

— 2020 SURVEY OF —

AMERICA'S PHYSICIANS

COVID-19 Impact Edition

A Survey Examining How the
Coronavirus Pandemic is Affecting and
is Perceived by the Nation's Physicians

**PART TWO OF THREE: COVID-19's
Impact on Physician Wellbeing**

Survey completed September, 2020.
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2020 SURVEY OF AMERICA’S PHYSICIANS

COVID-19 IMPACT EDITION

A Survey Examining How the Coronavirus Pandemic is Affecting and is Perceived by the Nation’s Physicians

PART TWO OF THREE: COVID-19’s Impact on Physician Wellbeing

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INTRODUCTION: A NEW TOLL

With COVID-19, physicians are experiencing a new source of stress that is taking a further toll on their wellbeing.

Part Two of The Physicians Foundation's *2020 Survey of America's Physicians* focuses on how the coronavirus pandemic is affecting physician wellbeing. [Part One](#), released in August 2020, revealed how the pandemic is affecting physician practices and their patients. Part Three, to be released in October 2020, will focus on how physicians see the pandemic affecting the nation's health care system.

This year, The Physicians Foundation redirected the focus of its biennial national physician survey exclusively to the pandemic. Trends and topics typically addressed by the survey to provide a "state of the union" of the medical profession, including physician work hours, use of electronic health records (EHR), valued-based compensation and others, are not addressed in this special edition. The Physicians Foundation will continue to examine these and related issues in future surveys.



A SURVEY IN THREE PARTS

Physicians face significant time constraints under the best of circumstances. As they deal with the current pandemic, they may have even less time to devote to completing surveys.

Therefore, rather than conducting one extensive survey, The Physicians Foundation determined to conduct the 2020 survey in three smaller parts. Each part is designed for rapid completion in respect of physicians' limited time, and each will focus on a different aspect of COVID-19's impact on physicians, as follows:

Part One: The Impact of COVID-19 on Physicians' Practices and Their Patients

Part Two: The Impact of COVID-19 on Physician Wellbeing

Part Three: The Impact of COVID-19 on the Health Care System

Because COVID-19 has created a highly fluid environment in which circumstances are continually changing, the three-part survey format also was selected to ensure data relevance.

We believe the surveys will be of interest to health care professionals, policy makers, academics, media members and to anyone concerned by how the current pandemic is affecting today's physicians. We encourage all of those who have a stake in the medical profession and in health care delivery to reference the surveys and comment on their findings.

Gary Price, M.D.
President

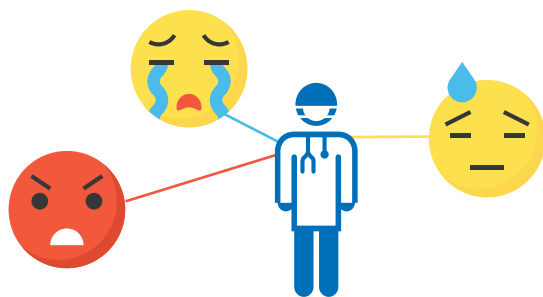
Robert Seligson
Chief Executive Officer

Ripley Hollister, M.D.
Chairman, Research Committee

KEY FINDINGS:

Part Two of The Physicians Foundation's *Survey of America's Physicians: COVID-19 Edition* focuses on how the coronavirus pandemic has affected physicians' wellbeing. The survey was conducted from August 17- 25, 2020. Data is based on 2,334 responses. Complete methodology is available on page 17.

