



The American Academy of Family Physicians' (AAFP's) brief analysis of the family medicine results of the annual National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) Main Residency Match® (NRMP Match) provides a snapshot of a major input into the primary care workforce pipeline.

## **2016 NRMP Match Highlights**

**3,105** medical students and graduates matched to family medicine residency programs in 2016, the most in family medicine's history as a specialty.

Of those matches, **1,481** positions were filled with U.S. Seniors, 859 fewer than the historical peak (2,340 in 1997).

Family medicine offered **3,260** positions, 44 more than in 2015.

This is the **seventh straight year** that the family medicine match rate climbed year-over-year, and the largest increase in matches of U.S. Seniors in four years.

**Key Takeaway:** The 2016 NRMP Match results continue in the right direction for family medicine. The number of U.S. Seniors matching into family medicine residencies is up 398 over the last seven years. However, neither the production of family medicine residents by U.S. medical schools nor the number of available family medicine residency positions are sufficient to address primary care workforce needs in the U.S. The AAFP is working to remove significant barriers in the educational and practice environments that are stifling growth in family medicine specialty choice among U.S. medical graduates, as well as increase the number of family medicine graduate medical education positions. Substantial increases in the family medicine and primary care workforce will improve the health of Americans and the sustainability of the health care system.

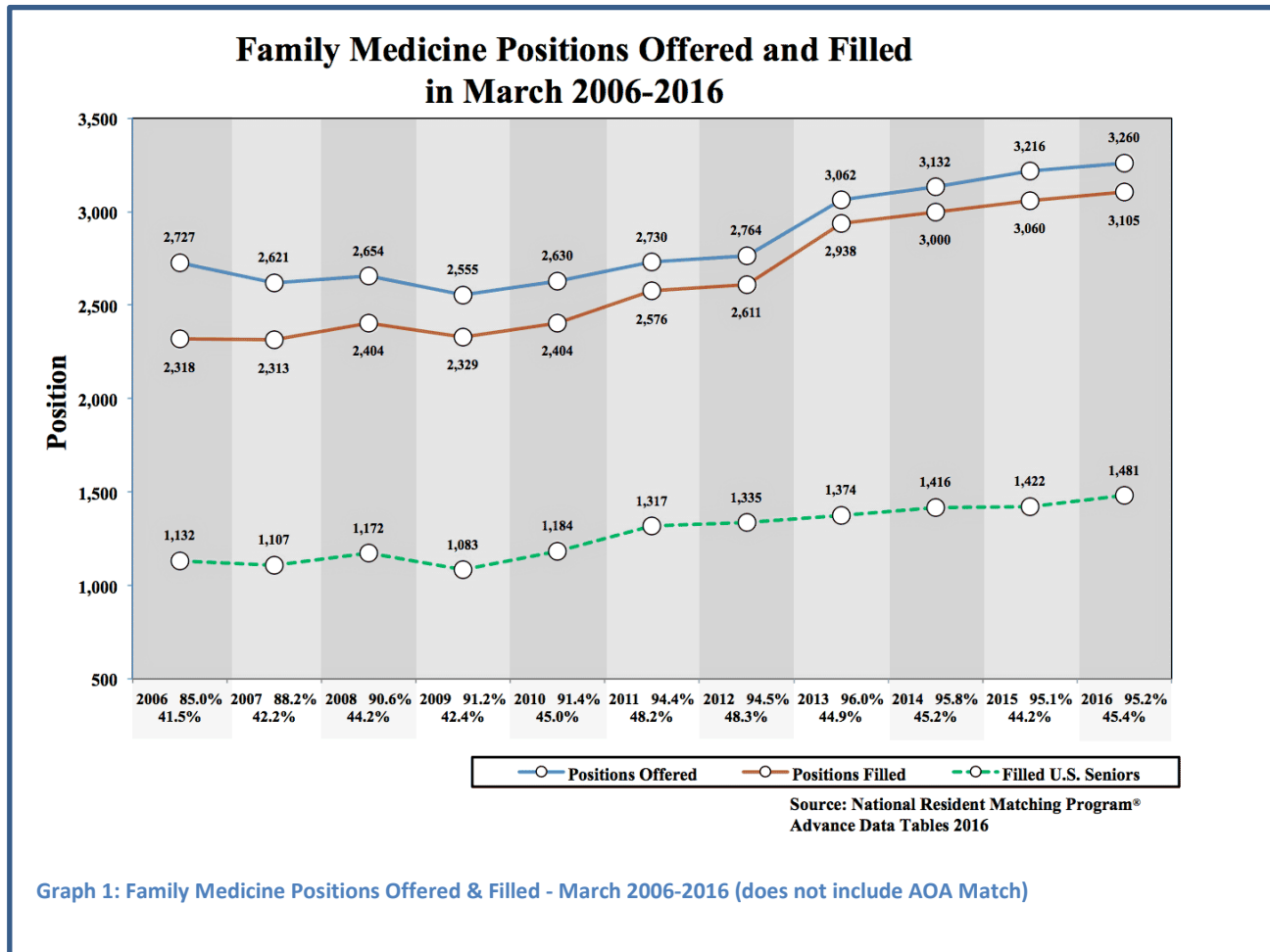
## **A Closer Look at the 2016 NRMP Match Results**

A total of 27,860 PGY-1 positions were offered in all medical specialties in the 2016 NRMP Match and 26,386 were filled. Of those, 17,057 were filled with seniors in Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)-accredited U.S. schools of medicine (U.S. Seniors). In the 2016 NRMP Match:



- Family medicine\* offered 11.7% and filled 11.6% of the total positions.
- The fill rate for U.S. Seniors in family medicine was 45.4%.

