

# RA/APM fellowship programs in the United States: an analysis of the current landscape

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## Introduction

Regional anesthesiology and acute pain medicine (RA/APM) fellowships have become increasingly popular. Each program offers a unique experience into the field of regional anesthesiology, and may differ vastly in the requirements for completion based on aspects such as research and dedicated academic time. Applicants may also want to prioritize certain fellowships over others based on how programs will strengthen their techniques and skills to achieve their career goals.

## Objectives

- In this study, we look at various characteristics of all RA/APM accredited and unaccredited fellowship programs in the United States including:
- Demographic characteristics of program directors
  - Academic vs private institution status
  - ACGME vs non- ACGME program status
  - Application method
  - Distribution of programs

## Methods

We reviewed the websites of RA/APM programs in the United States and the American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine website to gather the most up-to-date information regarding fellowship programs. At the time of analysis, 80 fellowship programs were evaluated. We obtained information about the race and gender of program directors, application method, fellowship positions, number of associated hospitals, type of program (academic or private), base salary, if journal clubs were offered, whether research was mandatory, and the ACGME status of the programs.

## Conclusions

- Academic institutions are more likely to have required research, offer journal clubs, and use the SF match than private institutions.
- Although many programs, have decided to switch to SF Match for applications, many programs continue to use the Common Fellowship Application or require emailing of CV and letters of recommendation to program leadership.
- As the number of RA/APM programs and prospective regional fellows increase, having a more streamlined application process can allow for programs to screen more applicants and vice versa.

The wide distribution of RA/APM program offerings and application methods indicates a need for standardization.

