Letter to the Editor

State Licensure Requirements for Students Seeking Postgraduate Residency Training May Limit Options

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TO THE EDITOR:

During the residency application process for the 2016-2017 academic year, our program had to deny interviews to 6 candidates who otherwise had very strong applications. Students applying for residency positions in their final year of pharmacy school may be unaware of differing pharmacy state licensure requirements. Ignorance of these differences may derail an otherwise excellent candidate's application and put them at a competitive disadvantage.

To be eligible for a residency position, students must obtain a pharmacy license either before or within a certain period of time after the start of their residency program. Every state has the basic requirement of passing both the NAPLEX and the state law exam. However, some states may require the passing

of additional examinations as well as specific intern hours that may be external to the hours obtained during experiential training. For example, in addition to the common requirements previously mentioned, Pennsylvania requires a total of 1,500 intern hours. Five hundred of those hours must be non-school intern hours. If a student were unaware of this requirement, it would be impossible to obtain these hours during the final few months prior to graduation.

We strongly recommend that pharmacy students who plan on seeking residency positions check state board licensure requirements prior to their fourth professional year. Preceptors, experiential coordinators, and student mentors should also make students aware of this issue as soon as a student expresses an interest in residency training. ■

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