University of Vermont
Larner College of Medicine

# Perceived Impact of USMLE Step 1 Pass/Fail on Medical Student Applications to Otolaryngology

Abigail Mercier, BA[1], Allison Lipsky, MD[1], Ba Truc Trinh, MD[1], Meghana Babu, MD[2], William Shin, BS[2], Richard Hubbell, MD[2]
[1]Department of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery, The University of Vermont Health • Burlington, VT
[2]Department of Otolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery, Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine • Maywood, IL

## INTRODUCTION

The transition of USMLE Step 1 to pass/fail reporting was intended to:

- ❑ Improve medical student well-being
- ❑ Promote a more holistic approach to residency application review
- ❑ Reduce reliance on numeric screening metrics

***This study aims to examine the impact of this change on medical student interest in otolaryngology and perceived priorities within the residency application process.***

## METHODS & MATERIALS

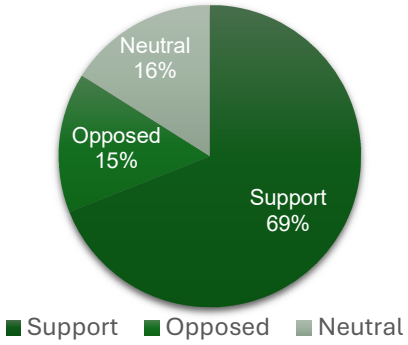
In 2024, an electronic survey was distributed via RedCap to enrolled medical students at **Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine** and the **Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont**.

Survey included questions about:

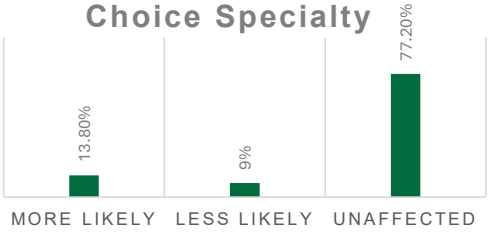
1. Opinion on pass/fail transition
2. Impact on specialty interests
3. Importance of application components

## RESULTS

### Medical Student Views on USMLE P/F Transition




### Likelihood of Applying to Choice Specialty




### Perceived most important variables for successful residency application

- ✓ **RESEARCH** (70.4%)
- ✓ **USMLE STEP 2 CK** (87.3%)

## CONCLUSION

- Previous studies demonstrated Step 1 scoring transition resulted in fewer objective measures of medical student performance, no significant improvement in learner anxiety, and greater focus on research endeavors
- Our study shows medical students largely support Step 1 pass/fail scoring, however, there is now a **large emphasis on STEP 2 CK** and **research** in the residency application process
- Minimal change in encouraging medical students to apply to specialty of choice

***As the residency application process continues to evolve, future studies should assess how removing objective measures impacts residency program selection committees and subsequent resident performance.***

## REFERENCES

**Available upon request.**

Contact: Abigail.mercier@med.uvm.edu