Key findings of the survey include:



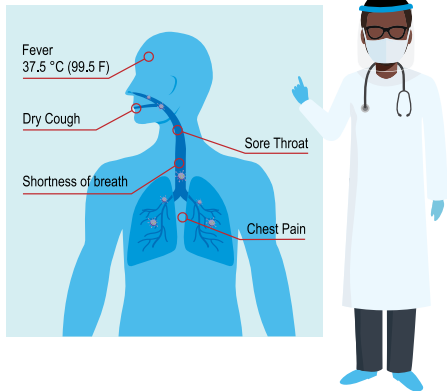
- **50 percent of physicians have experienced inappropriate anger, tearfulness or anxiety as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment.**
- 30 percent of physicians feel hopeless or that they have no purpose due to COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment situation.
- 8 percent of physicians have had thoughts of self-harm as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment, with younger physicians reporting thoughts of self-harm at a higher rate than older physicians.



- **18 percent of physicians have increased their use of medications, alcohol or illicit drugs as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment situation.**
- By contrast, 13 percent of physicians have sought medical attention for a mental health problem as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment situation.

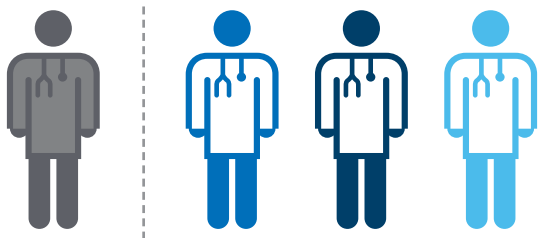


- **58 percent of physicians often have feelings of burnout, compared to 40 percent in 2018 as tracked by Physicians Foundation data.**



- 24 percent of physicians have sought medical attention for a physical problem as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment situation.

- 37 percent of physicians would like to retire in the next year.

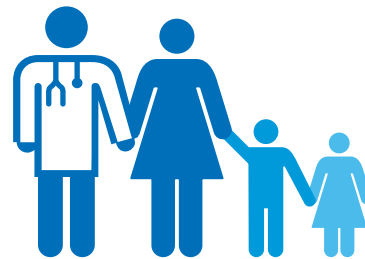


- Nearly 1 in 4 physicians (22 percent) know a physician who has committed suicide.
- 26 percent of physicians know a physician who has considered suicide.
- 15 percent of physicians know a physician who has attempted suicide.



- Majority of physicians (78 percent) rate lack of population compliance with COVID-19 distancing and mask-wearing protocols as their number one source of frustration during the pandemic.

- 70 percent of physicians rate lack of reliable COVID-19 tests as their second highest source of frustration.



- 90 percent of physicians indicate family members have been the most help in maintaining physician wellbeing during the pandemic.

- 83 percent of physicians indicate friends have been somewhat to very helpful, while 73 percent indicate colleagues have been somewhat to very helpful.

- 56 percent of physicians said their medical practice or group has been somewhat to very helpful, while 40 percent said their hospital or health system, 34 percent said their specialty society and 23 percent said their state medical society.

PART TWO: QUESTIONS ASKED AND RESPONSES RECEIVED

Three quarters of physicians (75 percent) surveyed in [Part One](#) of The Physicians Foundation’s 2020 *Survey Of America’s Physicians* indicated they face moderate to serious health concerns as a result of COVID-19, but will nevertheless continue to practice. These and other findings of Part One raise the question of how the pandemic is

affecting not just physician practices, but their personal wellbeing.

Part Two of The Physicians Foundation’s 2020 *Survey of America’s Physicians: COVID-19 Impact Edition* focuses on how the coronavirus has impacted physicians’ wellbeing.

Q1 - How often have the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on your practice or professional employment caused you to do any of the following? (check all that apply)

#	Question	Never	Just Once	Once a Month	Once a Week	Every Day
1	Seek medical attention for a physical problem	76%	18%	4%	1%	<1%
2	Seek medical attention for a mental health problem	87%	6%	4%	3%	<1%
3	Begin use of medications and/or alcohol or illicit drugs	90%	3%	2%	3%	2%
4	Increase use of medications and/or alcohol or illicit drugs	82%	3%	3%	9%	3%
5	Have thoughts about or actions of self-harm	92%	3%	2%	2%	<1%
6	Feel hopeless or that you have no purpose	70%	9%	9%	8%	4%
7	Withdraw or isolate from family, friends, and co-workers	57%	10%	12%	13%	8%
8	Have inappropriate feelings of anger, tearfulness, or anxiety	50%	10%	16%	17%	7%

