OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

Obstetrics/gynecology is a diversified specialty concerned with the delivery of medical and surgical care to women. This field combines two specialties: obstetrics, which focuses on the care of women before, during and after childbirth; and gynecology, which involves the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the female reproductive system and breasts. Relationships with patients are long-term and are often maintained through the postmenopausal stage of a patient’s life.

Obstetrician/Gynecologists (Ob/Gyn) often serve as consultants to other physicians. In many cases, the Ob/Gyn is the primary care physician, with whom patients have regular contact and obtain medical advice and counseling. The specialty also offers opportunities to practice other skills such as laparoscopic surgery, endocrinology and preventive medicine.
Profile
The following information reflects responses from 112 obstetricians who completed the 2003 Pathway Physician's Survey.

A. Respondents by types of areas

- Large City: 22.32%
- Metropolitan City: 36.61%
- Small City: 28.57%
- Rural: 10.71%
- Other: 1.79%

B. Respondents by gender

- Male: 76.58%
- Female: 23.42%

C. Respondents by years in practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in Practice</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 yrs</td>
<td>22.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 yrs</td>
<td>36.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 yrs</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-25 yrs</td>
<td>10.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 yrs</td>
<td>1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 30 yrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perspectives

A. Respondents’ satisfaction with current specialty/area of work

- Very satisfied: 50.89%
- Somewhat satisfied: 23.42%
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied: 6.36%
- Somewhat dissatisfied: 13.86%
- Very dissatisfied: 5.95%
B. Would you choose this specialty again?

C. Respondents by practice environment

D. Respondents' satisfaction with practice environment
Rating and Weighting of Critical Factors

Critical Factors represent significant aspects of physicians’ experiences in their practices. The rating represents their assessment of their current practice characteristics, while the weighting represents the importance of each factor to physicians.

A. Caring for patients: How much time do you spend directly seeing and caring for patients?

Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

σ = 1.66

B. Continuity of care: How much continuity of care do you have with patients, (i.e., the length of patient relationships)?

Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

σ = 2.12

C. Autonomy: To what extent do you have the final word on the treatment of your patients?

Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

σ = 1.81
D. Diversity: How much routine (similar work) or diversity (different tasks/activities) is involved in your work?

σ = 1.90

E. Personal time: Does your work allow you to control the scheduling and amount of time you spend on personal activities, (i.e., family, leisure)?

σ = 2.30

F. Expertise: How broad is the scope of your work?

σ = 1.62
G. Income satisfaction: Compared to all physicians, do you feel you are fairly compensated for the amount of time and effort you spend?

Rating

![Rating Chart]

Weighting

![Weighting Chart]

H. Creativity: To what extent does your work provide opportunity for creativity?

Rating

![Rating Chart]

Weighting

![Weighting Chart]

I. Certainty of outcomes: How much certainty of clinical outcomes does your work provide?

Rating

![Rating Chart]

Weighting

![Weighting Chart]
J. Clinical decision-making: On what basis are your clinical decisions made?

Rating: Application of theory to a situation based on prior evidence of clinical outcomes

σ = 1.30

Weighting

σ = 0.73

K. Patient decision-making: To what extent do your patients have input into decisions about their health care?

Rating: Little opportunity vs. Great deal of opportunity

σ = 1.60

Weighting

σ = 0.85

L. Interacting with other physicians/members of health-care team: To what extent does your work provide opportunities for you to interact with other physicians/members of a health-care team?

Rating: Very little vs. A great deal

σ = 1.93

Weighting

σ = 0.83
M. Manual/mechanical activities: How often do you use manual/mechanical activities for highly skilled tasks (i.e., following procedures, performing operations)?

Rating

![Rating Scale](image)

**Weighting**

![Weighting Scale](image)

N. Pressure: How much pressure do you have in your work (i.e., dealing with clinical crises, need for immediate decisions about patients, dealing with multiple patients simultaneously).

Rating

![Rating Scale](image)

**Weighting**

![Weighting Scale](image)

O. Responsibility: How much responsibility do you assume for patient outcomes in your work?

Rating

![Rating Scale](image)

**Weighting**

![Weighting Scale](image)
P. Schedule: What type of schedule do you have in your work?

Q. Security: How much professional security do you have in your position, (i.e., know where you stand and are certain of your future professionally, will there be a need for your services in the future)?

R. Sense of accomplishment: To what extent does your work provide the opportunity to see end results?
Weekly distribution of time
According to the survey, obstetricians spend their week as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Average Hours per week (may overlap)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient care activities</td>
<td>41.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-call (in contact)</td>
<td>15.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-call (available)</td>
<td>67.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>8.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional travel</td>
<td>4.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing education</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other professional</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patient profile

A. Patient encounters per week

B. Patient characteristics

By age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants (0-2 yrs)</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (3-18 yrs)</td>
<td>10.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults (19-64 yrs)</td>
<td>75.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older adults (65+ yrs)</td>
<td>15.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underrepresented minority (URM)</td>
<td>29.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-URM</td>
<td>70.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By type of insurance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Insurance</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid/Medicare</td>
<td>27.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninsured</td>
<td>8.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>64.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of patient encounters that deal with:

- Routine check-ups: 52.35%
- Acute illness: 28.28%
- Chronic illness: 17.77%
- Terminal illness: 2.30%

Percentage of time per patient encounter devoted to:

- Acute conditions: 43.50%
- Chronic conditions: 27.37%
- Preventive health: 42.83%

C. Five types of illnesses/conditions most frequently encountered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illness/Condition</th>
<th>Number of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy/Childbirth</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abnormal uterine bleeding</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menopausal concerns</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaginitis</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelvic pain</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of comments for question: List up to three other factors, if any, you would advise students to consider carefully before selecting your specialty?

