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# A Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Certificate Prior to Matriculating into an ACGME-Accredited Sports Medicine Fellowship: Preliminary Results

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## Background

While it is an ACGME requirement for each sports medicine fellowship (SMF) to train their fellows in musculoskeletal ultrasound (MSK US), many residents receive earlier exposure. For those interested, obtaining an MSK US certificate is a way to show competency with this skill. The purpose of this study is to see the current outlook of having an MSK US certificate prior to matriculating into an ACGME-accredited SMF, utilizing a national survey of SMF program directors (PDs).

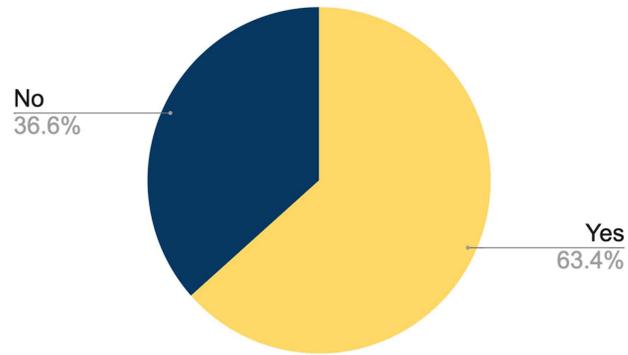
## Methodology

The authors designed a Google Form survey with 16 questions regarding the value of obtaining an MSK US certificate prior to or during a SMF. The survey was then sent to the PDs and program coordinators for each of the 188 ACGME-accredited SMF, as listed on FREIDA. The results were compiled by synthesizing the data provided by each program's representative.

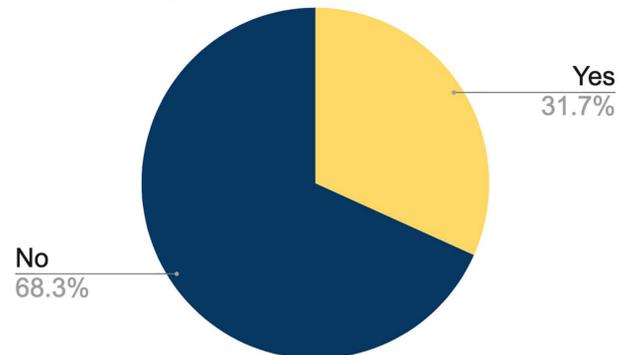
## Key Findings

- Sports Medicine Fellowship Directors were very aware of MSK US Certifications, but did not expect residents applying for fellowship to obtain them prior to fellowship
- Of the certifications, RMSK was the most well known and the most frequently obtained by previous fellows, faculty, and program directors
- 85% of the PDs felt that there was enough exposure during their fellowship to meet the requirements of obtaining an MSK US Certification

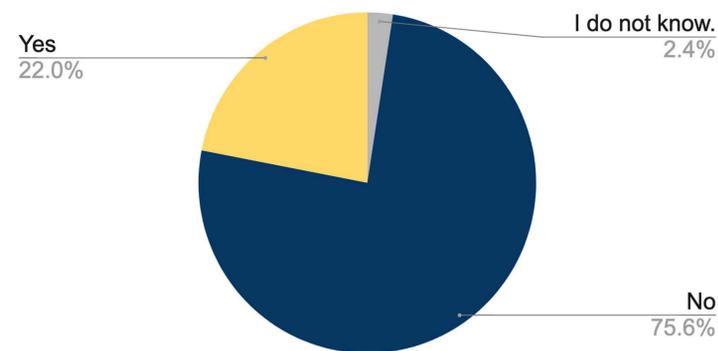
Do you believe that obtaining one of these certificates is of value for today's Sports Medicine physicians?



Do you believe that obtaining one of these certificates prior to applying to or during the application process for a Sports Medicine fellowship would be of value for an applicant seeking a fellowship?



Is the program director of this Sports Medicine fellowship personally certified in ultrasound?



## Results

Of the 40 PDs that completed the survey, 37 (92.5%) reported they were aware of certificates of competency in MSK US. The most commonly acknowledged certificate (75%) was Registered in Musculoskeletal Sonography (RMSK). 25 PDs (62.5%) thought that obtaining one of these MSK US certificates was valuable for today's sports medicine physicians. Only 12 (30%) believed that obtaining an MSK US certificate prior to applying to a SMF would be of value for an applicant, yet 18 (45%) stated that it would positively impact the view of the trainee's candidacy for the SMF. Only 4 (10%) would recommend residents obtain an MSK US certificate prior to applying. 34 (85%) stated that there was enough MSK US exposure during their respective SMF to meet the requirements of obtaining a certification, if so desired. 9 (22.5%) of the PDs that responded are personally MSK US certified, each with the RMSK certification.

## Conclusions

There were limitations in this study. Only 40 of 188 (21%) programs responded to the survey. In addition to the low response rate, responses were kept anonymous. In spite of that, based on preliminary data, there appears to be a near universal awareness amongst PDs of MSK US certificates, with RMSK being the most well known. The majority stated that they felt that a certificate was valuable for today's sports medicine physician, yet only 30% believed that obtaining one prior to applying for an SMF was valuable. Interestingly, nearly half of the PDs felt that obtaining a certificate would be a positive attribute for SMF candidates.



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