Close to one quarter of physicians surveyed in Part Two (24 percent) indicated they have sought medical attention for a physical problem caused by the effects of COVID-19 on their practice or employment situation. Prorated over the current number of physicians now in active patient care roles nationwide (approximately 840,000), this equates to more than 200,000 physicians,

a significant number (Note: As detailed in the Methodology section below, the survey has a +/- 2.0% margin of error, so this and other prorated numbers below are estimates).

Though 18 percent of those surveyed indicated they sought medical attention for a physical problem just once, the survey nevertheless suggests the

virus has been detrimental to the physical health of many physicians. Female physicians report seeking medical attention for a physical problem resulting from COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment at a higher rate than male physicians:

Sought Medical Attention For A Physical Problem As a Result of COVID-19

	2020
Male Physicians	19%
Female Physicians	30%

Thirteen percent of physicians surveyed have sought medical attention for a mental health problem resulting from the effects of COVID-19 on their practice or employment situation. This equates to approximately 110,000 physicians prorated over the current physician workforce – a particularly significant number given that many physicians are reluctant to seek mental health care due to the perceived negative impact doing so may have on their reputations and careers.

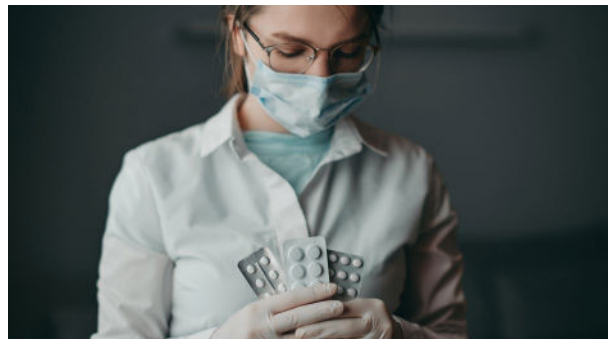
Female physicians also reported seeking medical attention for a mental health problem at a higher rate than male physicians:

Sought Medical Attention For a Mental Health Problem As a Result of COVID-19

	2020
Male Physicians	9%
Female Physicians	19%

It is not uncommon for people to use self-medication as a coping mechanism for stress and

as an alternative to seeking mental health care and physicians are no different. Ten percent of physicians surveyed in Part Two indicated they began use of medications, alcohol or illicit drugs as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment situation, a number prorating to approximately 84,000 physicians. Three percent did so just once, while six percent did so once a month or more. A larger number (18 percent) indicated they have increased their use of medications, alcohol or illicit drugs as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment situation, a number prorating to approximately 151,000 physicians. The survey suggests that physicians are turning to medications, alcohol or illicit drugs in response to the effects of COVID-19 on their practices or employment situations at roughly the same or even higher rates than they are seeking medical attention for mental health problems.



Part Two of the survey indicates that close to one-third of physicians (30 percent) feel hopeless or that they have no purpose as a result of the effects of COVID-19 on their practice or employment situation. For most, these feelings are recurrent. Thirty percent is a large number, prorating to 252,000 physicians, and it underscores the steep emotional toll the pandemic has taken on physicians.

An even larger number of physicians (50 percent) have experienced inappropriate feelings of anger, tearfulness or anxiety as a result of the effects of COVID-19 on their practice or employment situation, while 43 percent have withdrawn or isolated from family, friends or coworkers. For the majority of both these groups, these feelings and actions are recurrent.

THOUGHTS OF SELF-HARM

Eight percent of physicians surveyed reported that they have had thoughts of self-harm as a result of COVID-19's effects on their practice or employment situation, suggesting COVID-19 has driven some physicians to the most extreme of emotional reactions short of actual self-harm.

