Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
School of Medicine
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Program Description

The fellowship program in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery at the University of North Carolina is a three-year program approved by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. One fellow is accepted at the first year level each year. The educational objectives are:

1) To prepare the Fellows to provide excellent clinical care, medical and surgical, in the comprehensive evaluation and management of women with pelvic floor disorders, including urinary incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, neurogenic bladder, defacatory dysfunction, fecal incontinence, and complex benign conditions such as vesicovaginal and rectovaginal fistulas and congenital anomalies.

2) To provide the fundamental research and analytical skills necessary for a successful career as an academic leader in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery and to nurture a drive towards independent scientific investigation.

3) To promote skills in teaching, curriculum development, and management essential for excellence as future educators, mentors, and leaders in this field.

The goal of the Fellowship is to train physicians to assume the role of consultant as clinicians and surgeons while promoting the academic goals of teaching and research within this rapidly advancing subspecialty. This is accomplished through a multidisciplinary team approach to patient care involving nationally and internationally recognized experts in GI Medicine, Urology, Colorectal Surgery, and Neurology. The diverse referral patient population cared for by this team allows for training in multiple surgical modalities including vaginal, abdominal, laparoscopic, and robotic approaches. In addition, the medical care offered to patients allows for advanced training in physical therapy, pain management, neuromodulation, and pharmacotherapy. This collaborative effort encourages a diverse range of clinical and scientific viewpoints and experiences.

The School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and UNC Hospitals comprise North Carolina’s most comprehensive public center for medical care, health careers, education and biomedical research. The close association with the nationally recognized UNC School of Public Health expands the quality and diversity of opportunities available. The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at UNC is one of only a few departments in the nation with boarded fellowships in all 4 subspecialties. The residency program recruits outstanding physicians from across the country and is fully staffed with 7 residents in each year.

UNC Hospitals has 778 licensed patient beds. The UNC Women’s Hospital opened in 2002 immediately adjacent to the main building. Consultative services are available in an array of specialty and subspecialty areas. The Women’s Hospital contains the Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery clinic, the Urophysiology Laboratory, the Faculty Practice Clinics and the Pelvic Pain Clinics. The Neuropsychology and GI procedures laboratories are located within the main hospital building. These facilities contain state-of-the-art equipment for performing pertinent diagnostic studies including multichannel urodynamic evaluations, cystoscopy, anal manometry, biofeedback therapy, colonoscopy, flexible sigmoidoscopy, defecography, GI motility studies, EMG’s and nerve conduction studies. UNC Hospitals has three DaVinci robots. Fellows also operate and see patients with attendings at UNC-Rex Hospital in Raleigh, NC.
Several multidisciplinary conferences are held on a monthly basis. Pelvic floor disorders conferences allow for the presentation and discussion of patients with complex conditions. Teaching conferences are held weekly including journal club, didactic seminars and research meetings. Fellows receive $2,500 annually for travel expenses. Attendance and presentations at the American Urogynecologic Society and the Society of Gynecologic Surgeons Annual Meetings are encouraged. The fellows are allowed protected research time to develop and complete their research projects and to attend courses on biostatistics, research design and epidemiology.

The fellows are on-call for the gynecology service and interact closely with the residents. This allows for the fellows to further develop their teaching skills.

In summary, the Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery Fellowship program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill provides exceptional, multidisciplinary educational opportunities to fellows and prepares them for a career in clinical and academic medicine. This is accomplished through a multidisciplinary team approach to patient care involving nationally and internationally recognized experts. The diverse referral patient population cared for by this team allows for training in multiple surgical modalities including vaginal, abdominal, laparoscopic, and robotic approaches. In addition, the medical care offered to patients allows for advanced training in physical therapy, pain management, neuromodulation, and pharmacotherapy. This collaborative effort allows for a comprehensive training experience in the evaluation and treatment of complex pelvic floor disorders and encourages a diverse range of clinical and scientific viewpoints and experiences.