

Medical residents report widespread sexual harassment

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Sexual harassment in academic medicine is widespread and prevalent with female residents in surgery and internal medicine reporting the highest rates and those in pediatrics reporting the lowest, a new study

finds.

In research published online earlier this year in the *American Journal of Medicine*, physician and medical researcher Linda Pololi and several colleagues reported the results of a survey of roughly 1,700 residents at 14 [academic medical centers](#) across the country. About half the respondents were women.

Pololi, the paper's first author, is a distinguished research scientist at the Women's Studies Research Center.

Among the paper's findings:

- Nearly 12 percent of women doing their residency in general surgery reported being harassed by colleagues or superiors in their previous two years of training. In [internal medicine](#), it was 7 percent and in pediatrics, 2 percent
- Residents who identified as LGBTQ reported the highest levels of [sexual harassment](#)
- Women who reported that they had been sexually harassed by other doctors said they were less energized by work and had higher levels of ethical or moral distress

"It is chilling to realize the widespread extent of this unprofessional behavior among physicians in medical training programs," Pololi and her colleagues wrote in the paper. "In our institutions of healing, learning and discovery, gender bias and harassment must be eliminated."

More information: Linda H. Pololi et al. Us, Too. Sexual Harassment Within Academic Medicine in the United States, *The American Journal of Medicine* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/j.amjmed.2019.06.031](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amjmed.2019.06.031)

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