Have Experienced Thoughts of Self-Harm By Age

	2020
Physicians 45 years old or younger	11%
Physicians 46 years old or older	7%

Younger physicians report thoughts of self-harm at a higher rate than older physicians (see graph at left).



It should be reiterated that all of the responses included above were made by physicians specifically assessing how the effects of COVID-19 on their practice or employment situations have affected them. They do not necessarily reflect how the pandemic is affecting physicians in other contexts outside of their work environments, such as their personal plans, the political direction the nation is taking as a result of the virus, how the pandemic will affect their children's futures and other concerns. These may be additional causes of stress for physicians, as they are for many other people.

Q2 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

#	Question	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I often have feelings of burnout	23%	35%	13%	14%	15%
2	I would like to retire within the next year	21%	17%	14%	12%	36%
3	I would recommend medicine as a career to young people	19%	25%	21%	20%	15%

A wide range of data suggest that physicians are subject to high levels of stress, fatigue and burnout. The Physicians Foundations' [2018 Survey of America's Physicians](#) indicated that 40 percent of all physicians often or always experience feelings of burnout. These feelings begin early, with almost half of all physicians (45 percent) still in training reporting that they are burned out (*Association of clinical specialty with symptoms of burnout*. JAMA Network. September 18, 2018).

Burnout is not merely an occupational hazard for physicians – it also is a health hazard for the public. A Stanford University School of Medicine study found that physicians experiencing burnout are twice as likely to report medical errors as those not experiencing burnout (*Medical errors may stem more from physician burnout than unsafe health care settings*. Stanford Medical News Center. July 8, 2018). In 2019, a report published by the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health labeled physician burnout a “public health crisis” (*Leading health care organizations declare physician burnout a public health crisis*. Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. January 17, 2019).

Part Two of the 2020 survey indicates the number of physicians who often experience burnout has increased. Fifty-eight percent of physicians responding to Part Two of the survey either moderately or strongly agree that they often experience feelings of burnout. Primary care physicians report often having feelings of burnout at a somewhat higher rate than specialists.

Often Have Feelings of Burnout/ Primary Care Versus Specialists

	2020
Primary care	61%
Specialists	57%

Primary care physicians are more likely to have experienced an influx of COVID-19 patients than specialists and have had to rapidly restructure their operations to accommodate them, increasing their workload and contributing to their relatively high burnout levels. However, burnout is prevalent among both groups of physicians.

Burnout also is considerably higher among female physicians than male physicians.

Often Have Feelings of Burnout by Gender

	2020
Male	50%
Female	68%

It is sobering to observe that the majority of physicians of all kinds often feel professional burnout. Physician burnout has been a public health crisis for many years, with the 2018 survey citing 62% of physicians are pessimistic about the future of the medical profession and over one-quarter (27%) stating they would not choose medicine as a career again. Part Two of the survey offers further evidence that the crisis is being exacerbated by COVID-19 and that physician burnout is not being adequately addressed.

A PHYSICIAN RETIREMENT CLIFF

Another public health concern related to physician burnout is physician supply. In July, 2020 the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) released a report projecting a shortage of up to 139,000 physicians by 2033 (*The Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand Projections From 2018- 2033*). This is an increase over its 2019 report, which forecast a shortage of 121,900 physicians by 2032.

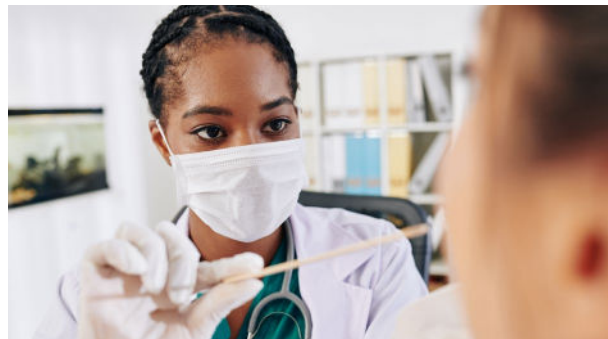
Given this looming shortage, it is important that physicians remain in patient care roles for the duration of what in the past have typically been decades-long careers. Part Two of the survey, however, indicates that many physicians (38 percent) would like to retire within the next year. A growing number of physician retirements can be expected over the next several years given that more than 30 percent of active physicians today are 60 years old or older. However, even a significant number of younger physicians indicated they would like to retire in the next year:

