



A Survey of Obstetric and Gynecology Resident Experience and Interest in Global Health

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Background

The Department of Global Health at the University of Washington (UW) is focusing on enhancing sustainable health care in low income countries (LICs) through the integration of education, research, and service in coordination with other academic departments.
 Electives in LICs offer residents unique opportunities
 >to broaden their clinical and surgical skills
 >to increase their global awareness of health care inequality,¹
 >Young physicians exposed to global health during residency may be more apt to continue international work during their careers.^{2,3}

Objective

To evaluate UW OB/GYN resident experience and interest in international clinical electives during residency training.

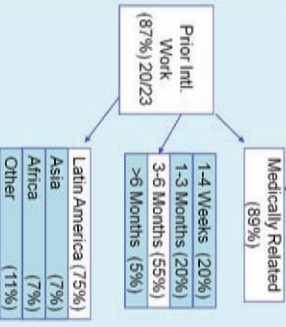
Methods

We asked 30 current and incoming UW OB/GYN residents to complete an anonymous survey, which received IRB approval. The questions addressed respondents' prior experiences in international settings, language skills, and interest and preferences regarding potential future international experiences.

UW Ob/Gyn Resident Experience and Preferences

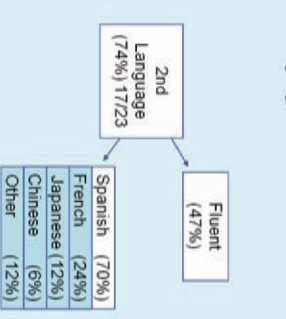
Prior International Experience

The majority of residents have participated in international work. Most served for greater than a month while in medical school and the majority worked in a Latin American country.



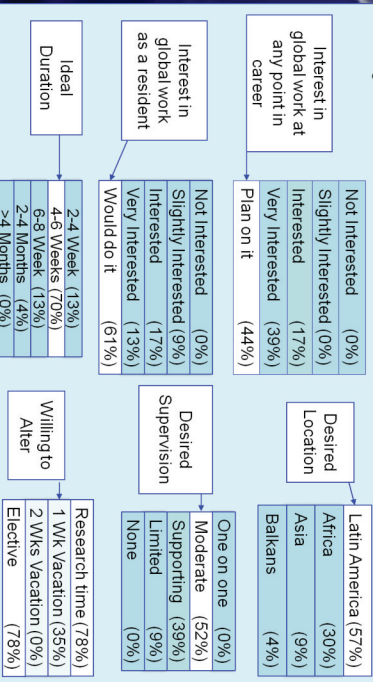
Second Language

Over half state that they speak a second language, with Spanish the most prevalent. Almost half claim fluency in that language.



Resident Interests and Preferences

All respondents were interested in international work in their careers, and the majority would do a medical elective if it were available to them as a resident. The ideal duration for most was 4-6 weeks long and the greatest percentage would prefer a Latin American country. Most would prefer to have supporting to moderate supervision, and many would be willing to forfeit one week of their vacation to serve abroad.



Discussion

Our survey demonstrates that many of the UW residents have prior international experience in medical settings
 > strong interest to continue serving
 > valuable language skills
 > desire to contribute their personal time toward an international experience.

We believe these results indicate that our residents would overwhelmingly participate if international rotations with appropriate supervision are made available.

Further work is needed to
 > develop international programs
 > evaluate the quality of residency training abroad
 > measure physicians' commitment to international health after participating in these electives.

References
 1. Ozgucel D, et al. Surgery in Developing Countries. *World J Surg*. 2006;30(11):1562-69.
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 3. Thompson ML, et al. Educational effects of international health electives on U.S. and Canadian medical students and residents. *A Acad Med*. 2004;69(3):342-7.