

# GPR/AEGD Residency

## Notes From the ADEA Residency Series

*This information is a result of the annual ADEA Residency Series, co-sponsored with the Office of Career and Professional Development and UCSF ADEA chapter. Faculty, residents and D4s shared their thoughts about the qualities of an outstanding candidate in their specialty, and gave advice to D1s, D2, & D3s about the application process and residency experience.*

### **EXPLORING GPR/AEGD**

#### **Q: What is an Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) residency?**

**A:** AEGD is a 1 year (optional 2 year) program to enhance a graduate's skills and knowledge base in general dentistry. AEGD residency programs usually take place in a clinical setting. Panelists shared that the training is similar to the clinical training received during dental school, but with less supervision and residents see more difficult cases and work at a faster pace. During the program, residents see a variety of patients, including routine checkups, trauma cases, after-hours emergencies, mentally challenged individuals and the elderly. Residents also gain experience with a variety of materials including high-level anesthetics. Most AEGD programs provide a stipend.

#### **Q: What is a General Practice Residency (GPR)?**

**A:** GPR residency programs are also 1 or 2 years, but are hospital based. In these programs residents have the chance to increase their speed and proficiency in performing various dental procedures, gain experience with developmentally disabled and medically compromised patients and develop surgical skills. Residents rotate through various medical rotations in different programs, but are required to rotate through general medicine and anesthesiology. GPRs are often considered employees of the institution and paid at the level that all other first-year residents at the affiliated hospital. This is usually more than what AEGDs pay.

#### **Q: What characterizes GPR at UCSF?**

**A:** Four GPRs are accepted each year for a 1 year program. A strong emphasis is placed on hospital dentistry including rotations in anesthesia, oral surgery, general medicine, oral medicine, and orofacial pain. A new component of the program is an increasing number of advanced restorative cases including restoration, and sometimes placement, of implants. Didactics include History & Physical didactic and hands-on course, Head & Neck anatomy, lectures on anesthesia, trauma, TMD, management of medically complex patients. Many of these classes are taken in conjunction with OMFS interns and other first year residents in other specialties. Monthly GPR journal club is facilitated by a rotating schedule of residents. Residents take call approximately 1 week per month while on the dental service. They take overnight trauma call at SFGH while on that rotation. Enough exposure is offered in anesthesia to allow the successful graduate to apply for a CA Conscious Sedation permit, once licensed. Pay is over \$45,000 plus benefits. As of 2010, there was a 10:1 ratio of applicants:positions available.

#### **Q: What characterizes Air Force AEGD residencies?**

**A:** There are 12 AEGD residency programs run by the US Air Force; these are guaranteed post-graduate programs, 25% didactic and 75% clinical, and include IV sedation certification. The Air Force AEGD program is a 4 year commitment but incurs little or no debt, compensating residents \$60,000 in loan repayment and \$30,000 salary plus bonuses.

#### **Q: What characterizes AEGD at the San Francisco Veterans' Affairs Medical Center (VA)?**

**A:** Residency work at the VA is government-sponsored and primarily treats an older male population, involving a lot of prosthodontics. Pay is \$40,000-\$45,000 per year.

#### **Q: How do GPR and AEGD programs differ?**

**A:** According to the requirements put out by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, GPRs have all the same requirements as AEGDs in addition to providing hospital training, specifically in anesthesia and general medicine, and with a more diverse population of patients. GPRs can allow a resident to get 3-4 years ahead of a dental graduate who goes straight into private practice. AEGD residencies are more clinic-based, and involve working with the general public, including all specialties: endodontics, anesthesia, periodontics, implants, etc. One's experience in AEGD depends heavily on the type of patients you happen to get. In general, doing an AEGD or GPR residency can help a graduate decide on a specialty.

#### **Q: What is a typical day for a GPR/AEGD resident?**

**A:** Panelists reported that schedules can vary widely. Generally a resident works 8:30AM-5:00PM and sees 6-8 patients per day. Receptionists schedule patients, but the resident needs to make sure "things are under control." Residents may do their own lab work or send it out.

