

### **Writing a Residency Personal Statement**

The residency personal statement is an essay that is used by residency directors to determine whether to extend an applicant an invitation to interview for a place in their residency program. This personal statement is submitted along with other application materials (such as grades and C.V.), and therefore should complement (not duplicate) the information in those materials. This essay is a unique opportunity for an applicant to show their character, what motivates them to apply to the given specialty, and what relevant qualities and experiences they will bring to the residency. The same statement is used for all residencies that an applicant is considering, so it should not be specific to any program. Below are some quick tips to introduce you to the task of writing a residency personal statement.

#### **Length**

- Your residency personal statement should be one page long.
- Another way to think about it is that your essay should be around 700 words (which is about one page, single spaced, 12-point font)

#### **Tone**

- Professional tone...after all, this essay is essentially a job application
- Less narrative than the AMCAS personal statement
- Within the bounds of professionalism, you want to come off as excited to be entering this specialty
  - Usually some of your readers are the current residents that will be supervising you, so it would be good to impress upon them that you are excited enough about the work to engage and persist with it even when the going gets tough (...and it definitely will in residency!)

#### **Content**

- What specialty are you applying to?
  - Explicitly mention which specialty you are applying to in the first paragraph of your essay (by the 2nd paragraph at the very latest).
- Why do you want to go into this specialty?
  - Ideally this answer will be at least in part based on some clinical experience
  - Consider including not only clinical, but also administrative or academic interests in the field if they inform your relevant experience or overall interest in the field
- Why will you excel in this specialty?
  - Again, this answer should be backed up at least in part by your experiences in this specialty
- What would you like to get out of a residency?
  - This answer can include kinds of training, kinds of patients you'll be treating, or particular strengths of the program
  - Be mindful that usually the same residency personal statement is sent out to multiple programs, so what you want out of one program shouldn't preclude any of the other programs you are applying to



- What will your career after residency look like?
- Address any red flags that could reasonably arise in your application (poor grades, withdrawal from an academic program, criminal record, expulsion or other disciplinary action, etc.)

**Format**

- Most residency personal statements are copy / pasted into an online form, so you don't need to worry too much about formatting (font, line spacing, etc.).
  - This does mean that you shouldn't use italics or bold because they likely won't show up when you past your text into the online field. Use quotation marks if you want to mention the title of a book or the like.

For further information on writing your residency personal statement, review 'Writing Residency Personal Statements', a resource developed by the UCSF Office of Career & Professional Development for medical and dental residency applicants:

<https://career.ucsf.edu/sites/career.ucsf.edu/files/PDF/Dentistryresidencystatementtips.pdf>