The Obstetric Experience among Vascular Surgery Trainees

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Background

- Females compose 1/3 of vascular trainees and less than 10% of practicing vascular surgeons in the U.S.
- Significant challenges have deterred many pursuing surgical career
- Vascular surgery poses unique risks during pregnancy, including long hours, physically demanding work, and radiation exposure.

Objectives

To analyze trainees’ experience of pregnancy and parenthood in vascular surgery:
- Describe trainee perceptions and experiences of pregnancy and parenthood
- Examine the prevalence of obstetric complications and the associated learning environment factors
- Determine the impact of obstetric complications on trainees’ wellbeing

Methods

- Optional and anonymous survey after 2021 VSITE
- Perceptions of pregnancy and parenthood
- Prevalence of obstetric complications
- Trainee parents’ wellbeing including burnout, thoughts of attrition, and suicidal thoughts
- Bivariate analysis and multivariable logistic regression were used to evaluate association for obstetric complications and wellbeing

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Results

- Study cohort: 123 vascular surgery training programs
  - N= 510 trainees
  - N= 128 experienced pregnancy during clinical years
    - Female 52.8% vs. Male 30.2%

Figure 1. Perceptions of Pregnancy and Parenthood

- I have delayed or am delaying having children because of residency*
- I was advised against having children during training*

Table 1. Factors Associated with Burnout

- Includes adjustment for resident & program characteristics

Figures 2. Mistreatment for Parents vs. Non-Parent Residents

Limitations

- Timing of survey
- Cross-sectional analysis demonstrates association, not causation
- Recall bias
- Mistreatment measure and 80 hour violations were of the current academic year while pregnancy may have occurred in previous clinical years

Conclusions

- Female trainees experienced more external pressure related to family planning decisions
- Trainee mothers experienced more mistreatment than trainee fathers which is associated with burnout
- Improving parental support for trainees is necessary to maintain a diverse workforce wellness, and maternal-fetal health

Figure 3. Wellness Outcomes among Trainee Parents