Physicians who completed the Pathway Physician’s Survey, 2003, submitted the following comments. The majority of comments are categorized by the Critical Factors that are rated and weighted in another section. Numbers in parentheses indicate the total number of responses for a particular comment.

1. Caring for Patients
   - Patient contact
   - Need to see most ob patients with a problem
   - Enjoy these patients in particular
   - Care about your patients
   - Importance of direct patient care
   - Learn from patients
   - Sharing joy with patient

2. Continuity of Care

3. Autonomy

4. Diversity

5. Personal Time
   - Lifestyle (15)
   - Time off
   - Willing to give up personal schedule
   - Social life
   - Personal time/family time needed/limited (12)
   - If ob - can you live with constant disruption to a schedule, pressure and unpredictability?
   - Practice structure as it relates to personal time constraints
   - Having time for yourself
   - Quality of life

6. Expertise
   - Unique skills

7. Income Satisfaction
   - Income/financial security/salary/compensation (10)
   - Decreasing reimbursement (3)

8. Creativity
9. Certainty of Outcomes
   • Uncertainty of outcomes (2)
   • Most of the time great outcome

10. Clinical Decision Making

11. Patient Decision Making

12. Interacting with Other Physicians/Members of Health-care Team
   • Enjoy colleagues
   • Congeniality of coworkers: physicians, nurses
   • Nursing issues

13. Manual /Mechanical Activities
   • Manual dexterity in performing surgical procedures (3)

14. Pressure
   • Prepared for the stress of obstetrical decision-making
   • Pressure/stress (8)
   • Ability to make quick decisions in high pressure situations
   • Occasionally, high pressure job

15. Responsibility

16. Schedule
   • Hours: long/unpredictable/irregular/night/on-call (19)
   • Schedule/lifestyle (2)
   • If OB - Can you be pleasant when awakened in the middle of the night?
   • Not mind night work
   • Do you dislike getting out of bed constantly at 1, 2, and 3 am?
   • Good call schedule
   • Chance of being up all night on call at age 50+
   • Are you prepared to commit time to the community in which you practice?

17. Security
   • Less of a market for male obstetricians
   • Evolving practice opportunities
   • Need in geographic area desired (2)
   • Number of practitioners
   • Demand for specialty

18. Sense of Accomplishment
   • Great deal of satisfaction
• Professional satisfaction of dealing with women's health care at a time when the demographics of our society needs it a lot
• Incredible satisfaction of helping to bring life into the world

19. Patient Characteristics
• Type of patient
• Sex of applicant
• Pro's of caring for generally healthy patients

20. Types of Illnesses
• Exposure to life threatening illnesses such as HIV
• Sometimes bad outcome
• Degree of patient illness

21. Practice Environment
• Malpractice situation/crisis/costs/insurance/risks (25)
• Liability: climate/risk/professional/issues/exposure (13)
• Insurance/hospital control (2)
• Willingness to pay high malpractice premiums and see income shrink steadily
• Payer types
• Group practice
• Medical practice environment
• Ability to pick a type of practice

22. Health Care Environment
• Bureaucratic intervention
• Managed care and HMO impact/intervention (5)
• Regulation (2)

23. Personality/Temperament
• Willingness to miss personal events
• Sense of humor
• Have lots of stamina (3)
• Empathy for the infertile
• Be friendly
• Enjoy the challenge of decision-making (2)
• Enjoy surgery
• Love working with people
• Make sure you like to deal with only women patients
• Passion
• Ability to multitask/be task oriented (2)
• Do you have a strong compassion or empathy for the problems females have?
• Devotion
- Ability/willingness to listen to patients (2)
- Need for conformity
- You must like to talk.
- Desire to do medicine and surgery
- Personality
- Patience (2)
- Able to tolerate sleep deprivation (2)
- Compassion
- Enjoy action
- Ability to be alert ready to respond to emergencies at any hour
- Dedicated
- Ability to work hard
- Solid philosophical foundation
- Common sense

24. Miscellaneous Comments
- Gender of fellow physicians in future
- Gender/gender bias/male female provider issues (5)
- Research interests
- Availability
- Debt upon graduation
- Liability
- Tort reform
- Physically demanding
- Faith
- Interest (2)
- Willingness to perform deliveries
- Flexibility
- Hard work
- Be willing to read and keep up with changes
- Where you want to live (2)
- Retirement
- Ancillary staffing
- Respect for others
- Communication skills
- Patience
- CME
- Paperwork
- Compulsive record checking
- Time and financial investment in education
- Love/enjoy your work (5)
- Stable loved ones who can accept your hectic lifestyle
- Commitment
- Job/personal satisfaction/gratification (9)
- Will you enjoy doing this work 20-25 years later?
- Stress/reward factors in ObGyn
- Do you like politics—very important in medicine
- Making a difference