

# Disparities seen in surgical resident representation, attrition

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The percentage of female residents in surgical specialties has improved

during the last 18 years, while the percentage of underrepresented-in-medicine (URiM) residents has not, according to a study published online Feb. 8 in *JAMA Surgery*.

Lee S. Haruno, M.D., from Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, and colleagues assessed trends in racial and sex disparities in resident attrition among surgical specialties. The analysis included 407,461 program-reported resident years collected from 112,205 individual surgical [residents](#) from 2001 to 2018.

The researchers found that the mean percentage of female trainees was 40.0 percent, which increased over the 18-year period. The greatest sex disparities were seen in [orthopedic surgery](#). During the study period, residents who were URiM comprised 14.9 percent of all surgical trainees, which decreased 2.1 percent overall. Across specialties, the overall attrition rate was 6.9 percent. Risk for attrition was higher for female versus male residents (relative risk, 1.16), as was unintended attrition (relative risk, 1.17). Higher risk for attrition was also seen for URiM residents (overall relative risk, 1.40; unintended relative risk, 1.92). Black/African American residents had the highest attrition (10.6 percent) and unintended attrition (5.2 percent) rates.

"This study highlights the issue of limited diversity and attritional disparities in surgical residency training programs," the authors write.

**More information:** Lee S. Haruno et al, Racial and Sex Disparities in Resident Attrition Among Surgical Subspecialties, *JAMA Surgery* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamasurg.2022.7640](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamasurg.2022.7640)

Kelly R. Haisley et al, Addressing Disparities in Resident Attrition, *JAMA Surgery* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamasurg.2022.7649](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamasurg.2022.7649)



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