

Fireside Chat with Residents 2025

Jan 16th, 2025, Panel and Discussion with PGY2s: Dr. David-Dan Nguyen (U of T), Dr. Iman Sadri (McGill).

Pre-Interview Tips

Practice and Preparation:

- Start practice runs with friends, colleagues, or mentors.
- Go over the main classic interview questions ahead of time.
- Try not to have a script too much, as you may sound robotic.
- Structure in your head is key.

Content and Reflection:

- Think about experiences and structure them around the **CANMEDS** roles.
- Prepare positive and negative experiences.
- Prepare clinical and non-clinical experiences.
- *Behavioral* questions: what would you do in this scenario?
- Have almost a “database” of experiences with CANMEDS roles.

Technical Setup (Virtual Interviews):

- **Zoom setup is important.** Lighting, and a clean or interesting background help.
- Reduce the Zoom screen and have it near the camera to emulate eye contact.

Day of Interview Tips

During the Interview:

- The day can be tiring, but the format is generally similar between schools.
- There are not many clinical questions; “**prioritization**” is a key concept, especially understanding urological emergencies.
- Review your CV the day before and **expect questions around hobbies**.
- Be ready for behavioral questions related to CANMEDS roles (e.g., professionalism).
- Make sure your internet connection is working properly.

After the Interview:

- Take notes about how you felt and how each interview went as this will help when comparing programs later.

Building Your Rank List

Before Interviews:

- **Think about your rank list early.** Decide on your preferences before interviews so your impressions on interview day don’t overly influence your choices.

When Submitting:

- Have both your preliminary and final lists ready and compare them carefully.
- **Rank the programs you truly want.** The CaRMS algorithm works in the applicant's favor.

Q&A Insights

General Tips:

- Most interviews are conversational but try not to spend too much time on casual banter. **Focus on key questions.**
- Keep your introduction short and natural. For example: *"I'm a big fan of X" or "I'm proud of X, and I'd be happy to chat about it later."*
- Think carefully when answering questions about **safety** as programs want residents who are professional and safe.
- Aim to answer each question in about **one to two minutes**.
- Prepare **one thoughtful question** for each school, but only ask when it feels natural (e.g., if the interview is shorter or the timing fits).
- Avoid too many jokes — stay professional, appropriate, and composed.
- Interviews are generally standardized across schools with similar core questions; they may become more conversational near the end.
- Some programs (e.g., Toronto) may ask about **academic vs. community career goals**. Have a sense of your long-term interests, such as research or teaching.
- Expect some **off-beat questions**, though these are uncommon in urology.
- **Hobby questions are very important.** Be ready to discuss your interests with genuine detail and enthusiasm.

Practical and Logistical Advice:

- Don't interrupt or jump in too quickly when answering; take a moment to think before speaking.
- Review your CV the day before and expect questions about hobbies.
- Dress formally and maintain a professional presence.
- Have a setup ready to **refresh between interviews**. Drink water, stay near a window, use the washroom, and keep notes handy only *between* interviews (stay fully engaged during).
- Many schools have **pre- and post-interview rank lists**. It can be hard to move up significantly, but strong interviews can help you rise a few spots.
- **Post-interview emails:** Generally, not recommended unless a program emails you first. Unsolicited follow-ups may be viewed negatively.