

# Delivery of a Virtual Residency Mock Interview Experience to Student Pharmacists

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## Background

- Student pharmacists who are on advanced pharmacy practice experience (APPE) rotations need individualized mentorship throughout the residency application and interview process
- Previous studies have shown that in-person mock interviews are associated with higher residency match rates<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>
- A virtual mock interview experience (MIE) may be an accessible alternative to the traditional in-person MIE since students are on rotation at various sites around the country
- Since the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual residency interviews have been offered with benefits such as improved logistics, efficiency, cost savings<sup>5</sup> and may still be offered by programs moving forward
- Other health professions students have utilized virtual mock interviews, showing an increase in confidence and preparedness with a decrease in anxiety<sup>6</sup>

## Objective

To assess whether a virtual residency mock interview is beneficial in preparing students for their residency interviews to be able to successfully match to a pharmacy residency program.

## Methods

### Virtual MIE Process:

- Sign-up sent out to all fourth professional year (P4) student pharmacists
- Interested student paired with an interviewer (college of pharmacy faculty or PGY2 resident) to mutually decide on specific date and time of mock interview
- Interviews conducted via Zoom from 2020 to 2023 in January
  - Sample interview questions given to interviewers
  - Around 45 minutes for interview and feedback
  - Verbal feedback given to student immediately at the end of the interview
  - Mock interviews recorded and sent to student for review
- Survey sent to students who completed the virtual MIE once after phase I and phase II of the match completed

### Study Groups:

- MIE participants: students who completed a virtual residency mock interview and responded to the post match survey
- Non-MIE participants: match data published by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP)
  - Match rate calculation: match/active with list for combined phase I and II

**Primary Endpoint:** Difference in match rate between MIE participants and non-participants within the college of pharmacy

**Statistics:** Chi-squared test

## Results

**Table 1: Baseline Characteristics**

Characteristic	Class of 2020	Class of 2021	Class of 2022	Class of 2023	Overall
<b>Number of virtual MIE, N</b>	15	39	20	23	97
Number of students who participated in the post-MIE survey, n (%)	11 (73.3)	22 (56.4)	10 (50)	16 (69.6)	59 (60.8)
<b>Number of residency applications, n (%)</b>	<b>n = 11</b>	<b>n = 22</b>	<b>n = 10</b>	<b>n = 16</b>	<b>n = 59</b>
< 10 programs	2 (18.2)	8 (36.4)	5 (50)	9 (56.3)	24 (40.7)
≥ 10 programs	9 (81.8)	14 (63.6)	5 (50)	7 (43.7)	35 (59.3)
<b>Number of residency interviews, n (%)</b>	<b>n = 11</b>	<b>n = 22</b>	<b>n = 10</b>	<b>n = 16</b>	<b>n = 59</b>
< 4 interviews	2 (18.2)	9 (40.9)	3 (30)	3 (18.8)	17 (28.8)
4-9 interviews	6 (54.5)	10 (45.5)	5 (50)	11 (68.8)	32 (54.2)
≥ 10 interviews	3 (27.3)	2 (9.1)	2 (20)	2 (12.5)	9 (15.3)
Did not disclose	0 (0)	1 (4.5)	0	0 (0)	1 (1.7)
<b>Residency match results, n (%)</b>	<b>n = 11</b>	<b>n = 22</b>	<b>n = 10</b>	<b>n = 16</b>	<b>n = 59</b>
Phase I	9 (81.8)	16 (72.7)	8 (80)	11 (68.8)	44 (74.6)
Phase II	1 (9.1)	0 (0)	2 (20)	4 (25)	7 (11.9)
Did not match	1 (9.1)	6 (27.3)	0 (0)	1 (6.2)	8 (13.5)

**Table 2: Comparison of Successful Residency Match Results within the College of Pharmacy**

	MIE Participants	Non-MIE participant	P-value
<b>Class of 2020</b>	10/11 (90.9)	22/37 (59.5)	0.052
<b>Class of 2021</b>	16/22 (72.7)	12/27 (44.4)	0.047
<b>Class of 2022</b>	10/10 (100)	12/21 (57.1)	0.014
<b>Class of 2023</b>	15/16 (93.8)	19/25 (76)	0.141
<b>Overall</b>	<b>51/59 (86.4)</b>	<b>65/110 (59.1)</b>	<b>&lt; 0.001</b>

Data shown as number of students who successfully matched/total number of students (%)

### Summary of Survey Commentary:

- Virtual MIE was highly valuable compared to other interview preparation
- Most students reported the virtual MIE being "very consistent" or "somewhat consistent" with their residency interviews
- Allowed students to gain practice thinking on their feet to questions they may not have prepared for or anticipated
- Personalized approach allowed students to receive customized feedback
- Ability to rewatch the recorded interview was highly valuable in identifying areas of improvement

## Discussion

- Residency preparation processes are not standardized between colleges and schools of pharmacy, but of those who provide mock interviews most conduct in-person events
- In our study, significantly more students had a successful match to a pharmacy residency if they completed a mock interview during the winter of their P4 year, even though the mock interviews were completed virtually
- Student pharmacists found the virtual MIE valuable in preparing for their residency interviews
- Virtual MIEs are less burdensome on faculty and convenient for busy schedules for both faculty and P4 students
- Limitations:
  - Highly motivated students may be more likely to participate in virtual MIE
  - Students who did not match may be less likely to complete the post match survey
  - No standardized training for interviewers
  - May not have prepared students for rigorous half or full day interviews or clinical case based questions
  - Did not collect data on how many students had virtual residency interviews in real life
- Future Directions:
  - Comparison to national match rates
  - Analysis of virtual fellowship mock interview data

## Conclusion

- Virtual residency MIEs were utilized by student pharmacists while on APPE rotations and allowed flexibility in both student and faculty scheduling regardless of busy schedules or physical location
- Participation in the virtual residency MIE was associated with a higher match rate to a pharmacy residency program at one institution

## References

