

Introduction

- According to many experts, USMLE exams are the most difficult exams that a medical students will ever take and it is the exam that managed by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME).
- To be licensed to practice medicine in the United States, all medical students should pass all steps of the USMLE.
- IMGs form 25% of all the healthcare providers in the United States. Many Facts indicate that some IMGs provide better patient outcomes than US practitioners.
- Many of IMGs or even US medical graduates have USMLE attempts. These attempts will affect their residency application and chances to get interviews which most of IMGs are concerned about it.
- It is important for the IMG applicants who are having multiple attempts to know that it is not the end of medical residency match and there is no direct filter for USMLE attempts instead it's a programs preference.
- This article discusses important tips to overcome USMLE attempts and improve their chances of securing an interview and subsequent match.

Methods

This article identified good information through the collection data from PubMed search, and to get further information, we scanned relevant articles from Google, PMC, and the AMA journal. The keywords were a combination of the following: IMGs, USMLE attempts, Challenging of IMG in the US, and USMLE step 1 Pass/Fail transition.

Results

Upon reviewing of all available articles and blogs, eight studies were included. Variable finding such as multiple USMLE attempts, IMGs, changes USMLE Step 1 to Pass/Fail, residency interviews, and IMGs friendly programs, all were strongly correlated to the residency match. David A. Marzano, MD, is an associate professor and director of the ob-gyn residency at Michigan Medicine. He has worked with students and residents who have failed Step 1. "There's some people that just have a bad day," Dr. Marzano said. "We are all human. We've all had our bad days." If you do fail your first crack at Step 1, the path to recovery is an important one. He also said "We are looking at the whole picture," he said. "We are looking at grades and clinical evaluations and letters of recommendation and all those things together.

Discussion

- Do not use your USMLE attempts as a weakness in your application. You should address it in your personal statement and show the programs that you did not give up and eventually passed your exam.
- There are several tips that can help to overcome the fact of multiple USMLE attempts such as having a strong ERAS application, hands-on US clinical experiences and strong Personal Statement.
- IMG applications should focus on specialties and programs that invite applicants with multiple USMLE attempts. It's intelligent to identify and apply for the programs that known to be IMGs friendly as well as accepted multiple attempts. FREIDA can allow applicant to limited their research with 35-plus filters.
- Consider passing Step3. Having PASS Step 3 in your hand might be good for old candidates who are willing to make their application stronger and alleviated the pressure of worrying about previous USMLE exam attempts on other steps.
- Transition of Step1 scores to Pass/ Fail, it might be a benefit for IMGs residency application, the idea of getting a particular score was stressful for the medical students and negatively impact on students' well-being as was mentioned by Daniel Dent, MD, a professor of surgery and medical education at the UT Health San Antonio Long School of Medicine, in a [2022 AMA Moving Medicine video](#). The goal will be for these applicants to make sure that their attributes are reflected to the other components of the applications.

Conclusion

IMGs look at the US medical residency an opening to go further from restrictions of their home countries. They have to overcome all the challenges and USMLE attempts is one of those challenges. Do not give up, multiple USMLE attempts seem scary but it's not the end of the world. Work hard, prepare well for the residency season.



Source: <https://www.medsmarter.com/blog/overcoming-the-stress-of-first-time-exam-failure/>

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