Gender Diversity in Head and Neck Oncologic Surgery Fellowship Programs

Emily Ehsan MD[1], Tony Satroplus MD[2], Kaeli Samson MPH, MA[3], Elizabeth Bradford Bell MD[2]

[1]UC Los Angeles, Department of Head & Neck Surgery
[2]University of Nebraska Medical Center, Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
[3]University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Public Health

Methods

- **Design:** retrospective study of US H&N fellowships, **2015–2024** (AHNS data)
- **Outcome: % female fellows** per program-year
- **Predictor: FD gender** (public records)
- **Analysis: linear mixed-effects regression** and **Mann–Kendall** trend test
- IRB exempt

Objective:

Assess whether fellowship director (FD) gender is associated with female fellow representation in Head & Neck Oncologic Surgery fellowships

Results

Figure 1. Male and female FDs by year

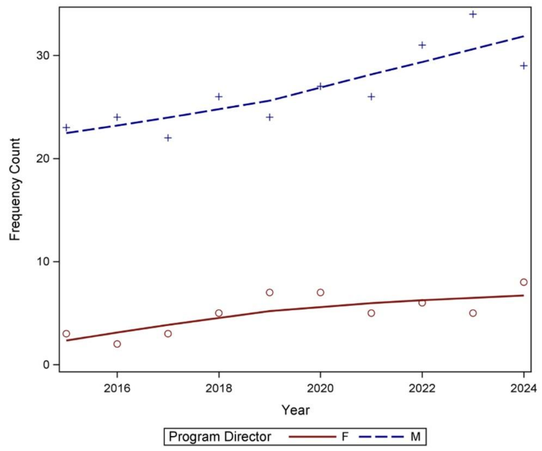
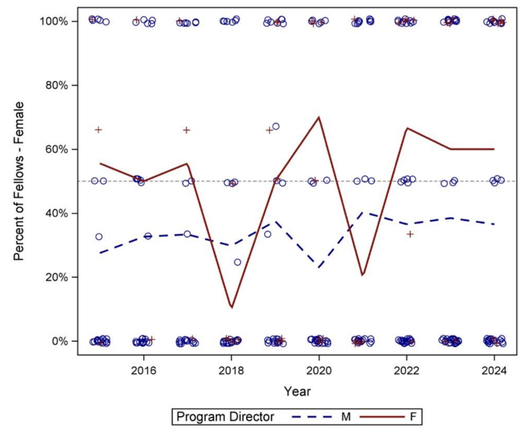


Figure 2. Female fellows by FD gender



21.6%
of FDs were female in 2024, up from **11.5%** in 2015 (n=3 → 8)

τ = 0.60
steady rise in female fellows, 2015–2024 (Mann–Kendall **P<0.01**)

+16.75 pts
more female fellows in programs with a female FD, vs 25.5% with male FDs (**P=0.03**)
95% CI 2.04–31.46; adjusted for year and program

Conclusion

Programs led by female FDs train more female fellows.
Diversifying fellowship leadership may help diversify H&N oncology training.

- Female FDs and fellows both increased over the past decade
- Possible mechanism: mentorship and role modeling
- **Limitations:** few female FDs, incomplete program data, short study period