

ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS AND UPDATES FROM DR. W. P. ANDREW LEE

August 25, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to announce the appointment of **Catherine Y. Spong, M.D.**, as the new Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, effective Sept. 1. She will hold the Paul C. MacDonald Distinguished Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology.

Dr. Spong joined UT Southwestern in 2018 as Professor and Vice Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She also serves as Chief of the department's Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine, and holds the Gillette Professorship of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

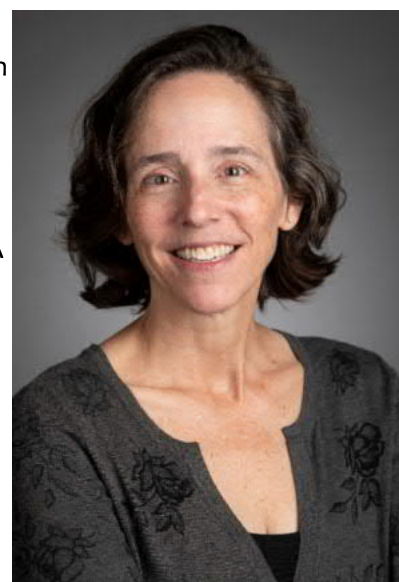
Dr. Spong received her medical degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. After serving as chief resident in obstetrics and gynecology at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, she began her career at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) as a Maternal-Fetal Medicine Fellow, including clinical work at Georgetown University.

In her 23-year career at NICHD, she served in many capacities, including Deputy Director, Acting Director, Associate Director for Extramural Research and Director of the Division of Extramural Research, and Chief of the Pregnancy and Perinatology Branch. She directed initiatives to understand the human placenta, genomics of preterm birth, stillbirth, and adverse pregnancy and neonatal outcomes. She oversaw the publication of landmark clinical trials in obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics, and fetal surgery that have defined the standard of care.

A specialist in prematurity, fetal complications, and improving outcomes in children, her clinical responsibilities include high-risk labor and delivery, the antepartum unit, extended care unit, and obstetric and gynecologic sonography. One of her major research interests has been the developing fetus. She holds several patents for neuroprotective agents that help prevent fetal injury.

Under Dr. Spong's leadership at UT Southwestern, William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital and Parkland Memorial Hospital achieved the highest Level of Maternal Care, Level 4, thus expanding our tertiary referral footprint in North Texas for high-risk pregnancy complications.

Dr. Spong has served on a number of professional and federal boards, including the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine, the Reproductive Scientist Development Program, and the President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children.



A prolific author, she has published more than 290 peer-reviewed papers. She has served as an editor of *Williams Obstetrics*, *Management of High-Risk Pregnancy*, *Protocols for High-Risk Pregnancies*, and *Stillbirth: Prediction, Prevention and Management*, and as editor-in-chief of *Contemporary OB/GYN*.

Dr. Spong's contributions to the field have been recognized with numerous teaching and professional awards, such as the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Lifetime Achievement Award, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Distinguished Service Award, National Institutes of Health Director's Awards, and a Surgeon General's Certificate of Appreciation for her work on prematurity.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Deborah Diercks, for her service as Chair of the Search Committee, and to all the Search Committee members – Dr. Ezra Burstein, Dr. James Griffin, Dr. Ethan Halm, Dr. Lee Kraus, Dr. John Mansour, Dr. Diane Twickler, Dr. Wanpen Vongpatanasin, Dr. Myra Wyckoff, Dr. Philippe Zimmern, and Dr. Charles Ginsburg – for the dedication and insights they brought to this comprehensive national search. I would also like to recognize Dr. Steven Bloom, who will step down as Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology after 16 years of distinguished services, to devote more time to his current role as Associate Dean for Clinical Sciences.

The compelling background and expertise Dr. Spong brings will continue the department's tradition for excellence and further elevate UT Southwestern Medical Center as a national hub for innovations in obstetrics and gynecology.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Spong on her new leadership role at UT Southwestern.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D.
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Dean, UT Southwestern Medical School

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