Would Like to Retire Within the Next Year

	2020
Physicians 45 or younger	21%
Physicians 46 or older	43%

Any acceleration of physician retirements due to burnout would exacerbate the physician shortage at a time when more physicians will be needed to provide care for an aging population with a high rate of chronic health problems. These problems are likely to worsen due to the

direct effects of COVID-19 on patient health, as well as the indirect effects of increased unemployment, poverty and other social determinants of health.



A CAREER THEY WOULD NOT RECOMMEND

Nearly half of physicians responding to the survey (44 percent) would recommend medicine as a career to young people. Only 19 percent strongly agree they would do so. This is fewer physicians who would recommend medicine as a career to young people than has been tracked in previous surveys conducted by The Physicians Foundation.

Would Recommend Medicine As Career to Young People

2020	2018	2016	2014
44%	51%	51%	59%

Source: 2020, 2018, 2016 and 2014 Surveys of America's Physicians

Q3 - To what degree have each of the following factors caused you to become upset or frustrated during the pandemic?

#	Question	A great degree	A moderate degree	A small degree	Not at all
1	Lack of adequate personal protective equipment (PPE)	23%	24%	28%	25%
2	Lack of reliable COVID-19 tests	40%	31%	19%	10%
3	Lack of adequate medical supplies	17%	26%	30%	27%
4	Lack of clear, evidence-based treatment protocols for COVID-19	32%	31%	25%	12%
5	Lack of awareness among patients of COVID-19 risks	37%	31%	21%	11%
6	Lack of population compliance with COVID-19 distancing and mask-wearing	57%	21%	14%	8%
7	Inadequate support from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP)	16%	16%	20%	48%

COVID-19 has presented a wide range of challenges to physicians, some of them financial and operational and others related to the provision of care.

Part Two of the survey asked physicians to rate various factors in terms of the frustration they have caused. While issues related to clinical care, such as the availability of tests and equipment, were cited as causing a moderate or great degree of frustration, the most frustrating factor cited by physicians is related to population behaviors.

Most physicians (78 percent) indicated that lack of population compliance with COVID-19 distancing and mask-wearing protocols is a cause of moderate to great frustration than any other factor. Female physicians appear to be significantly more frustrated by this than male physicians:

Frustrated by Lack of Population Compliance With COVID-19 Distancing and Mask-Wearing Protocols

	2020
Male physicians	73%
Female physicians	85%

Second among factors causing physicians frustration is a lack of reliable COVID-19 tests, cited by 71 percent of physicians. These tests sometimes result in false positives or false negatives, and physicians may find it difficult to infer what treatments, if any, are required given the unreliability of test findings.

Sixty-eight percent of physicians indicated that lack of awareness among patients regarding COVID-19 risks causes them a moderate to great degree of frustration.

Many physicians also are frustrated by lack of clear, evidence-based treatment protocols for COVID-19. Sixty percent of physicians indicated this causes them moderate to great frustration. Though research into the matter is ongoing, it is not evident yet which treatments or procedures are effective when treating COVID-19 and which are not. Primary care physicians, who are more likely to treat COVID-19 patients than are specialists, find this somewhat more frustrating than do specialists:

Frustrated by Lack of Evidence-Based Treatment Protocols for COVID-19

	2020
Primary Care	61%
Specialists	57%

Lack of medical supplies, lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) and lack of support from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) also are cited by physicians as sources of frustration.

