

Availability of Parental and Family Information on Otolaryngology Residency Websites in a Post-Signaling Era

BACKGROUND

Since the introduction of signaling in 2021, otolaryngology applicants increasingly rely on residency program websites to guide their decision-making on where to apply and train. Decisions around parenting and childbearing have been recognized to have an impact on overall wellness. These policies may influence applicants' choice of residency programs, but may be difficult for applicants, particularly female applicants, to inquire about directly. This study aims to characterize the availability of family and parental information on OHNS residency websites.

METHODS

Websites for all 125 U.S. OHNS residency programs and related graduate medical education (GME) websites were reviewed for 12 content items focused on family, parental, and wellness support resources. Each site was reviewed for the presence or absence of these items, either directly on the program website or via clearly accessible links.

RESULTS

Content Items	% of OHNS Programs
Benefit Information	73.6
Insurance Coverage Information	59.2
Duration of Maternity/Paternity Leave	52.8
Parental Leave Policy	52.8
Childcare Support	26.4
Prenatal Visit Coverage Information	25.6
Delivery Coverage	24.8
Breast Milk Pumping Accommodations	24
Adoption Assistance	21.6
Fertility Benefit Information	21.6
Sleep Deprivation Resources	16.8
Family Planning Resources	12.8
Flexibility in Training Information	8.8

Figure 2. Percentage of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck (OHNS) residency programs providing benefit-related information on program websites.

CONCLUSIONS

As applicants increasingly rely on program websites when making long term training decisions, the limited availability of family planning and parental support information identified in this study may influence perceptions and preferences. In the post-signaling era, program websites represent a key platform for communicating existing policies and resources, and variability in the information provided may limit applicants' ability to readily access this information.

What Can Programs Do?

Make existing policies visible: Applicants cannot consider resources they cannot find.

Centralize the information: Link program websites to institutional/GME policies when not program-specific.

Reduce the need for sensitive questions: Clear online information allows applicants to make informed decisions.

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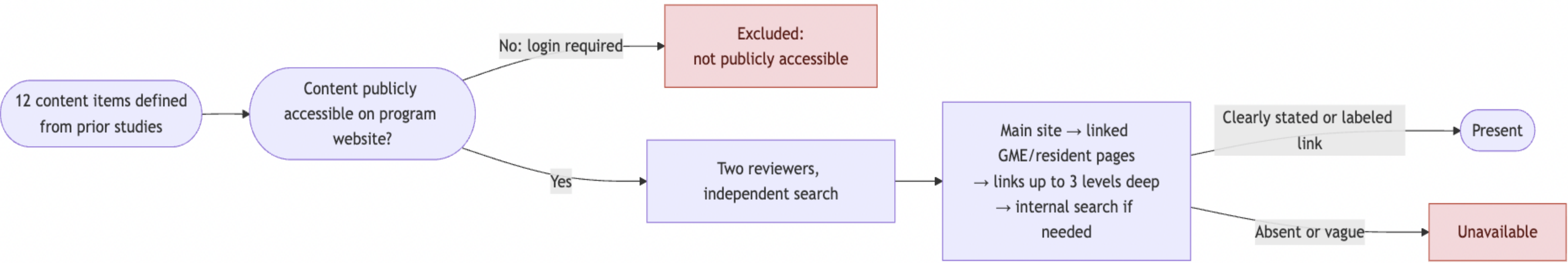


Figure 1. Schematic demonstrating process for determining information availability on program websites