

Regional Refresher/Re-entry Course for OB-GYN Physicians

by Nielufar Varjavand, MD; Dipak Delvadia, DO; Mark B. Woodland MS, MD, FACOG

The Drexel Medicine Physician Refresher/Re-Entry Program of Drexel University College of Medicine (DUCOM) has provided a re-education program for the OBGYN physician community since its inception in 1968. Though most physicians who participate in Drexel's program reside locally, many have come from all over the United States and even internationally.

Drexel's planned clinical and didactic preceptorship is a resource for OB-GYN physicians to enhance or update a particular clinical skill or general knowledge. For instance, numerous physicians have put aside their obstetrics career to concentrate on gynecology, only to learn that they enjoy an OB practice equal to a GYN practice. Upon seeking return to obstetrics, they often face a barrier from their employer or hospital credentialing committee who may require recent up-to-date obstetrics experience. Others seek Drexel's re-entry course after complete retirement and voluntarily seek a refresher before returning to practice. Some are required by their state board to complete a refresher/reentry course if they have been away a number of years. International physicians sometimes use Drexel's course to gain a glimpse of American medicine. The course at Drexel has been able to accommodate all of these scenarios as well as others. Despite varying reasons for seeking a refresher/reentry course, all participating physicians strongly agree that Drexel's program has been an invaluable resource to their careers and for their return to OB-GYN.

Enhanced with Technology

In 2006, Drexel's Physician Refresher/Reentry Program was enhanced by combining DUCOM's instructional technology resources and faculties' experience in medical education. The result has been an innovative curriculum for physicians to individualize based on their needs and career goals. Drexel's Refresher/Re-Entry Program offers several educational & assessment opportunities online as well as onsite. The goal of the online program is to allow physicians anywhere to access courses at their convenience in order to update their medical knowledge and hone in on clinical reasoning or communication

skills and gives them comparative feedback. Enhancing one's communication skills is particularly useful when interacting with specific patient populations or situations, such as changing habits, discussing unwanted outcomes, substance abuse, intimate partner violence, or adolescent care. The onsite preceptorship combines online learning tools with onsite clinical work. At Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia, physicians participate in conferences and both inpatient and outpatient clinical rotations. In addition to traditional learning, physicians learn using simulation and standardized patients. Though physicians work with all OBGYN departmental faculty, they are paired 1:1 with a dedicated re-entry preceptor for closer observation and assessment.

Non-clinical Updates

Returning physicians often need up-to-date learning in various "newer" skills pertinent for a practicing physician: electronic medical records, medical documentation changes, computer or research skills, skills of disclosing medical errors, and health policy changes. In addition, program staff and director guide physicians in the maze of career counseling and regulations to determine the best way of achieving each physician's career goals. Physicians who have completed the program stay in touch long after they finish, seeking guidance with letters and credentialing and reporting on their progress.

We are very proud of our participants to date. They have universally found the program to be more than helpful and they have achieved their desired goals from participation in the program. There are only a few of such programs that exist in the country and we are fortunate to have this program in Philadelphia as a regional and national resource.

For more information about Drexel's refresher/reentry program, please visit <http://webcampus.drexelmed.edu/refresher> or call 215-762-2580.