development
 - Presentations
 - Grants

Clinical or teaching responsibilities during a fellowship vary by program.

Career Pathways After Training

PGY1

AFTER PGY1

- General clinical pharmacist roles
- Hospital / health-system practice
- Ambulatory or community practice
- Managed care & other settings
- PGY2 specialty training
- Teaching, precepting & leadership

PGY2

AFTER PGY2

- Advanced clinical specialist roles
- Specialty leadership
- Advanced roles (leadership, management, etc.)

FEL

AFTER FELLOWSHIP

- Academia
- Pharmaceutical industry
- Research
- Scientific / clinical development
- Policy & scholarship careers

Career pathways: Begin with the end in mind



Your career goals should choose the training.

Many paths reach the same end — residency and/or fellowship let you customize the route, and your interests may shift along the way.

ASK YOURSELF

- What skills do I want to gain?
- How fast do I want to reach my goal?
- Do I want to specialize — or stay broad?

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ANY TRAINING

- Experience aligns with goals
- Mentorship and preceptor support
- Research, teaching and CV building
- Finances, geography and program size
- Program rigor, support, culture, fit
- Where current trainees end up

Build An Application Programs Remember!

PREPARATION

PERFORMANCE

FIT

Your goal: make the “why you” + “why this program” easy to see

What programs are really trying to predict

1

CAN YOU DO THE WORK?

Academics • APPE performance • clinical foundation

2

HAVE YOU DONE MORE THAN THE MINIMUM?

Leadership • research • work • service

3

CAN YOU COMMUNICATE?

CV • letter of intent • interview

4

DO OTHER PHARMACISTS TRUST YOU?

Recommendations with specific evidence

5

DO YOU WANT THIS PROGRAM?

Program knowledge • intentionality • goals

6

WOULD WE WANT TO WORK WITH YOU?

Professionalism • coachability • self-awareness • fit

Your residency application starts before P4

P1

EXPLORE

- Learn practice models
- Join clubs!
- Meet pharmacists
- Build academic habits

P2

ENGAGE

- Leadership
- Research
- Work experience
- Find mentors

P3

DIFFERENTIATE

- Specialty exposure
- Poster / presentation
- Own a project
- Choose APPEs strategically

P4

PROVE + PACKAGE

- Excel on APPEs
- Secure strong LORs
- Tailor applications
- Practice interviews

Build a story, not a checklist

CANDIDATE A

- 3.9 GPA
- 6 organizations
- 3 leadership titles
- Research experience
- Volunteer experience

CANDIDATE B

- 3.5 GPA
- Specialty pharmacy intern
- Oncology research poster
- Health-system specialty APPE
- Leadership project on patient access

Show me you understand specialty pharmacy

PATIENT CARE

- Complex disease
- Adherence
- Education
- Longitudinal care

ACCESS

- Prior authorization
- Benefits investigation
- Financial assistance
- Medication access

OPERATIONS

- LDDs
- REMS
- Cold chain
- Accreditation

OUTCOMES

- Persistence
- PDC / adherence
- PROMs
- Clinical outcomes

ECOSYSTEM

- Health system
- Payer / PBM
- Manufacturer

Get involved! Don't wait for permission

START A CHAPTER

No NASP student chapter at your school? Start one

ATTEND NASP

Done! :)

FIND A MENTOR

Work, IPPES/APPEs, NASP

TAKE ELECTIVES

Specialty electives stand out on applications

CHOOSE APPEs

Pick rotations that show your interest

Your application gets you an interview, the interview is where you SHINE



CV

- Results > responsibilities
- Quantify when meaningful
- Clean, consistent formatting
- Cut unexplained fluff

LETTER OF INTENT

- Why residency?
- Why this program?
- Why you + them?

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Choose people who know your work
- Specific evidence > impressive title
- Ask: "Can you write me a strong recommendation?"

Tell Them Why You Chose Them!

