FAQs on SNS External Medical Student Rotation Policy during the COVID-19 Pandemic

My school is close to several programs. Could I rotate at programs within the same city?

Unfortunately, that is not possible this year. Many institutions have quarantine rules and many are not allowing students to rotate out. In order to create equity for all students, students will only be allowed to rotate and receive LORs from their own institutions this year.

I am a student without a home neurosurgery program. How do I arrange an external neurosurgery rotation?

The Dean’s office of your medical school should contact the closest (or equivalent) available regional AGCGME-approved neurosurgery residency Program Director to arrange for your rotation.

Do I need to complete 8 weeks of neurological surgery rotations at my home institution?

Yes. This is highly recommended in order to receive adequate training and understanding of the specialty of neurosurgery. Most students have limited exposure to neurosurgery and the neurosciences during medical school and an acting internship allows for participation in all aspects of the specialty, prior to deciding upon a career path. It will also give adequate time for the faculty to get to know you and provide you with insightful letters of recommendation.

From whom can I get letters of recommendation?

Letters of recommendation should come from your home institution. You must have at least two (2) from neurosurgical faculty and one (1) from general surgery leadership (ie- program director, clerkship director) to summarize your performance during surgical rotations at your institution. A third letter from neurosurgical faculty or a research mentor at your institution is highly recommended. In rare circumstances, you may have previously done a clinical or research rotation (at least 4 weeks) at another institution prior to April 2020, and could request a letter from that mentor if they know you better than current faculty.