

Bridging the Gap: Challenges and Solutions in OB-GYN Ultrasound Training – A Dual Perspective from Trainers and Trainees

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Introduction

Ultrasound is crucial in obstetrics and gynaecology (OB-GYN), improving diagnosis, monitoring, and patient outcomes. Effective training is crucial for developing clinical competence, yet significant gaps remain in both training provision and access. This study evaluates the current state of ultrasound training in the UK, identifies key challenges faced by trainers and trainees in achieving competency, and explores potential solutions.

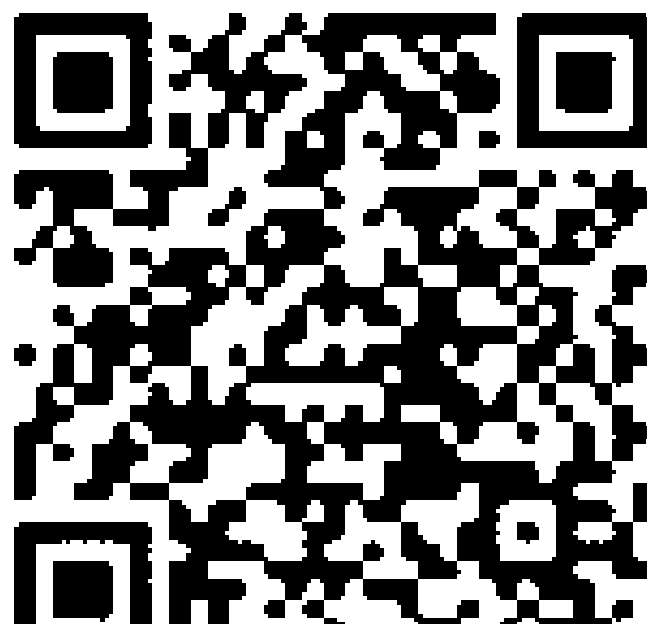
Methods

A national mixed-methods survey was conducted among UK OB-GYN ultrasound trainers and specialty trainee doctors (ST1–ST7). Trainers and trainees provided insights via a structured questionnaire with open-ended, binary, and numerical response options. Data were compiled and analysed categorically.

TRAINEE SURVEY



TRAINER SURVEY



Results

Survey data from trainers and trainees highlighted opportunities to strengthen obstetric ultrasound education. While 90% expressed concern over no structured training, 58% benefitted from consultant obstetrician teaching. Trainers echoed these concerns: 80% lacked dedicated teaching time. The majority also reported that structured radiology sessions from obstetric sonographers or radiologists were missing. Encouragingly, 80% of units had ultrasound simulators, offering a foundation for hands-on learning. However, only 20% of trainers felt current training prepared trainees for emergency obstetric POCUS, and none felt early pregnancy POCUS was adequately covered. Trainers recommended curriculum expansion to include Doppler and intrapartum scanning. They advised 6–12 structured sessions annually, tailored to the stage of training. Both groups emphasized the importance of institutional support and protected teaching time. A minimum of eight structured sessions per year was identified as essential to improve confidence, preparedness, and clinical competence, ensuring alignment with future training needs.

Conclusion

Structured ultrasound training is essential in OB-GYN curricula. At least eight annual sessions, supported by institutional commitment and number and competency-based training, will secure protected teaching and enhance readiness.

