

Characteristics of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (OB/GYNs) with Malpractice Reports in the National Practitioner Data Bank

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BACKGROUND

The increase in medical malpractice insurance premiums and litigation risks are widely recognized among OB/GYNs^{1,2}.

Little is known about the characteristics of OB/GYNs with medical malpractice payment reports (MMPR).

METHODS

❖ The National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) was created by the Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986 and began operation in 1990. Detailed NPDB information is available at: <http://www.npdb-hipdb.hrsa.gov/index.jsp>.

❖ Types of available information are
 ✓ Medical malpractice payment reports
 ✓ Adverse action reports: state licensure, clinical privilege/membership action, professional society membership, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Medicare/Medicaid exclusions.

❖ NPDB research dataset was linked to external data (2011) to obtain additional information regarding physician specialty, gender, and current age.

❖ 1991-2011 NPDB data with specialty information from the external data source were analyzed using SAS 9.3.

OBJECTIVE

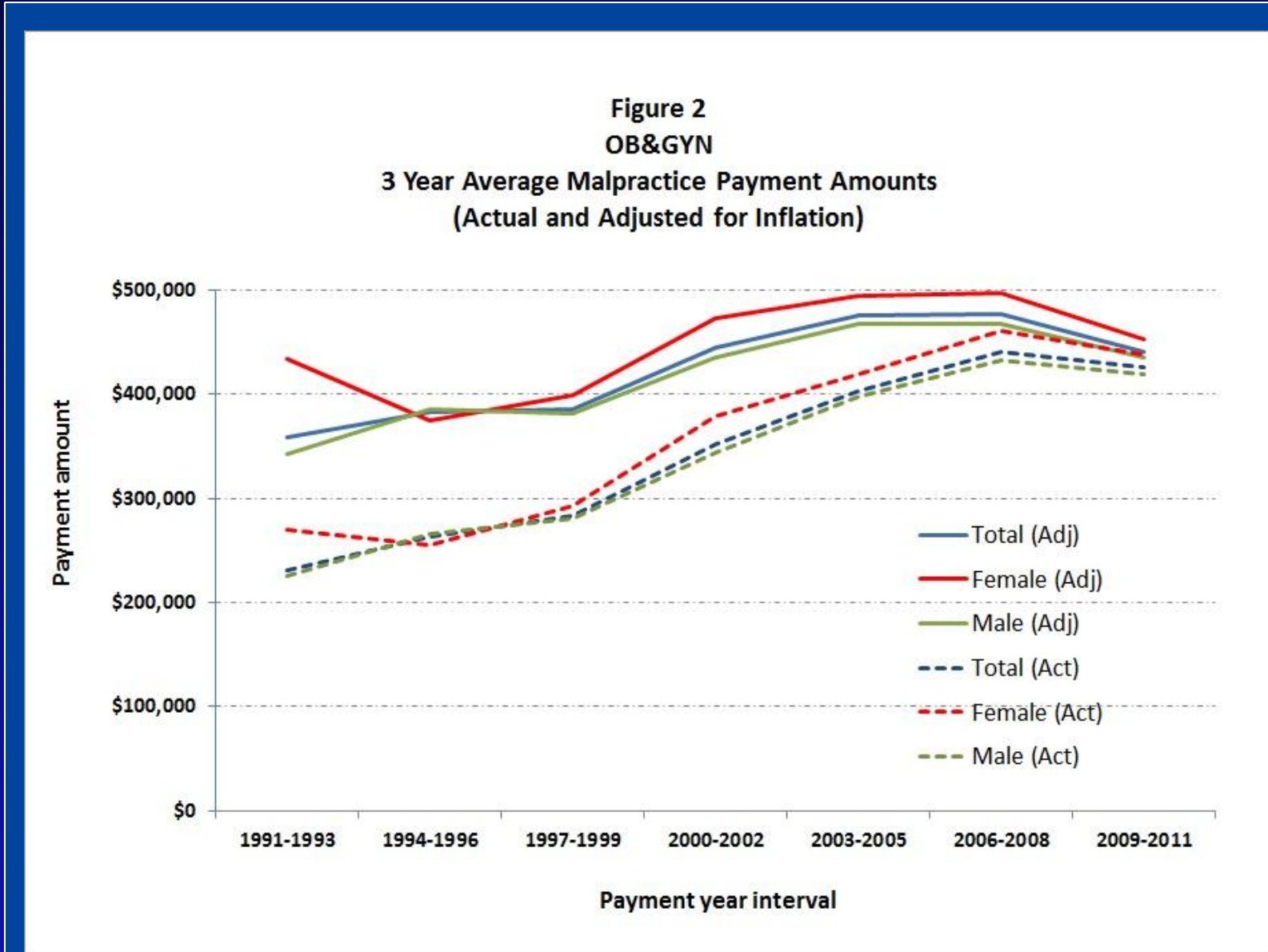
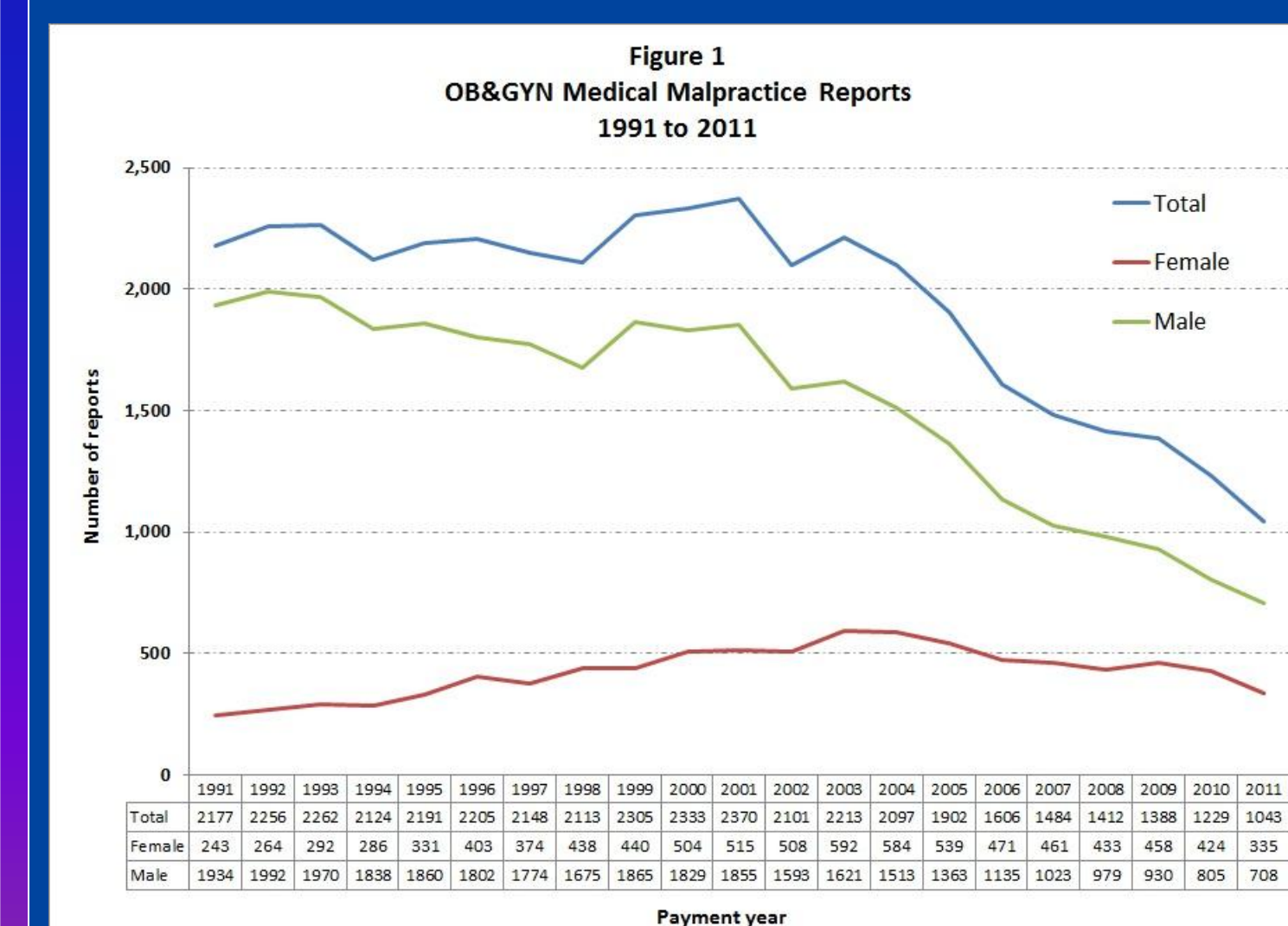
- ❖ Describe the characteristics of OB/GYNs with Medical Malpractice Payment Reports in the NPDB.
- ❖ Identify variations with regard to age, gender, and malpractice payment amounts.

