

## Prepare Now For Residency Application Deadlines

BETHESDA, MD, 27 November 2000—Excitement from checking out residency programs at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting can quickly turn to anxiety as the various programs' deadlines for applications quickly approach. Make good use of the time left to assemble your application packets.

First, make sure you have application forms for all the programs that interest you. If you cannot find a program's application form, contact the appropriate person immediately. Don't risk missing the program's deadline by relying on last-minute mail delivery during the holiday season. Perhaps the organization offers its applications and supplemental information through the Internet.

Next, look over the documents that you need to submit. Filling out applications, obtaining academic transcripts, polishing a curriculum vitae, and arranging to have letters of recommendation sent to residency programs are tasks probably not too difficult or time-consuming to finish. But some residency programs require a letter of intent and a personal statement with each application. The time and effort put into these latter tasks will pay off, so start early and do the job right.

A letter of intent is usually a brief, formal document in which you declare your interest in a particular residency program. This document, which is similar to a [cover letter](#), may also be called a letter of interest or introduction. Some programs ask for an essay instead of a letter. Read each application packet carefully to see whether a program asks you to address anything specific in your letter of intent.

You may also be asked to compose a personal statement describing your motivations and professional goals. Again, carefully read the application packet. The residency program may require that you include your personal statement in the application form or provide a separate document.

Keep in mind that the letter of intent and personal statement are not short versions of your curriculum vitae. In the letter of intent and personal statement, you discuss your knowledge of pharmacy practice, expectations from the residency, and possible contributions to the program.

Not all residency programs require both an intent letter and a personal statement. Some programs ask the applicant to combine elements of each document into a single statement. Again, review your application packet carefully.

Although you do not have to completely rewrite your letter of intent and personal statement for each application, do not treat these documents as form letters. Before you seal all your documents in an envelope, carefully review the letter of intent and personal statement to confirm that the content relates appropriately to the residency program that will receive your material.

Also, confirm that the documents for residency program "A" will be mailed in the envelope addressed to program "A" and not to one of the other programs on your list.

This past fall, ASHP sent each U.S. pharmacy school a booklet designed to guide students through the residency application process. Included in this free, 28-page publication are a sample curriculum vitae, letter of intent, personal statement, and application checklist. The booklet, *Professional Development: Residencies, The ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting, and More...*, can be obtained from the faculty liaison at your school.