

## Parental Leave Policy in Plastic Surgery Residency Programs

### Purpose:

Maternity leave policy in plastic surgery programs is not standardized and its influence on residency training is unknown. The aims of the study are to assess how programs accommodate female residents post-partum and the effects on the residency learning climate.

### Methods:

A survey was sent to program directors (PDs) and included questions regarding the institution's residency characteristics, maternity leave policy, the effects it has on call structure, resident performance and the program director's level of satisfaction.

### Results:

Many programs (37.5%) did not have an official maternity leave policy but all programs adhered to the ABPS board requirements. 50% of programs offered residents four to six weeks of maternity leave incorporating vacation and all program gave an option of longer maternity leave by making up time at the end of residency. 12.5% of program offered a research block as part of maternity leave. Depending on the institution, 0-50% of female resident choose to have children during residency. 50% of PDs are very satisfied with the maternity leave policy with 57.1% agreeing the system is working well. All PDs believed resident performance remained the same or was transiently impaired after maternity leave. 75% of programs reported the total number of calls for the affected resident during the year remained the same but was redistributed. 75% of PDs believed maternity leave minimally disrupted work flow.

### Conclusions:

Maternity leave is instituted on an individualized basis while adhering to ABPS policy with high satisfaction among PDs. Clear, frequent communication in addition to advanced planning are encouraged for minimal work flow disruption.