RESULTS

- ❖ While OB/GYN has historically been a male dominated field, females have increasingly entered OB/GYN practices over the last decade.
- ❖ Most females experienced their first MMPR between 25 and 44 years of age while males were between 35 and 54.
- ❖ Females exhibited higher risk of having an MMPR in the first 10 years of service than males.
- ❖ Between 1991 and 2011, the number of OB/GYN with MMPR decreased 52%, mostly driven by a substantial decrease among males; there was relatively little change among females.
- ❖ The 3-year average payment amounts indicated an upward trend even when adjusted for inflation.

Physician Characteristics	Total		Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	19,765	100.0	14,817	100.0	4,948	100.0
Age as of 2011**						
25-34	34	0.2	8	0.1	26	0.5
35-44	1,263	6.4	472	3.2	791	16.0
45-54	4,196	21.2	2,347	15.8	1,849	37.4
55-64	5,977	30.2	4,428	29.9	1,549	31.3
65-74	4,407	22.3	3,840	25.9	567	11.5
Years of service as of 2011**						
< 10 yrs	4,960	25.1	2,711	18.3	2,249	45.5
10-19 yrs	6,767	34.2	4,931	33.3	1,836	37.1
20-29 yrs	4,705	23.8	4,104	27.7	601	12.1
30-39 yrs	2,578	13.0	2,364	16.0	214	4.3
40 and over	711	3.6	679	4.6	32	0.6
Age at first malpractice payment report**						
25-34	2,896	14.7	1,520	10.3	1,376	27.8
35-44	7,225	36.6	4,938	33.3	2,287	46.2
45-54	5,238	26.5	4,367	29.5	871	17.6
55-64	2,931	14.8	2,690	18.2	241	4.9
65-74	810	4.1	774	5.2	36	1
Number of NPDB reports*						
One	9,888	50.0	7,015	47.3	2,873	58.1
Two or three	7,099	35.9	5,473	36.9	1,626	32.9
Four or more	2,778	14.1	2,329	15.7	449	9.1
Citizenship						
US Native Born	14,793	74.8	11,138	75.2	3,655	73.9
US Naturalized	1,068	5.4	770	5.2	298	6.0
Non US Citizen	3,904	19.8	2,909	19.6	995	20.1

* Significant relationship between female and male (p<0.05)
 * Under 25 and over 74 years old are excluded
 ** Years of service from graduation year as of 2011



CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ There are variations along age and gender boundaries with regard to the medical malpractice payment amounts.
- ❖ In spite of the decrease in the number of OB/GYN with MMPR, the 3-year average payment amounts increased over the last decade.
- ❖ Additional studies are underway to investigate gender variations among other physician specialties.

References

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- Jena AB, Seabury S, Lakdawalla D, and Chandra A. Malpractice Risk according to physician specialty. *N Engl J Med*. 2011; 365 (7): 629-636