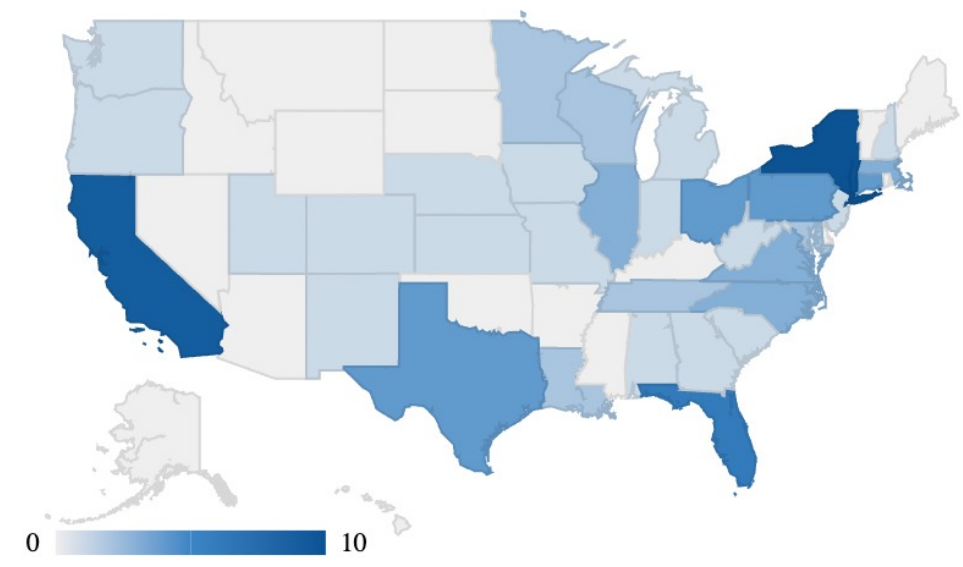


## Demographic Characteristics

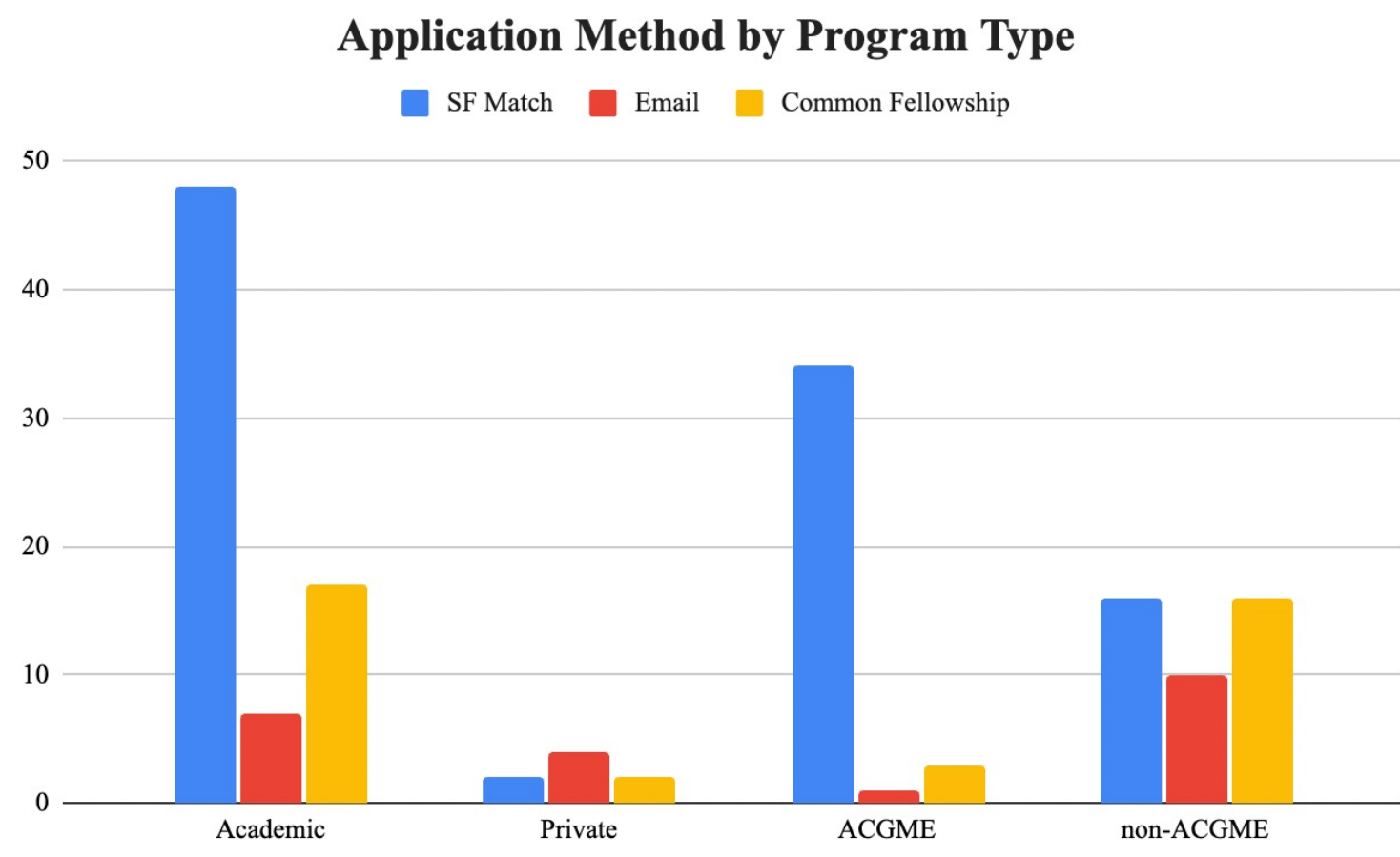
| Demographic Characteristics | Category                      | Count (Percentage) |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| PD Gender                   | Female                        | 34 (42.5%)         |
|                             | Male                          | 45 (56.25%)        |
| Race                        | White                         | 47 (58.75%)        |
|                             | Asian                         | 6 (7.5%)           |
|                             | South Asian                   | 17 (21.25%)        |
|                             | Hispanic                      | 1 (1.25%)          |
|                             | Black                         | 2 (2.5%)           |
|                             | Undetermined                  | 8 (7.5%)           |
| Application Method          | SF Match                      | 51 (63.75%)        |
|                             | Common Fellowship Application | 19 (23.75%)        |
|                             | Email Program                 | 11 (13.75%)        |
| Type of Program             | Academic Institution          | 72 (90%)           |
|                             | Private Practice              | 8 (10%)            |
| Research                    | Required                      | 52 (65%)           |
|                             | Strongly encouraged           | 10 (12.5%)         |
|                             | Optional                      | 5 (6.25%)          |
|                             | Not Required                  | 13 (16.25%)        |
| Journal Club                | Offered based on website      | 43 (53.75%)        |
|                             | Not offered                   | 3 (46.25%)         |
| ACGME Status                | Accredited                    | 38 (47.5%)         |
|                             | Unaccredited                  | 14 (17.5%)         |
|                             | Not reported                  | 26 (32.5%)         |
|                             | In process                    | 2 (2.5%)           |

## Distribution of Programs by State and Region

| By region          | Count       |
|--------------------|-------------|
| South Atlantic     | 17 (21.25%) |
| Middle Atlantic    | 15 (18.75%) |
| Pacific            | 11 (13.75%) |
| East North Central | 11 (13.75%) |
| New England        | 8 (10.0%)   |
| West South Central | 6 (7.5%)    |
| West North Central | 6 (7.5%)    |
| Mountain           | 3 (3.75%)   |
| East South Central | 3 (3.75%)   |



## Application Method by Program Type



## Program Characteristics by Type and ACGME Status

| Fellowship Spots             | Average Fellow Spots       | p-value |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------|
| Academic Institution         | 2.72                       | 0.32    |
| Private Practice             | 2.25                       |         |
| ACGME Accredited Program     | 2.37                       | 0.24    |
| non-ACGME Accredited Program | 3.36                       |         |
| Total                        | 2.68 (n=80)                |         |
| Salary                       | Average Salary             | p-value |
| Academic Institution         | \$83,729                   | 0.006*  |
| Private Practice             | \$144,125                  |         |
| ACGME Accredited Program     | \$81,769                   | 0.012*  |
| non-ACGME Accredited Program | \$96,210                   |         |
| Total                        | \$89,845 (n=79)            |         |
| Rotating Hospitals           | Average Rotating Hospitals | p-value |
| Academic Institution         | 2.74                       | 0.98    |
| Private Practice             | 2.75                       |         |
| ACGME Accredited Program     | 2.76                       | 0.9     |
| non-ACGME Accredited Program | 2.64                       |         |
| Total                        | 2.74 (n=80)                |         |

## Findings

- Of the 80 programs, 47.5% were ACGME accredited and 2.5% more in the process of getting accreditation. Ninety percent of the programs were located at academic institutions. Applications for these programs were to be submitted through SF Match (n=51, 63%), the Common Fellowship Application (n=19, 23.5%), or by emailing program leadership (n=11, 13.6%)
- Private on average offer a higher salary (\$144,125 vs \$83,729 p=0.006) than academic programs. ACGME accredited programs also on average offer a lower salary (\$81,769 vs \$96, 210 p=0.012) than non-ACGME programs.
- The top 3 states with the most programs were: New York (n=10), California (n=9), and Florida (n=6). The region with the most programs was the South Atlantic region with 21.25% of all programs, followed by the Middle Atlantic (18.75%), and Pacific (13.75%)