Female Surgeons in Germany - results of a survey

Gunda Leschber

Head of Department of Thoracic Surgery, ELK Berlin Chest Hospital
Speaker of the Section "Women Surgeons" of the Professional Board of German Surgeons (BDC)
Professional Board of German Surgeons (BDC)

- Members
  - 2011: 16,275 3016 women (18.5%)
  - 2006: 15,061 2256 women (15.0%)

- New members
  - 2011 38.6% women
  - 2006 21.9% women

- 2011:
  - Trainees 35.1% women
  - Attending 14.1% women
  - Head of department 3.6% women
  - Medical students 60-70% women
Survey among Female German Surgeons

- Questionnaire at Homepage of BDC
- Email to all female BDC-Members
- Further Informations to all German Surgeons via BDC-Homepage, Emails, Journals
- Result: 1026 Women answered
Age (n = 1026)
Decision for Surgery made by:
How do you consider your own surgical catalogue (quality/quantity)?
How is your operative catalogue in comparison to your male colleagues?
How satisfied are you with your work?
How much are you stressed by
How much are you stressed by

- Physical Strain
- General Overstrain
- General "Understrain"
Organisation of your department

- Excellent: 5
- Good: 35
- Satisfactory: 45
- Bad/Chaotic: 15
Is there equal treatment of women and men in your department?
Are there equal chances for women and men in surgery?
Distribution of workload in clinical practice (%)
Distribution of workload in clinical practice (%)

- Publications
- Prestigious Activities
- Work in Committees

Legend:
- (mostly) men
- 50/50
- (mostly) women
Family status (%)
Parenthood (%)
Compatibility of work and private life

- Very good: 45%
- Satisfactory: 35%
- Very bad: 20%
Would you become a Surgeon again?
Conclusion

- Planned decision to go into surgery, mostly during the practical year
- Role models are important
- Operative catalogues are equal to men’s
- Overstrain is not a problem
- Sexistic comments are experienced by 52%
- No equal chances for women and men in surgery
  - Men are more likely to do prestigious work/publications
  - Women do more the routine work on the ward
Conclusion

- 93% of female surgeons would choose the profession again –
  - but 37% only under different circumstances

- Stress is caused mainly by
  - Overwhelming bureaucracy
  - Long working hours/overtime
  - Lack of compatibility of work and private life