\*Includes family medicine-categorical, plus combined programs: emergency medicine-family medicine, family medicine-preventive medicine, medicine-family medicine, and psychiatry-family medicine.



Graph 1: Family Medicine Positions Offered & Filled - March 2006-2016 (does not include AOA Match)

Compared with 2015, family medicine residency programs in the 2016 NRMP Match:

- Offered 44 more positions (3,260 vs. 3,216)
- Matched 45 more students and graduates (3,105 vs. 3,060)
- Matched 59 more U.S. Seniors (1,481 vs. 1,422)
- Had a similar overall fill rate (95.2% vs. 95.1%)
- Had a similar fill rate for U.S. Seniors (45.4% vs. 44.2%)
- Offered 11.7% of all positions in the Match (12.1% in 2015)
- Matched 8.7% of all U.S. Seniors in the Match (8.4% in 2015)



The 2016 NRMP Match results continue a seven-year trend of increases in the number of family medicine positions offered, positions filled, and positions filled with U.S. Seniors. In fact, the number of family medicine positions filled in the 2016 NRMP Match is the highest number filled in the history of the specialty, and has been each year since 2013. The number of U.S. Seniors matched saw its largest increase in four years. These increases reflect rising interest in family medicine careers among U.S. medical students. However, the number of positions filled with U.S. Seniors remains 859 below the historical high of 2,340 in 1997.

The 2016 results also show a fill rate above 95%, meaning that the gap between positions offered and positions filled in family medicine has diminished over time. The fill rate for family medicine has increased significantly since 2003 when it hit a low of 76.2%. Of the 155 positions unfilled in family medicine in 2016, most are anticipated to be filled during the NRMP Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program<sup>®</sup>, resulting in nearly 100% of family medicine positions offered in the NRMP Match to fill. By contrast, the fill rate in family medicine for U.S. Seniors decreased drastically between 1996 (72.6%) and 2005 (40.7%) and increased slightly since to 45.4% in 2016, but has remained below 50% since 2001.

## Family Medicine Programs

Family medicine – categorical programs offered 3,238 positions, filled 3,083 positions, and filled 1,467 positions with U.S. Seniors. The overall fill rate for family medicine – categorical programs was 95.2%.

Overall, family medicine combined programs filled at 100% in the 2016 NRMP Match, which is fairly consistent with past performance.

- **Emergency medicine-family medicine** filled 4 positions, 2 with U.S. Seniors.
- **Family medicine-preventive medicine** filled 6 positions, 1 with a U.S. Senior.
- **Medicine-family medicine** filled 2 positions, both with U.S. Seniors.
- **Psychiatry-family medicine** filled 10 positions, 9 with U.S. Seniors.

## Other Primary Care Specialties

In the 2016 NRMP Match:

- Primary care\* positions were 14.5% of the positions offered overall (4,053 of 27,860).
- Primary care positions were 14.5% of the positions filled overall (3,893 of 26,836).
- Primary care residency programs filled with U.S. Seniors at a rate of 50.7% (2,054 of 4,053).
- Of the U.S. Seniors matched, 12.0% were in primary care residencies (2,054 of 17,057).

\*Defined as family medicine categorical and combined programs, internal medicine-primary, internal medicine-pediatrics, and pediatrics-primary.



In total, 42 more positions were offered in primary care specialties compared with 2015. These results show a 1.0% increase in the number of positions offered in all primary care specialties.

Compared with the 2015 NRMP Match:

- **Medicine-primary** (primary care internal medicine) filled 14 fewer positions in 2016 (325 vs. 339) and matched 4 more with U.S. Seniors (210 vs. 206).
- **Medicine-pediatrics** (med-peds) filled 5 more positions (384 vs. 379) and matched 10 more U.S. Seniors (329 vs. 319).
- **Pediatrics-primary** (primary care pediatrics) filled all of the positions offered, 5 more total (79 vs. 74) and 8 more with U.S. Seniors (34 vs. 26).

## 2016 AOA Family Medicine Results

Another prominent matching program for medical students or graduates is the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Intern/Resident Registration Program (AOA Match), which matched 2,255 graduating osteopathic medical students in February 2016. This program matches students into graduate medical education programs that are either solely accredited by the AOA or are dually accredited by the AOA and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The United States is the only country that trains osteopathic physicians, so the AOA Match does not include international medical graduates.

