

PLANNING FOR A SPORTS MEDICINE FELLOWSHIP

Sports medicine fellowships have no uniform set of standards expected of their applicants. Some may be very research focused and seek applicants with a strong research background, while others may be more interested in candidates with a breadth of sideline coverage and experience. We feel residents can best position themselves as an applicant by showing a longitudinal interest in sports medicine, from their time as an intern through the end of their third year. We feel residents with a breadth of experience in the realm of sports medicine, from sideline coverage to conference attendance to posters or publications, are best suited for a fellowship position.

EVENT COVERAGE.

For many programs, it's not what you cover but the fact that you've done it throughout your time as a resident. Start as an intern, where you can, and continue through your third year.

Local high school coverage. Local high schools need help with PPEs as well as sideline coverage. Volunteer with your residency program if you're interested.

Special Olympics is always looking for volunteers and residents have found this to be a great experience in the past.

Mass events, including marathons and triathlons, may be willing to have you as a resident volunteer. Reach out to race organizers if you're interested and they can connect you with the head of their medical staff.

ELECTIVE ROTATIONS.

Consider reaching out to ask if you can spend some elective time with specialists in your health system. It's a great way to build your knowledge base in sports medicine and to gain valuable experience. You could rotate with radiology, nutrition, cardiology (exposure to treadmill tests), orthopedics (work with the cast tech), PM&R, and orthotics and prosthetics.

You can consider setting up an audition rotation with a fellowship program you're particularly interested in. That's your chance to shine and show them what a great fellow you'd be, but also your chance to find out more in depth information about their program.

MEMBERSHIPS.

Consider joining the AMSSM or ACSM as a student member. You'll get their journal and it's a chance to demonstrate on your CV your commitment to the field.

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE.

Consider attending the ACSM or AMSSM national conferences. While not required, it's great exposure to potential fellowship programs. A poster presentation of your research or a case presentation are also options at these conferences (and another great way to set yourself apart as an applicant), although these obviously require significant planning.

Consider attending an Advanced Team Physician course (look on the AMSSM website), a procedural conference to gain experience with MSK U/S or injections, or a conference on basic OMT (if you're an MD) or an advanced OMT skills conference (if you're a DO) to really perfect your techniques.

RESEARCH.

If your residency requires a QI or research project, consider making yours sports / MSK focused. Presenting at your local research day or even a regional or national research day is a great way to build your CV.

Consider publishing on a sports medicine topic. FPIN has topics that are sports related. You can also try submitting an article proposal to a national journal (AFP is an option), although you will need a faculty member as lead author.



EXCEL IN YOUR PRIMARY SPECIALTY.

Many, though not all, sports medicine physicians practice family medicine in their future career. A solid foundation in family medicine will set you up well for a career in primary care sports medicine. Remember you need to maintain your family medicine board certification in order to take your sports boards.

Your test scores will count, at least to some degree, on your sports medicine application. Make sure you're studying for step 3! Programs like to see scores improving.

You will need letters of recommendation from 3-4 attending physicians as part of your sports medicine application. It is important for programs to know how well you function in clinic (get along with staff? run on time? complete your notes?) as a family physician. Consider asking family medicine faculty to write a letter on your behalf so they can comment on how you are as a family physician in addition to your sports interests.



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

**Primary Care Sports
Medicine Fellowship Program**

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