

Dalhousie University, Halifax
Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology

Program Director: Dr. Leanne McCarthy

IWK Health Centre

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What are you specifically looking for in a candidate?

We are looking for a diverse group of candidates who show a genuine interest in obstetrics and gynaecology. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, along with maturity and sensitivity are critical to our specialty. Trustworthiness and knowing your own limitations are essential. We are a group of residents that are hard-working, supportive of each other and flexible.

What can a potential candidate do now in order to be an appealing applicant to your program?

We are looking for applicants who have completed a broad range of electives while demonstrating an interest in OB/GYN. Electives at Dalhousie are not necessary, but can be helpful for the applicant and the program when making a decision.

How is your residency program organized?

We are now a competency-by-design program. Though our clinical curriculum is still structured in blocks, skill acquisition is tracked and achieved on a longitudinal basis.

PGY-1	General Internship Year Obstetrics (Saint John, NB) 2 blocks General Surgery 2 blocks Junior Core Obstetrics/Gynaecology 4 blocks Gynaecologic Oncology 1 block Emergency Medicine 1 block ICU 1 block General Medicine 1 block Research 1 block
PGY-2	Core OB/GYN OB (Saint John, NB for 3 blocks) 6 blocks total Gynaecology 6 blocks
PGY-3	Core OB/GYN OB 3 blocks Gyne (Saint John, NB for 3 blocks) 6 blocks total Subspecialty 3 blocks

PGY-4 & PGY-5 **Subspecialty and Senior Core Rotations**
Senior OB 3 blocks
Senior Gyne 3 blocks
Elective & Selective 3 blocks each
Gyne Oncology, REI, MFM, Urogyne, Colposcopy 3 blocks each

Our residents are required to participate in the Principles of Surgery course. Residents are excused from their clinical duties for one half-day per week on Wednesday mornings during PGY 1 for POS lectures and seminars. The exam is written in the fall of PGY2.

What is the availability of experiences in subspecialty areas during training?

We have excellent breadth of exposure to all subspecialty rotations including Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Gynaecologic Oncology, MIS, Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, Urogynaecology, Colposcopy/Pathology and Ultrasound. We also have opportunities to work with staff that have a special interest in Pediatric Gynaecology.

What is the typical day in the life of a resident?

While on core obstetrics, you will be covering Labour and Delivery, elective C-sections, OB clinics, early labour assessments and the antepartum and postpartum wards. Core Gynaecology responsibilities include inpatient consults, inpatient rounds, OR time and ambulatory clinics, including the Early Pregnancy Complications Clinic. There is usually a team of residents covering a core rotation at any one time, enabling duties to be shared among colleagues. Educational responsibilities generally include presenting at grand rounds, journal club, gynaecology case rounds and academic half-day sessions.

What is call like?

Maximum call is 1 shift every 4 days. As a PGY1, while on OB or Gyne services, you do call with a senior buddy. On Gyne Onc you will cover call on your own. Otherwise, when off service, you cover call for whichever service you are rotating through. In years 2-5, residents generally cover OB call on a rotating basis and the amount of call is graded in nature, such that PGY2s cover the most and PGY5s the least to provide time for exam preparation. Weekend shifts are 12 hours in length. Our gynaecology service is covered using a home call night-float system where the resident on is relieved from daytime duties. Gynaecologic oncology is home call. Our residents and staff are always respectful of each other's time and post-call days.

What is overall resident satisfaction like in your program?

Overall, we are a very happy and social group of residents. Recent graduates from our program have felt they received very well-rounded training that prepared them for practice as an independent staff.

Are there sufficient elective opportunities during training to explore your special interests?

There are 3 months dedicated to elective time in fourth year. Electives may be pursued anywhere within Canada or internationally. They may also be completed outside of the

specialty if they pertain to a particular interest or career goal (e.g. ICU, genetics, neonatology, etc.).

What distinguishes the Dalhousie program from other programs?

We have a state-of-the-art surgical skills lab where wet and dry sessions are conducted to help enhance residents' surgical skills. We also have a fully equipped simulation centre, including an ultrasound scan-trainer. Our strong simulation curriculum provides us with additional opportunities to practice the management of obstetrical emergencies. Both facilities are open for self-directed learning 24/7.

We are the only high-risk obstetrical centre in the Maritimes, providing exposure to unique and challenging presentations. We have very few fellows, allowing residents to maximize OR time. Staff-led cadaver and laparoscopic skills labs throughout the year to enhance surgical skill development. Well-established resident wellness program with department-sponsored events every month. Close and supportive group of residents and staff who are committed to creating a positive learning environment.

What distinguishes Halifax from other cities?

Halifax is the largest and most vibrant city in Atlantic Canada. There is an abundance of food and music festivals throughout the year and the waterfront is always bustling with activity. Miles of spectacular rugged coastline surround the province with numerous opportunities for outdoor activities. Above all, the seafood is unsurpassed!

How competitive is it to get in to your program, and then to succeed in your field?

OB/GYN was the 11th ranked discipline in 2020 with respect to number of applicants versus number of available residency positions. For every residency program spot, there were 1.5 applicants. Residents finishing our program acquire the broad skill set necessary to practice as a successful generalist obstetrician-gynecologist.

What local, national or international conferences would be of benefit to candidates interested in your residency program?

Attendance at conferences is not required for admission to our program. If candidates are interested, attendance at the SOGC Eastern CME or AGM may be an opportunity to meet our residents and staff. The SOGC has a medical student program at the ACSC each year which is of great benefit.

Who can we contact for more information?

Education Coordinator: Mary Boudreau, mary.boudreau@iwk.nshealth.ca

Website:

<http://obstetrics.medicine.dal.ca>

Specifically, is there a list of residents whom we can call or email?

Jessica Pinkham: Jessica.pinkham@dal.ca

Janet Green: janet.green@dal.ca