



WATOG satisfaction survey on the ultrasound training of trainees in obstetrics and gynaecology

Hammami A, Gabor P, Dimassi K, Rouveau R, Copado Y, Ramirez A, Kapustin R, Kuroda T, Ami O
World association of trainees in obstetrics and gynecology (WATOG), Paris, France

Objective

This is a satisfaction survey on the status of ultrasound training during postgraduate training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (OB/GYN) across the world from the 1st of April to the 31st of December.

Methods

The following questions were answered by the participants: the length of the ultrasound training (theoretical, practical), the cost of the training, the skills trainees acquire by the end of their curriculum, the skills trainees would like to acquire and those they would estimate necessary to acquire by the time they receive their certificate of specialisation, the difficulties they face during the training process and finally the global satisfaction regarding the training in ultrasound in obstetrics and gynecology.

Results

We received 1050 replies from 69 countries. The length of ultrasound training varies between 0 and 18% in proportion to the length of the whole basic training period. In 80% of the responding countries ultrasound courses are at least partly charged on trainees and in 15% of them no theoretical training is organized at all. As for the practical training: 65% of trainees are formed by assisting to seniors, 60% of them can practice in the OB/GYN emergency ward but only 40% has the occasion to realise ultrasound screening autonomously. The access to practical workshops and simulation labs is very limited (12%) and 10% of trainees say not to have any possibilities to practice ultrasound. Trainees were asked about what kind of skills they could acquire by the end of their curriculum (seven categories were determined): 90% of the respondents confirm to learn how to identify an early pregnancy, 85% of them learn to do simple biometric assessment and basic pelvic scan. Less than 60% of them learn how to realise a basic Doppler study, basic mid-trimester and first trimester scan. Less than 20% would perform full morphological mid-trimester scan. The first three of the above mentioned skills can be acquired in 90-95% of the surveyed countries, the following three skills in 40-50% of them, meanwhile the full mid-trimester scan is only available in a couple of training program. Trainees have been asked to precise the skills they really acquire and those they would estimate necessary to acquire by the time they receive their certificate of specialisation. The comparison revealed important gaps: almost 88% of trainees learn the first three basic competences, but 92, 5% estimate them necessary, as for the following three skills: 52, 5% learn them, but 78, 5% estimate them necessary, the full mid-trimester scan is realised only by 18%, although almost half of the respondents would like to acquire this competence. The global satisfaction was noted from 5 to 1 (very satisfied - not satisfied at all). Geographically a Western dominance can be observed in groups 5 and 4 points, with a European dominance in the very satisfied category. However in some of the very developed countries trainees seem to be unsatisfied (e. g.: Ireland, Canada). The most important difficulties trainees mentioned: the quality of ultrasound training is very dependent on the training centre (60%), there are no (enough) theoretical courses (55%), no national curriculum (45%), not enough access to tutoring by seniors (45%) or no access to the machines at all (18%). More than 50% of trainees find the organized courses too expensive and 15% estimate the requirements too low. After having realised a linear regression study on the global satisfaction, the global number of acquired skills turned to be the most important positive influencer. Other positive factors: the ultrasound cursus being included in basic training and the length of it. An inverse correlation was observed between the global number of difficulties, the absence of organized theoretical and practical training and of a national curriculum.

Conclusion

Ultrasound is an essential tool for OB/GYN specialists. Our survey shows that the quality of ultrasound training is inadequate in many countries across the world and that trainees are well aware of the gap between what they learn and ought to learn. Satisfaction surveys like ours reveal trainees' opinion and provide useful feed-back for specialist societies or ministries of health who organize postgraduate training and define its curriculum. The preliminary results of this survey were presented at the ISOUG World Congress in September 2017 and a publication is in progress on the definitive results.