

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Catherine Spong, M.D., elected to the National Academy of Medicine

October 9, 2023

To the UT Southwestern Community:

I am very pleased to announce that [Catherine Y. Spong, M.D.](#), Chair and Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, has been elected to the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) in recognition of her contributions to the field of maternal-fetal medicine, her leadership in women's health research, and her dedication to advancing health care for mothers and babies.

Dr. Spong has helped to improve our understanding of the physiology of the human placenta, the genomics of preterm birth and stillbirth, and adverse pregnancy and neonatal outcomes. Her investigations into obstetric complications have informed advancements in clinical practice and influenced guidelines for managing high-risk pregnancies while reducing maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality rates through innovative diagnostic tools and treatment strategies. Clinical research in which she played a leading role has provided critical evidence to guide obstetrical and gynecologic care, including for women affected by Zika and SARS-CoV-2 during those respective pandemics.

Dr. Spong, the Paul C. MacDonald Distinguished Chair in Obstetrics and Gynecology, is a five-time recipient of the NIH Director's Award and has been recognized with the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Lifetime Achievement Award, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Distinguished Service Award, and a Surgeon General's Certificate of Appreciation for her work on prematurity.

She joined our faculty in 2018 after more than two decades with the National Institutes of Health's *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). Dr. Spong contributed to multiple landmark clinical trials in obstetrics, gynecology, and fetal surgery that have defined standards of care in maternal and fetal medicine and best practices in obstetrics and gynecology. She also has served as a staunch advocate for improving inclusion of pregnant and lactating women in clinical research.

Dr. Spong was appointed Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at UT Southwestern in 2021. Under her leadership, William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital (CUH) is nationally ranked for obstetrics and gynecology by *U.S. News & World Report*, and both CUH and Parkland Memorial Hospital are designated as Level

IV maternal care facilities, the highest possible designation in the state, for expertise in the care of the most complicated obstetrical patients.

With Dr. Spong's election, UT Southwestern now has 20 members of the National Academy of Medicine – more than any other institution in Texas – along with 26 members of the National Academy of Sciences and 14 Investigators of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

As a researcher, mentor, physician, and advocate, Dr. Spong will bring valuable insight and a wealth of experience to the mission of the National Academies to provide expertise and guidance to policymakers and other stakeholders. Please join me in congratulating her on this important distinction.

Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.
President
UT Southwestern Medical Center