

To whom it may concern.

Subject: Survey on early parenthood in surgeons

Ghent, 18th of August 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would be grateful if your society could consider taking part in our study.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to attract students to general surgery. One of the challenges that both female and male students are addressing is the difficult balance between early parenthood and a surgical career. Parenting can be challenging both for parents and co-workers, especially in health care's high pressure environment.

We have prepared an online survey for distribution through general surgical societies within Europe regarding challenges in early parenthood for surgeons. The study was approved by our local ethical committee. Qualtrics, our university's preferable tool for safe data collection, will be used. This study will help to filling current knowledge gaps as well as providing us with examples of best practices.

This is the link to the online survey:

https://ugent.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ebRMslXojTOipD0

We are asking all general surgery societies within Europe, including yours, for internal distribution of the survey among your members. This will ensure all the participants are indeed surgeons (in training). The survey is completely voluntary, and includes questions for both men, women, people with and without children. The informed consent form is attached to this email.

It is recognised that overburdening your membership is not preferable. Therefore, we are hoping that you are willing to share a link to the survey in, e.g., a newsletter or through your social media channels. Your participation can be counted as part of your society's efforts with regard to *diversity, equity and inclusion*.

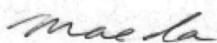
If you are willing to distribute this survey, it would be helpful to inform us on:

1. the timing of distribution
2. the methods of distribution (newsletter, social media, other)
3. the total number of members that will be reached (group size)

All contacted societies' responses to this request and the aforementioned requested details will be published in an eventual paper. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions, on the following email address: helen.weber@ugent.be

Yours sincerely, on behalf of the entire team,

Helen Weber, master student



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