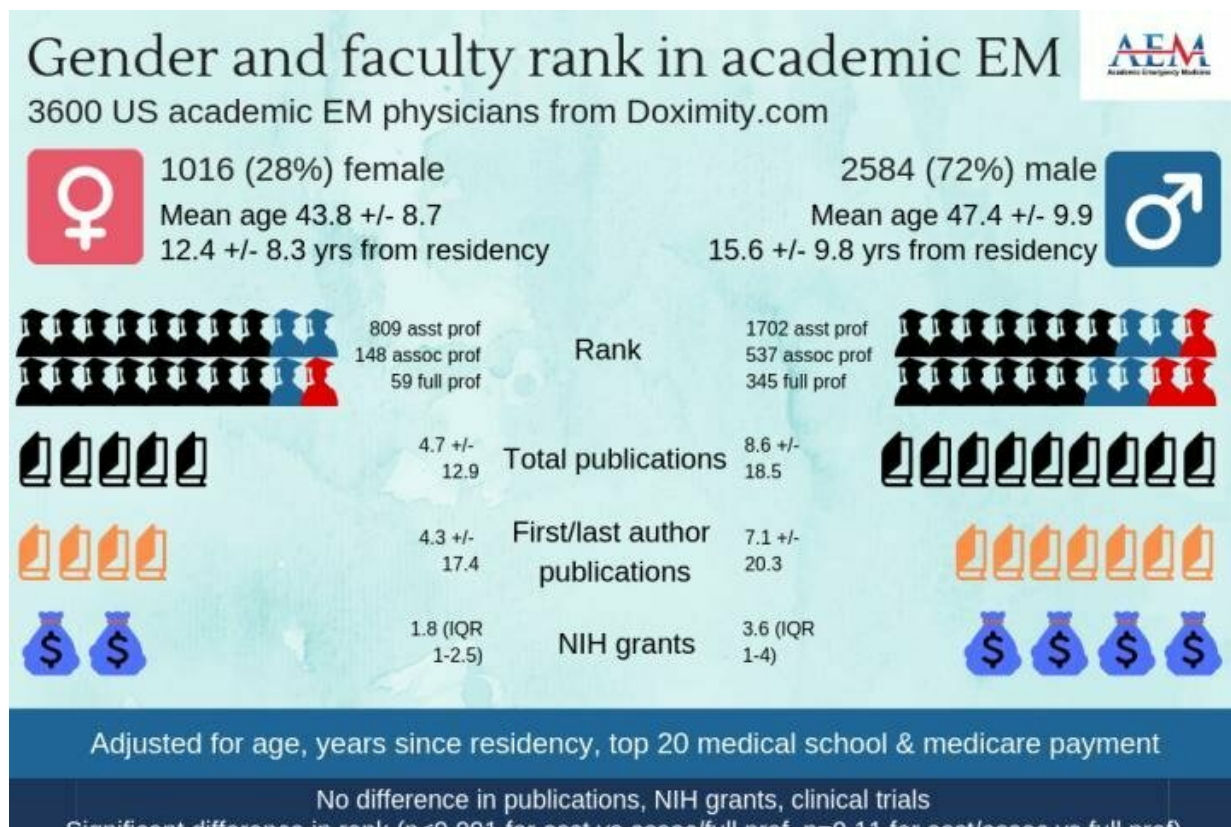


Female academic EM doctors less likely than male doctors to hold rank of full professor

March 11 2019



3600 U.S. academic emergency medicine physicians from Doximity.com.
Credit: Kirsty Challen, B.sc., Mbchb, Mrs, Ph.d., Lancashire Teaching Hospitals, United Kingdom

As few as one-third of academic emergency medicine physicians are female and these physicians face significant disparities in representation

and academic rank by gender. That is the conclusion of a [study](#) to be published in a March 2019 special issue of *Academic Emergency Medicine* (AEM) titled: "Influence of Gender on the Profession of Emergency Medicine."

In what is likely the largest published evidence on the association between physician gender and faculty rank among academic emergency [medicine](#) physicians, researchers have found that female academic emergency medicine physicians are less likely to hold the rank of full professor, compared to male counterparts.

"Our work provides a comprehensive analysis on a significant issue for academic emergency medicine. An issue that needs further study; one that demands action," said lead author of the study, Christopher Bennett, MD, MA, a clinical fellow at Harvard Medical School and Emergency Medicine [resident physician](#) at Massachusetts General Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital.

The findings of the study are discussed with Dr. Bennett in a recent AEM podcast, "[Gender Differences in Faculty Rank Among Academic Emergency Physicians in the United States.](#)"

The study, by Bennett, et al., found that female physicians comprise only 28 percent of the academic emergency medicine workforce. Moreover, these female emergency physicians were younger than their male colleagues and had fewer years since residency completion. In fact, while many surgical subspecialties have seen increases in female residents over the past decade, emergency medicine has not (36% in 2005 vs. 37% in 2015).

Commenting on the study was Roger J. Lewis, MD, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Emergency Medicine, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center:

"Dr. Bennett and collaborators present the best available, and clear, evidence of the end effect of barriers to advancement of female faculty members in academic emergency medicine. It is time to stop debating the existence of gender-based barriers in academic emergency medicine and, instead, to work together to identify and address root causes and to reverse the pattern. Because many of the characteristics included in the adjusted multivariable analysis are likely themselves also negatively affected by gender-based disparities, the analysis is conservative and likely to underestimate the true negative effect of these barriers. Thus, the results likely represent the 'best case' scenario and we should respond vigorously."

The study's researchers assert that the lack of recruitment and retention of female emergency medicine trainees may significantly affect numbers of female academic faculty. They suggest that future efforts to increase female faculty should include targeted strategies for the recruitment and retention of female residents.

Most significantly, the study found that only 17 percent of female emergency physicians were associate or full professors, compared to their male colleagues—a disparity which the researchers contend may also contribute to numerous other gender disparities in emergency medicine including differences in compensation, grant funding, administrative roles, and leadership positions.

The study concludes that there remains an obvious unmet need for the field of emergency medicine to encourage and promote diversity, inclusion and equal advancement across gender in academic emergency medicine. To that end, the authors recommend further research and intensified efforts are needed and may benefit from examining the successes of other specialties with fewer academic inequalities between female and male physicians.

"This study verifies what academic leaders in emergency medicine have long suspected—the reality of national gender/diversity disparities in emergency medicine faculty rank are not improving despite institutional efforts to move this needle. It is time for the emergency medicine academic community to create a collective action plan that works. Identifying and emulating successful strategies is a good starting place," said Kathleen Clem, MD, senior vice president for AdventHealth, and professor of [emergency medicine](#), College of Medicine, University of Central Florida.

Also commenting on the study was Gail D'Onofrio, MD, professor and chair in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Yale University School of Medicine and [physician](#)-in-chief of [emergency](#) services at Yale-New Haven Hospital:

"The good news is that given women are younger than their male colleagues, they have more years to be productive! However, their success will require proactive, innovative strategies on the part of EM leadership to provide the knowledge, skills, life coaching and opportunities for them to excel academically."

More information: Christopher L. Bennett et al, Gender Differences in Faculty Rank Among Academic Emergency Physicians in the United States, *Academic Emergency Medicine* (2019). [DOI: 10.1111/acem.13685](#)

Provided by Society for Academic Emergency Medicine

Citation: Female academic EM doctors less likely than male doctors to hold rank of full professor (2019, March 11) retrieved 17 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-03-female-academic-em-doctors-male.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.