GENERIC

"I am interested in your program because of its diverse rotations and strong preceptors."

Could this be sent to 30 programs? YES.

TAILORED

"My experience navigating access barriers sparked my interest in health-system specialty pharmacy. Your longitudinal specialty experience and oncology opportunities would let me build on..."

Specific enough that the program recognizes itself.



Prepare!

Can you communicate clearly?

Can you think through uncertainty?

Can you reflect?

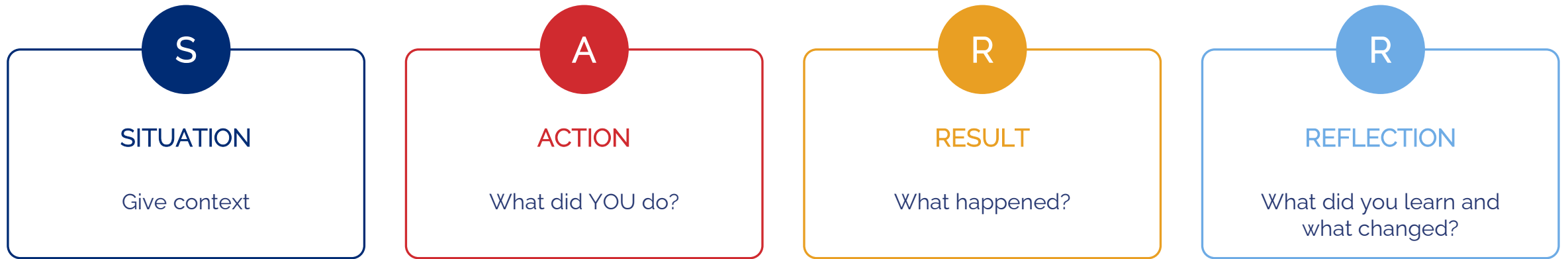
Can you accept feedback?

Do your goals align with us?

Would we want to precept you on a bad Monday?

Prepare with your experiences: leadership • conflict • mistake • feedback • difficult situation • initiative • priorities • proud moment

The answer framework that separates candidates



Question: "Tell me about a time you received difficult feedback."

Do your research OR ask in your interview :)



Practice model



Major disease states



Integrated vs. centralized



Key rotations



Research / project opportunities



Accreditation(s)



Patient management model



Access workflow



Outcomes they track



Specialty ecosystem partners



Graduate destinations



Questions only this program can answer

Be ready for: "Why specialty pharmacy?" without stopping at "I like building relationships with patients."

Things to Consider..

1

ALUMNI OUTCOMES

Where did past residents land? Does it match your goals?

2

PAST RESEARCH & POSTERS

Ask about prior projects! Does this spark your interest?

3

PROJECT INVOLVEMENT

Ask about URAC/ACHC accreditation work, new service lines, and QI projects.

These questions do double duty: they show genuine interest and help you find true fit.

Give programs reasons to remember you and why you belong there

YOU DO NOT NEED

- A perfect GPA
- Ten leadership positions
- Five publications
- A flawless interview

YOU DO NEED

- Evidence of growth
- Meaningful experiences
- People who can advocate for you
- A clear why + clear fit
- Self-awareness

MATCH

PREPARATION

PERFORMANCE

FIT

Summary

CHOOSE THE PATHWAY

- PGY1 = breadth, PGY2 = depth
- Fellowship = research and scholarship
- Begin with the end in mind

BUILD THE CANDIDATE

- P1–P3 builds, P4 packages
- Story over checklist
- Show you understand specialty pharmacy

PACKAGE THE APPLICATION

- CV, letter of intent, recommendations
- Tell them why you chose them
- Results over responsibilities

WIN THE INTERVIEW

- Situation, action, result, reflection
- Do your research or ask
- Preparation • performance • fit

Give programs reasons to remember you — and reasons to believe you belong there.

References

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Questions? Thank You!

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