Q4 - Do you know a physician who has:

#	Question	Yes	No
1	Considered suicide	26%	74%
2	Attempted suicide	15%	85%
3	Committed suicide	22%	78%

More than one-quarter of physicians responding to Part Two of the survey (26 percent) indicated they know of a physician who has considered suicide. This suggests that some physicians do share intimate details regarding their emotional state with physician colleagues or friends and do not keep such feelings entirely to themselves, though majority do not. Fifteen percent know a physician who has attempted suicide, while nearly one in four physicians (22 percent) know a physician who has committed suicide.



There are some differences among physicians based on gender and practice status (independent practice owners versus employed physicians):

Do You Know a Physicians Who Has	Considered Suicide	Attempted Suicide	Committed Suicide
Male Physicians	21%	14%	21%
Female Physicians	31%	16%	24%
Practice Owners	21%	17%	24%
Female Physicians	28%	16%	31%

The suicide rate among male physicians is 1.41 times higher than the general male population. Among female physicians, the relative risk is even more pronounced — 2.27 times greater than the general female population. (*Suicide Rates Among Physicians: A Quantitative and Gender Assessment (Meta-Analysis)*. American Journal of Psychiatry AJP, 161(12), 2295-2302. doi:10.1176/appi.ajp.161.12.2295). Part Two of the survey indicates female physicians are more likely to know a physician who has considered suicide, attempted suicide or committed suicide at higher rates than male physicians. Not coincidentally, they also experience higher rates of burnout than do male physicians.

In The Physicians Foundation’s *2018 Survey of America’s Physicians*, 85 percent of female physicians indicated they sometimes, often or always experience feelings of burnout, compared to only 74 percent of male physicians. Part Two of the 2020 survey also shows female physicians often feel burnout at higher rates than male physicians. This may be due in part to the dual roles female physicians play as medical professionals and primary home makers/child caregivers. Studies show that female physicians take on an average of 8.5 hours more work at home each week than do male physicians. Married male physicians with children spend seven hours longer at work and spend 12

hours less per week on parenting or domestic duties than do female physicians with children (*Why women leave medicine*. Association of American Medical Colleges. October 1, 2019).



The *2018 Survey of America’s Physicians* also showed that employed physicians experience higher rates of burnout than do independent practice owners. Eighty percent of employed physicians said they sometimes, often or always experience burnout compared to 76 percent of independent practice owners. A higher number of employed physicians (28 percent) indicated they know a physician who has considered suicide than did independent practice owners (24 percent). However, more independent practice owners (24 percent) said they know a physician who has committed suicide than did employed physicians (21 percent).

Q5 - Rate how the following have been of help to your mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic (rate all that apply).

#	Question	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Neither helpful or unhelpful	Somewhat unhelpful	Very unhelpful
1	My family	68%	22%	6%	3%	1%
2	My friends	48%	35%	14%	2%	1%
3	My colleagues	36%	37%	21%	4%	2%
4	My state medical society	6%	17%	60%	7%	10%
5	My specialty society	8%	26%	51%	7%	8%
6	My hospital/health system	11%	29%	33%	14%	13%
7	My medical practice/group	23%	33%	28%	8%	8%

Like other professionals, physicians have various people or organizations that may help them to maintain their wellbeing during challenging times. Part Two of the survey indicates personal contacts have been the most helpful to physicians in fostering their mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic. Ninety percent of physicians said that their family has been somewhat or very helpful in supporting their wellbeing, followed by friends at 83 percent and colleagues at 73 percent.



Institutions also have provided support. Fifty-six percent of physicians said their medical practice or group has been somewhat to very helpful to their mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic, 40 percent said their hospital or health system has been helpful, 34 percent said their specialty society has been helpful and 23 percent said their state medical society has been helpful.

