

EVALUATING THE NUMBER OF RESIDENCY POSITIONS OFFERED IN OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY IN CANADA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Introduction: Human Resource shortages in our specialty have forced us to examine several aspects of medical education in ObGyn to determine where improvements can be made. It is crucial for Departments of ObGyn to be able to accommodate all medical students who choose Obstetrics and Gynaecology as their first career choice.

Objective: To determine if the total annual quota of residency positions offered at each Faculty of Medicine for all specialties is proportional to the number of positions being offered in the Departments of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

Methods: Statistics were gathered for each of the thirteen English medical universities in Canada to determine the number of residency positions offered annually by each department of obstetrics and gynaecology and each faculty of medicine as a whole from 2000 to 2005.

Results: The number of residency positions offered in Obstetrics and Gynaecology has risen by 26% from 2000 to 2005. The total number of positions offered at each faculty of medicine for all specialties has risen by 27% for the same period. From 2003 to 2005, 3 universities received less than their quota of the residency positions when compared to the total number of positions offered at their university with the remaining universities receiving an equal share. Only 1 university allocated additional positions over and above their equal share in 2004 and 2005.

Conclusions: It appears that universities are taking the total number of positions and dividing it equally amongst all the specialties. There needs to be some flexibility from all faculties of medicine in order to accommodate for those specialties that are facing crisis situations by assigning additional positions as needed. An additional survey should be conducted comparing the number of medical students choosing ObGyn as their first discipline and the number of residency positions offered on a yearly basis to determine whether or not the Departments are meeting demands. The human resources problem is a much larger one requiring many more studies but perhaps this will bring us one step closer to addressing shortages in our discipline.

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