#### **Q: What other GPR/AEGD programs are good?**

**A:** Each program offers something slightly different from the next. It is best to identify professional and personal goals and find programs that are a good match. Some programs offer enough exposure to anesthesia and IV sedation that graduates can apply for a CA Conscious Sedation permit once they receive their CA dental licenses. The UCSF GPR is one such program. University of Nevada has a particular strength in implant placement and restoration.

**Q: How are GPR/AEGD residents compensated?**

**A:** Stipends range from \$27,000 to \$49,000 per year. Current residents stated the “pay is very bad.”

**Q: How does GPR/AEGD relate to Board Exams?**

**A:** In California, graduates of a GPR or AEGD can choose the route of licensure by residency rather than taking the board licensing exam. The applicant cannot have failed the WREB within the past 5 years. New York now requires a year of post-graduate training in order to get a license; they no longer accept board licensing exams. This trend is expected to continue. Students are encouraged to investigate regulations in the states in which they wish to practice. The ADA publishes a list of accredited programs on their website.

**Q: How can a dental student prepare for a GPR/AEGD residency?**

**A:** Current residents recommend starting the process early by emailing program directors and visiting programs. Applicants may be able to shadow current residents or do externships. Developing a good clinical and interpersonal relationship with faculty mentors will allow for strong letters of recommendation.

**Q: What careers can a GPR/AEGD residency lead to?**

**A:** Panelists reported that GPR/AEGD residents may go on to private practice, academics, or other specialties. Oral Surgery programs prefer GPR graduates over AEGD graduates.

## **PREPARING THE RESIDENCY APPLICATION**

**Q: What is the timeline of GPR/AEGD application?**

**A:** Current residents recommend registering with each program’s website and PASS early. Applicants should also request letters of recommendation early (e.g. request by June for November deadlines) and have their CV’s ready by Spring Break of their 3rd years. An applicant should make sure all of his or her application materials have been received by PASS at least 2 weeks before the deadline.

**Q: What constitutes an ideal GPR/AEGD candidate?**

**A:** According to panelists, GPR/AEGD programs are competitive, but not as competitive as specialty residencies. GPR applicants submit their applications via the PASS match system; matching commits an applicant to attending his or her matched program. International students must graduate from US-accredited schools in order to be admitted to a US GPR/AEGD program. To enroll in the VA’s program, graduates must be American citizens. Graduates fresh out of school are preferred. Research experience can strengthen an application, as can “anything to bulk up your resume.” There is no “ideal candidate,” but residency programs primarily consider National Board Dental Examination Part I scores (prefer over 85), academic training, 3 letters of recommendation, GPA/class rank (applicants should be in the upper half of their classes), personal statements, portfolios, and, most importantly, interviews. It is integral for applicants to know their professional goals to find a program that is a good match for them.

**Q: What constitutes a strong GPR/AEGD interview?**

**A:** According to panelists, in an interview, a candidate should demonstrate intelligence, willingness to learn, significant knowledge of the program, and great communication skills. An applicant should take notes during the interview about the size of the program, pay, sense of community, and overall feel.

**Q: What constitutes a strong GPR/AEGD letter of recommendation?**

**A:** Panelists stated that applicants should come off as “team players”; letters of recommendation should emphasize qualities of being ethical and professional, working hard, having good hand skills, and caring about patients.

**Q: How can students find information about GPR/AEGD programs?**

**A:** Panelists offered several suggestions. The ASDA puts out a book every year to compare GPR programs across the US. The ADA website also has a search engine in which applicants can seek, for example, 1 year GPR programs in California. However, according to panelists, the best way to ascertain the quality of different programs is by word of mouth. Before deciding where to apply, applicants should decide what they want to learn, as programs vary widely. A director’s specialty often directs the interests of a particular program. Applicants should investigate what techniques a particular program allows them to practice, such as implant placement, periodontal surgery, Invisalign, etc. Programs associated with dental schools that have their own endodontics departments may not allow GPR/AEGD residents to conduct many procedures. It is also useful to find out how many faculty are full-time.