

University of Manitoba, Winnipeg
Department of Obstetrics &
Gynecology

Program Directors: Dr. Alon Altman & Dr. Stephanie Johnston

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What are you looking for specifically in an impressive candidate?

All candidates who are interested in pursuing a career in obstetrics and gynecology are encouraged to apply. We value residents who are good team players, have excellent communication skills and get along well with other residents and members of the health care team. We look for candidates who not only possess strong academic capabilities, but also are mature, well-rounded and self-motivated. Please let us know if you have any extra-curricular activities and what you like to do in your spare time!

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

Do not fear if you have not had an opportunity to do an elective in OB/GYN at the University of Manitoba. We know restrictions brought on by the COVID pandemic has made this CaRMS application cycle particularly difficult. Doing various electives and/or exposure to OB/GYN clinical environments is important, as it gives you an idea whether this is a specialty you will like, but is by no means mandatory. We encourage you to speak with our residents and faculty. Don't be afraid to ask any questions about the program and Manitoba in general.

How is your residency program organized? (i.e. year by year breakdown and schedule of rotations)

PGY-1

- Obstetrics and Obstetrical Clinics 3 blocks
- Gynecology 2 blocks
- Internal Medicine 1 block
- Anesthesia 1 block
- General Surgery 2 blocks
- Gynecology Oncology Clinics 1 block
- SICU 1 block
- Emergency Medicine 1 block
- Ultrasound 1 block

PGY-2

- Core Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Northern Trip and Research 1 block
- Family Planning 1 block

PGY-3

- Core Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Maternal Fetal Medicine 3 blocks
- Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility 3 blocks

PGY-4 & PGY-5

- Chief Resident Clinic
- Core Obstetrics & Gynecology
- Menopause, Urogynecology & Gynecologic Oncology
- Electives and Selectives
- Royal College Exam Review

What is your residency program's orientation and focus?

Early surgical and hands-on experience, and a high volume of complex cases. We have one of the lowest caesarean section rates in Canada, and therefore more experience in operative vaginal delivery and vaginal breech delivery. We are also the main tertiary center for a large catchment area (all of Manitoba, Northwest Ontario and the Kivalliq region in Nunavut) and therefore we get early exposure to a wide range of complex cases.

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

We have trained subspecialists in gynecologic oncology, urogynecology, maternal fetal medicine, adolescent gynecology, reproductive endocrinology/infertility, minimally invasive surgery, reproductive infectious disease, addictions medicine and family planning. We also have gyne-oncology and maternal fetal medicine fellowships.

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

This varies for the junior and senior residents. On obstetrics, the junior resident (PGY1) is involved in managing the wards, triage and the obstetrics service under the supervision of the senior resident and the attending. On gynecology, the junior resident will be operating and managing the gynecology service under the supervision of the more senior residents and staff. The senior residents (PGY2 and above) assume a leadership role in organizing the day-to-day service as well as participating in clinical duties. They spend their time either on subspecialty rotations perfecting skills specific to those fields, managing the labour floor and obstetrical

service on core obstetrics, or operating (often 2-4 days per week) on core gynecology. We are highly involved in teaching the off-service PGY1s and medical students and organize daily teaching sessions for these learners in addition to our more formal Grand Rounds, High-Risk Rounds and Gynecology Subspecialty Rounds.

What is the resident satisfaction?

Satisfaction is high among residents, as we are given early surgical experience and early independence. Our medium-sized program allows us to work closely with attendings and other healthcare professionals, and we benefit from great workplace relationships. We are well trained to handle high volume, complex obstetrics and challenging gynecology cases. We also benefit from a supportive program that welcomes feedback and the opportunity for improvement at every turn.

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

Total of 6 months elective/selective time. Residents have done research electives, general or subspecialty electives in Manitoba and other provinces. There are also opportunities to do electives in other countries.

What is the on-call schedule during each year of residency?

We have a graded call system, meaning call decreases as you advance through training years. PGY-1-2s have a maximum of 7 calls per month, PGY-3 maximum is 6-7, PGY-4 is 5 and PGY-5 is 4.

What distinguishes the U of M program from other programs?

Early surgical experience (not as an assist!) is an asset. We also have lots of operative vaginal deliveries and vaginal breech deliveries. Winnipeg has high patient volume and interesting cases, as we cover all of Manitoba, Northwestern Ontario, and Nunavut. We also have an outstanding group of attendings who we can always count on for support, education, and mentorship. Lastly, our resident half-day is taught by attending staff and residents choose the topics.

What distinguishes your city from others?

Winnipeg is a medium-sized city with lots of things to do. There are many summer and winter festivals, and fabulous restaurants to explore. Grand Beach, which features fine white sand, is one of the top 10 beaches in Canada and is only about an hour north of Winnipeg. Winnipeg also has an active arts and cultural scene. With the new MTS Centre, the city is now attracting popular shows and concerts from world famous performers, not to mention the Jets!

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

Obstetrics and Gynecology is an exceptional field to work in and competition has increased, but don't let that deter you – it is well worth the effort! We have had excellent results in the Royal

College Exam and our program is dedicated to helping residents succeed in their training. We feel very supported to succeed.

Is there active and/or required research in your residency program?

Our program requires residents to complete at least one research project during their training. Residents are encouraged to publish their project and then present research at conferences (with financial support!). Many of our attendings are active in research and there is no shortage of resident research projects!

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

The annual SOGC conference (Medical Student Program) is a great conference for interested medical students!

Who can we contact for more information or to set up electives?

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