Feelings about their state medical society vary between independent practice owners and employed physicians:

My State Medical Society Has Been Somewhat or Very Helpful

	2020
Independent physicians	35%
Employed physicians	19%

CONCLUSION

Part Two of The Physicians Foundation's *2020 Survey of America's Physicians* indicates that the coronavirus pandemic has taken a heavy toll on physician wellbeing, eroding what already is a problematic medical practice environment for many physicians. The effects of COVID-19 on their practices or employment situations have caused half of physicians (50 percent) to experience inappropriate episodes of anger, tearfulness and anxiety; caused 43 percent of physicians to withdraw from family friends or coworkers; 30 percent to experience hopelessness; 24 percent to seek medical attention for a physical problem; 13 percent to seek medical attention for a mental health problem and eight percent to have thoughts or actions about self-harm.



The majority of physicians (58 percent) often experience burnout and 38 percent would like to retire in the next year. More than one quarter of physicians (26 percent) know of a physician who has considered suicide, while 22 percent know a physician who has committed suicide.

Lack of population compliance with COVID-19 mask-wearing and distancing protocols has been the greatest source of frustration for physicians during the pandemic, while family members have been their most highly rated source of support.

Findings of Part Two of the *2020 Survey of America's Physicians* raise two primary public health concerns. The first is that a decline in physician wellbeing and an increase in physician burnout levels have been linked to poor health care outcomes. It is in the public's interest to help maintain physician wellbeing and low levels of physician burnout, because healthy, engaged physicians generally provide better care than unhealthy, disengaged physicians.

A second public health concern regards physician supply. A widespread shortage of physicians has been projected that is likely to be exacerbated by COVID-19. It is important from a public health perspective that physicians remain in active patient care roles and not retire prematurely. Part Two of the survey, however, indicates that many physicians would like to do just that.

Given the high levels of stress, burnout, physical and mental harm caused to physicians by COVID-19, it is clear that more must be done to foster and promote physician wellbeing, for the good of the public and for physicians themselves.

METHODOLOGY

Part Two of the survey was sent by email to a list of physicians derived from an American Medical Association/Physician Master File-approved vendor, and to physicians in Merritt Hawkins’ proprietary data base. The survey was sent from August 17 – 25, 2020. It was received by more than 500,000 physicians nationwide. Data is based on 2,334 responses.

Responses by Physician Type

PRACTICE	2020
Primary Care	36%
Specialty	64%

Thirty-six percent of physicians who responded to the survey practice primary care, defined in this survey as family medicine, general internal medicine or pediatrics, while the remaining 64 percent practice one of various surgical, internal medicine, diagnostic or other specialties. Approximately 34 percent of all physicians practice primary care, according to the AMA’s Physician Master File, indicating primary care physicians are marginally overrepresented in the survey.

Responses by Gender

GENDER	2020
Male	54%
Female	43%
Gender non-binary/Other/ Prefer not to answer	3%

Fifty-four percent of physicians who responded to the survey are male, 43 percent are female and three percent indicated they are gender non-binary, other or preferred to not designate a gender. Approximately 36 percent of all practicing

physicians in the U.S. are female, indicating females are somewhat overrepresented in the survey.

Responses by Practice Status

PRACTICE STATUS	2020
Employed by a hospital or hospital-owned medical group	49%
Employed by a physician-owned medical group	15%
Practice owner or partner	24%
Other	12%

Twenty-four percent of physicians who responded to the survey are private practice owners, while the remaining 76 percent are employed by a hospital, a hospital owned medical group, a physician-owned medical group or are in some other status. Physician practice status varies by source. 2018 AMA data indicate that 46 percent of physicians are in private practice while the remainder are in employed or other status. Data from The Physicians Foundation’s *2018 Survey of America’s Physicians* indicate 31 percent of physicians are in private practice while the remainder are in employed or other status.

Responses by Age

AGE	2020
25-34	8%
35-44	18%
45-54	24%
55-64	30%
65+	20%

The ages of survey respondents generally correspond to the ages of all physicians.

