NEW ORLEANS — Nearly all family physician faculty members believe in contraceptive services are safe and effective, and more than half had reported insertion of one or more in the previous year, according to survey findings presented at the annual conference of the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine membership list.

There were 221 responses, for a 44% response rate. The mean age of respondents was 44 years and 56% were male. There were 500 clinical family medicine residency faculty selected from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine.

Dr. Smita Arora, M.D. (obstetrics and gynecology), University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Philadelphia, surveyed a random sample of 500 clinical family medicine residency faculty selected from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine.

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An estimated 10%-13% of women worldwide use an intrauterine device (IUD) versus less than 1% of women in the United States. Lower use in this country might be related to a lack of residency training or misconceptions about the device. “It could be a fear of infection or liability concerns,” said Smita Arora, M.D. of womens Health.

Respondents said they would not consider use of an IUD in a patient with history of pelvic inflammatory disease (71%), nulliparity (53%), or sexually transmitted disease (52%). When asked what they believe are the three most effective methods of contraception, 28% said tibal ligation, 21% said vasectomy, and 15% said a copper IUD. Dr. Arora said, “They may have responded with IUD because this was an IUD study.”

So we have this large population of family [medicine] faculty who are open to using IUDs. So why is the rate so low?” Dr. Arora asked. “We need less restrictive and more evidence-based criteria for use of IUDs, which would be a more woman-friendly approach to contraception.”

A majority of respondents, 74%, said family physicians are receptive to learning about IUDs. Twenty percent believe IUDs are aborticants and 6% think the devices lead to lawsuits.

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