

Neonatology Solutions Provides Resources to Ensure Fellows Can Still Define and Find Their Ideal Career Position

Scott Snyder, MD, Amy Patel, MD



We at [Neonatology Solutions](#) remain acutely aware of the challenges fellows face as they complete their training and navigate their future career path in an increasingly virtual world. To gain a deeper perspective, we sat down (virtually, of course) with Dr. Amy Patel, a first-year fellow at Columbia University Irving Medical Center, to hear how COVID-19 has changed the training process and how Neonatology Solutions has provided resources to ensure fellows can still define and find their ideal career position following fellowship:

Neonatology Solutions: So, you're completing your first year of fellowship in the middle of a pandemic, which is certainly an incredibly unique and challenging situation. What have been the biggest barriers to the usual educational process that we are all used to in medicine?

Dr. Patel: Well, with regards to our educational materials, a lot of the format has changed from the traditional bedside educational opportunities and traditional conference setting to more virtual set-ups. So everything from noon conference to other didactic sessions are almost all Zoom-based. When I teach residents now, I appreciate the flexibility and convenience that webinar platforms have provided, but I do think it has taken away from some of the insights and shared mental model that one would try to foster during these types of discussions. And while we all do our very best to teach effectively, reassure families and staff, there is now an impersonal component to doing so much of this over phone or video. And that's just a function of the pandemic. I really feel for our families who at baseline already have many challenges and barriers while having a baby in NICU. There are just so many more layers now that make it incredibly hard for both families and staff.

Neonatology Solutions: How do you see all these changes impacting your ultimate job search?

Dr. Patel: So throughout the years I've been fortunate to have many colleagues and friends with whom I've trained who are now early career attendings. They've given me great practical advice along the way, sharing lessons they learned. I also feel I've definitely benefitted from my bicoastal training. I started my training in California and am now in New York; because of this I feel fortunate to have met many leaders in our field with whom I can continue to pursue my research interests. I'm grateful that I've had such strong mentors very early on and I've known that I've wanted to do neonatology since my 4th year of medical school. I'd be remiss to not mention one mentor in particular who's been a fierce advocate since my intern year and shares many of my interests in global health, research and quality improvement, Dr. Priscilla Joe!

I also have sought out online resources, websites, and blogs such as Kevin MD, the White Coat Investor, and Neonatology Solutions. These resources have empowered me to think about the job search and my financial planning much earlier than I think I otherwise would have. I'm already reading about contracts and terms so that I can put my best foot forward and advocate for myself and my career. To that end, I've really come to appreciate the transparency of websites such as Neonatology Solutions. Coding, physician contracts, managing credentials...these are often not covered extensively in fellowship since there is so much medicine to learn.

Neonatology Solutions: How did you hear about Neonatology Solutions? What aspects of the site have been most helpful?

Dr. Patel: Well, I read a lot, whether about different practice models, physician lifestyles, career planning, etc. In researching different topics within our field, I came across your website which had so many of these elements concisely summarized. The NICU Directory has been really helpful since I have been in so many different places. I can appreciate how one's geographical preference can change over time, and fellows and trainees can have different preferences. This gives them a tool to compare and contrast different practice settings. I like that I can quickly search by State and NICU Level because, at least right out of training, I want to be at a busy Level III or IV NICU. I haven't looked at specific job postings at this point since I'm still in my first fellowship year, but I love that so many positions are compiled here.

Speaking specifically about the Career Planning section, I do appreciate the stepwise approach that is provided. While I haven't gone through the interview process yet, some of my colleagues who have become attendings in the last couple years have said that they felt unprepared going about negotiating a contract, and even just understanding what some of the different terms in the contract even mean. There's good information on the website to help fellows learn about these aspects of the job search.

Neonatology Solutions: What new features or content can Neonatology Solutions incorporate to further support fellows in their training and job search efforts?

Dr. Patel: Some of the areas I feel I don't have a good knowledge base of right now are things like billing and coding. By the time I approach my final year of fellowship, I want to be sure I understand this well. In the meantime, I plan to continue to share awareness of the Neonatology Solutions website and the resources it provides to my fellow colleagues.

We wish to express our appreciation to Dr. Patel for spending time to not only share ideas on how to improve our services, but for sharing her current efforts and challenges in long-term career planning, on behalf of Neonatology fellows across the U.S. We hope her perspective sheds some light for others and we want to ensure all Neonatology fellows know there is a dedicated resource to help with their ongoing career success.



Skip To: 2nd Year 3rd Year



6 Steps to Success



Career Planning Resources:

- [Career Planning Timeline](#)
- [6 Steps of Career Planning](#)
- [NICU Directory](#)
- [Neonatology Job Directory](#)

Our gratitude also goes to Columbia University for allowing Dr. Patel to participate in this interview and publication.

The author is a principal of Neonatology Solutions, LLC.

NT

Corresponding Author



*Scott Snyder, MD, FAAP
System Medical Director
St. Luke's Neonatology
Founder
Neonatology Solutions, LLC
Scott Snyder Scott@neonatologysolutions.com*



*Amy Patel, MD,
First-year Neonatal Fellow
Columbia University Irving Medical Center
630 West 168th Street
New York, NY 10032*

New subscribers are always welcome!

NEONATOLOGY TODAY

**To sign up for a free monthly subscription,
just click on this box to go directly to our
subscription page**