MARGIN OF ERROR ASSESSMENT

Below is an excerpt from the survey *Sample Error Analysis Report on Margin of Error (MOE)* statement provided to The Physicians Foundation/ Merritt Hawkins by experts in survey research and methodology at the University of Tennessee:

"...the overall margin of error for the entire survey is solid ($\mu \pm 2.03\%$), indicating a relatively small sampling error for a survey of this type. The brevity of the survey has again helped you to an acceptable sample size and completion rate, with very few omitted responses.

Accordingly, this survey sub-segment can be seen as "accurate" overall, and there is just a 1 in 49

chance (approximately) that a random physician not selected to participate in the survey would give responses that fall more than two standard deviations outside the observed distribution.

...As a result, the results are useful for making executive inferences and decisions with the standard caveats about survey research applied (non-response, social desirability bias, etc.). Readers should be encouraged to interpret the results as is, and not to extrapolate the findings onto larger populations without expecting some deviations in response, but in summary, this survey is well executed and reliable."

ABOUT THE PHYSICIANS FOUNDATION

The Physicians Foundation is a nonprofit seeking to advance the work of practicing physicians and help them facilitate the delivery of high-quality health care to patients. As the health care system in America continues to evolve, The Physicians Foundation is steadfast in its determination to strengthen the physician-patient relationship and assist physicians in sustaining their medical practices in today's practice environment. It pursues its mission through a variety of activities including grant-making, research, white papers and policy studies. Since 2005, the Foundation has awarded numerous multi-year grants totaling more than \$50 million. In addition, the Foundation focuses on the following core areas: physician leadership, physician wellness, physician practice trends, social determinants of health and the impact of health care reform on physicians and patients. For more information, visit www.physiciansfoundation.org.

Signatory Medical Societies of The Physicians Foundation include:

- Alaska State Medical Association
- California Medical Association
- Connecticut State Medical Society
- Denton County Medical Society (Texas)
- El Paso County Medical Society (Colorado)
- Florida Medical Association
- Hawaii Medical Association
- Louisiana State Medical Society
- Medical Association of Georgia
- Medical Society of New Jersey
- Medical Society of the State of New York
- Nebraska Medical Association
- New Hampshire Medical Society
- North Carolina Medical Society
- Northern Virginia Medical Societies
- South Carolina Medical Association

- Tennessee Medical Association
- Texas Medical Association
- Vermont Medical Society
- Washington State Medical Association.

Among other research endeavors, The Physicians Foundation conducts a national *Survey of America's Physicians*. First conducted in 2008, the survey also was conducted in 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 and now is conducted on a biennial basis.

ABOUT MERRITT HAWKINS

Merritt Hawkins is the largest physician search and consulting firm in the United States and is a company of AMN Healthcare (NYSE: AMN), the leader in innovative healthcare workforce solutions. Founded in 1987, Merritt Hawkins has consulted with thousands of health care organizations nationwide on physician staffing and related issues.

Merritt Hawkins continuously produces data and analyses that are widely referenced throughout the healthcare industry. Notable Merritt Hawkins' surveys include its annual *Review of Physician and Advanced Practitioner Recruiting Incentives*; *Survey of Final-Year Medical Residents*; *Survey of Physician Inpatient/Outpatient Revenue*; and *Survey of Physician Appointment Wait Times*.

In addition to internal research, Merritt Hawkins conducts research for third parties and has completed six previous projects on behalf of *The Physicians Foundation*, including *The Physicians' Perspective*, *A Survey of Medical Practice in 2008*; *In Their Own Words, 12,000 Physicians Reveal Their Thoughts on Medical Practice in America*; *Health Reform and the Decline of Physicians Private Practice*, a white paper featuring the 2010 survey *Physicians and Health Reform*; the *2012, 2014 2106, 2018, and 2020 Part One Surveys of America's Physicians*; *Practice Patterns and Perspectives*.

Additional information about Merritt Hawkins and AMN Healthcare can be accessed at www.merrithawkins.com and at www.amnhealthcare.com.

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