

Best Medical Schools Can Boost Best Hospital Rankings

By Gabrielle DeTora, Principal, DeTora Consulting, Philadelphia, PA

Many of the Best Hospitals listed in *U.S. News & World Report's* annual rankings are academic medical centers which are tied to a medical school. Just as it ranks hospitals, *U.S. News* ranks medical schools, with rankings divided into the areas of Research and Primary Care.

Strong research programs can improve rankings for both the medical school and the associated academic medical center. When the two entities are closely tied, they are able to develop cutting-edge joint research programs, helping both entities attract funding and thereby ensuring future research opportunities.

The strong research program can also help academic medical centers to improve their physician reputation scores. Communicating with peer physicians is vital in reputation-building efforts. These communications must present the academic medical center as a thought-leader to peer physicians throughout the country. A strong research program coordinated with a medical school can provide a steady stream of content that would be of interest to peer physicians, increasing the potential for improving physician reputation scores.

For the *U.S. News* rankings of the Best Medical Schools for Research, the 144 medical schools accredited in 2017 by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education and the 33 schools of osteopathic medicine accredited in 2017 by the American Osteopathic Association were surveyed in fall 2017 and early 2018. Of those 177 schools, 124 responded and provided the data needed to calculate the rankings based on the indicators used in the medical school research model as well as the primary care rankings.

Both rankings are based on a weighted average of indicators. Because the research model has the biggest opportunity to impact physician reputation scores, we have outlined those below.

Quality Assessment (weighted by .30 for the research medical school)

- Peer assessment score (0.15 for the research medical school model, a decrease from 0.20 last year).
- Assessment score by residency directors (0.15 for the research medical school model, a decrease from 0.20 last year).

Research Activity (weighted by 0.40 in the research medical school model only, an increase from 0.30 last year)

- Total NIH research activity (0.15).
- Average NIH research activity per faculty member (0.15).
- Total non-NIH federal research activity (0.025).
- Average non-NIH federal research activity per faculty member (0.025).
- Total nonfederal research activity (0.025).
- Average nonfederal research activity per faculty member (0.025).

Student Selectivity (0.20 in the research medical school model)

- Median MCAT total score (0.13 in the research medical school model).
- Median undergraduate GPA (0.06 in the research medical school model).
- Acceptance rate (0.01 in the research medical school model).
- Faculty resources (0.10 in the research medical school model).

Specialty Rankings

Similar to the reputation scores, Specialty Rankings for medical schools are based solely on ratings by medical school deans and senior faculty from the list of schools surveyed. This year for the first time, *U.S. News* conducted specialty rankings in anesthesiology, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry, radiology and surgery. These fields were added based on suggestions from medical schools deans to better reflect the curriculum taught at medical schools.

Survey respondents each identified up to 10 schools offering the best programs in each specialty area.

Those schools receiving the most votes in each specialty are numerically ranked in descending order based on the number of nominations they received, as long as the school or program received seven or more nominations in that specialty area. This

means that schools ranked at the bottom of each specialty ranking have received at least seven nominations.

The specialty areas of drug and alcohol abuse, family medicine, geriatrics, rural medicine and women's health are no longer surveyed.

Reference: [Methodology: 2019 Best Medical Schools Rankings](#)

About Gabrielle DeTora

Gabrielle is a healthcare marketing strategist with nearly two decades of executive experience and a proven track record of driving ROI. Gabrielle has worked with the CEOs and leadership teams of nearly 50 health systems, representing over 100 hospitals nationwide. She has served as the strategic leader for health systems, brand marketing agencies, and consultancies.

Earlier in her career, Gabrielle served as the Vice President of Health Strategy for a major advertising agency. There, she oversaw all strategic business planning, branding, marketing, and execution for more than a dozen large healthcare systems, healthcare organizations, and insurance companies.

Her past experience also includes top executive strategic planning and marketing roles at St. Joseph's Healthcare System, Hunterdon Healthcare System, the Cure for Lymphoma Foundation, and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. This deep experience gives her a keen understanding of the healthcare industry, which she uses to deliver highly effective strategic marketing plans for her clients.

Beyond the work Gabrielle conducts for her clients, she is also called upon regularly to speak at national healthcare conferences, and is a regular contributor to a variety of healthcare publications. Gabrielle has an MBA from Kennedy-Western University and a BBA from the Zicklin School of Business (CUNY).

To ask questions or inquire about consultant services for effective and efficient strategic planning execution, please contact Gabrielle DeTora at gabrielle@detoraconsulting.com or 908-447-9231.

Connect Online

www.DeToraConsulting.com | www.linkedin.com/in/gabrielledetora