In the 2016 AOA Match, family medicine residency programs:

- Offered 995 positions, up 77 from 2015
- Matched 594 osteopathic medical students, up 7% from 555 in 2015
- Matched 18.4% of positions offered overall and 26.3% of completed matches overall, which is higher than the proportion of family medicine matches through the NRMP Match
- Had a fill rate of 59.7%, which is lower than the NRMP Match's fill rate for family medicine

Unmatched family medicine positions typically are offered by the AOA through an informal supplemental matching process.

## Find More on the Family Medicine and Primary Care Workforce

The NRMP Match is the largest and most representative mechanism for medical student recruitment into specialized medical residencies in the United States, and as such, serves as a barometer of workforce production.



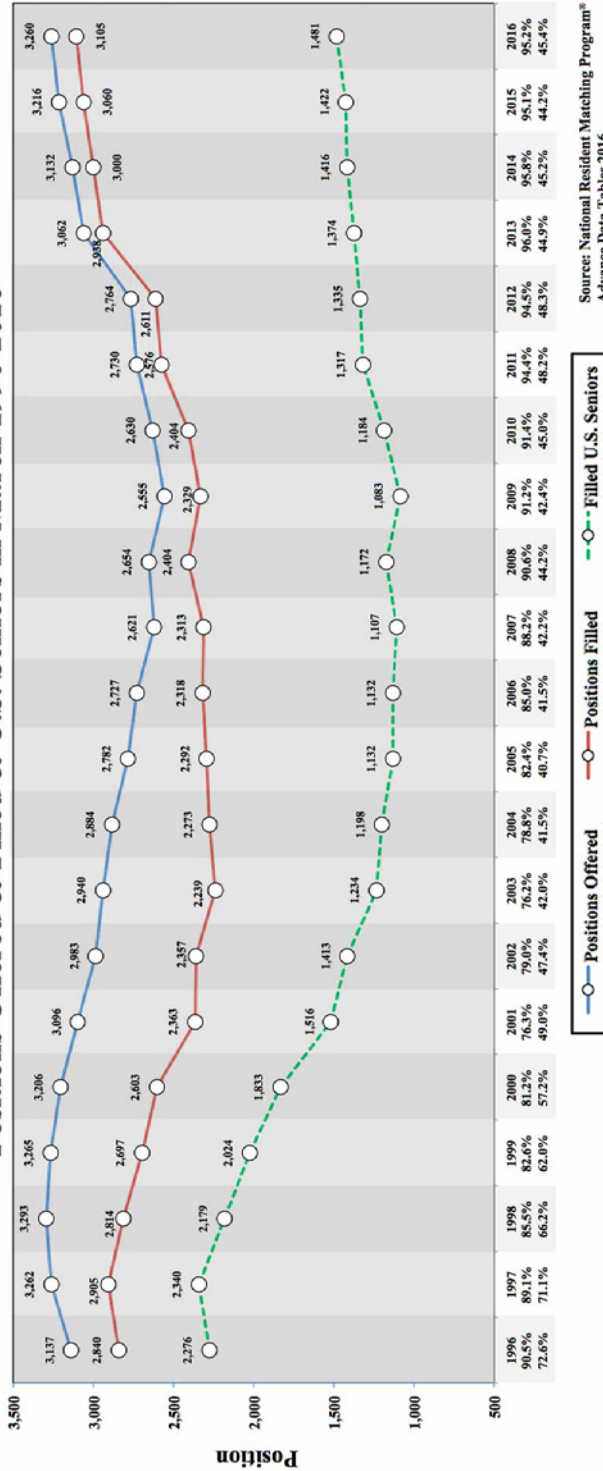
However, the NRMP Match and AOA match are not the only mechanisms through which medical students or graduates are matched with their required graduate medical education, or residency programs, in a specialized field to lead to board certification in a medical specialty (or multiple specialties).

The following resources provide a more in-depth look at the family medicine workforce pipeline:

- [Entry of US Medical School Graduates Into Family Medicine Residencies: 2014-2015](#) – This article authored by AAFP Medical Education staff provides an in-depth look at those entering family medicine residency programs each year, including the percentage of graduates from U.S. medical schools.
- [Results of the 2015 National Resident Matching Program: Family Medicine-A Comparison with 1997 and 2009](#) – This article reports on the performance of family medicine and other primary care specialties in the NRMP Match, and includes data that is not available at the time of the NRMP Match.
- [Aligning Resources, Increasing Accountability, and Delivering a Primary Care Physician Workforce for America](#) – The AAFP's proposal to strategically reform the nation's graduate medical education system.
- [Strolling Through the Match](#) – The AAFP's comprehensive guide to matching provides information from start to finish of the Match process, including the timeline, process, and tips on ranking programs and interviewing.



**Family Medicine Retrospective  
Positions Offered & Filled & U.S. Seniors in March 1996-2016**



Source: National Resident Matching Program®  
Advance Data Tables 2016

Graph 2: Family Medicine Positions Offered & Filled - March 1996-2016 (does not include AOA Match)