

The Physicians Foundation Annual Report 2023

Letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer

As we look back over the last year, The Physicians Foundation celebrates the progress we have made on behalf of physicians to spotlight the solutions needed to safeguard the future of medicine. In the face of mounting challenges and an evolving health care system, we remain dedicated to amplifying the physician voice to help inform and drive health care decisions. Through our efforts to identify and deliver solutions that support physician leaders, improve the wellbeing of physicians and address drivers of health (DOH), we know that we will help create a more sustainable health care system to benefit both physicians and patients.

An important step in addressing current challenges for physicians has been to understand the issues so that we can identify solutions. To better assess the state of primary care in the U.S., we worked with the Milbank Memorial Fund to release the first-ever national [primary care scorecard](#) in February of 2023. This initial scorecard provided a benchmark of the state of primary care and found that underinvestment, workforce shortages and lack of research funding threaten this essential sector of health care. The scorecard also included necessary recommendations to address the challenges faced by primary care physicians, pointing the way towards a future in which primary care is better supported and all patients can live healthier lives.

Another critical piece to improving the future of medicine is to ensure that future physicians are part of the solutions. With this belief in mind, for the first time, our [Annual Survey](#) on physician wellbeing included the state of residents and medical students in addition to physicians. This survey found that for the third year in a row, 6 in 10 physicians often have feelings of burnout, and residents and students experience an even lower state of wellbeing. These findings demonstrated a critical need for systemic changes to improve the future of medicine. To help address these needed changes, we launched [Dear FutureDoc](#) to encourage current and future physicians to reflect on their own mental health and wellbeing, support each other and share their hopes for the future of physician wellbeing. We also collaborated with eight medical student and resident organizations, as well as medical schools, to share these resources.

Additionally, The Physicians Foundation continued its work with the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation to accelerate systems change through [Vital Signs: The Campaign to Prevent Physician Suicide](#), in honor of National Physician Suicide Awareness Day (#NPSADay). In 2023, more than 130 supporting organizations joined us to promote #NPSADay, resulting in a potential reach of more than 14 million people through social media. Furthermore, in 2023, we began working with Brigham and Women's Health, where we funded [The Center for Physician Experience and Practice Excellence](#) to generate research and share solutions that will improve physician wellbeing and enhance patient care, such as the implementation of artificial intelligence to reduce administrative burdens for physicians.

The inability to address patients' DOH is a major driver of burnout for physicians. Supporting physicians in addressing DOH remains a significant focus area for the Foundation. Our [2022 Survey of America's Physicians](#) showed that DOH are essential to patient outcomes, but 6 in 10 physicians feel that they lack the time and resources to address them. In response, we launched a new campaign, [Let's Take 5 to Address Drivers of Health](#), which provides resources with actionable steps to start conversations around DOH with patients and integrate evidence-based approaches in clinical care settings. We collaborated with 22 organizations to share these resources, including medical schools, and medical student and resident organizations.

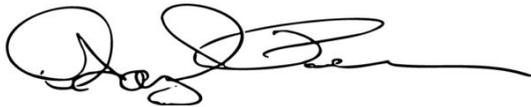
We also supported on-the-ground initiatives to address DOH through our new grant program, which funded five medical associations to support their physicians with DOH screening and resource connection and empower physicians to integrate DOH into their practices. Furthermore, in 2023, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that the first-ever DOH measures in federal payment programs, submitted by The Physicians Foundation, will be included in the proposed "Universal Foundation," a baseline to align quality reporting across federal programs.

The Physicians Foundation is also dedicated to equipping early career physicians to be the next generation of physician leaders. Our first [Fellow](#), Ryan Lowery, MD, a pediatrician, conducted research to understand how physicians across the country are implementing initiatives to screen for and address DOH for their patients. Additionally, we launched a new [Leadership Award Program](#). The goal of this program is to empower and honor the work of early career physicians, who will receive a scholarship to further their efforts. Results for 2024 will be announced later this year.

Furthermore, we continued to support the publication and promotion of research through [The Physicians Foundation Center for the Study of Physician Practice and Leadership at Weill Cornell Medicine](#). We also sponsored the Health Affairs series, [The Practice Of Medicine](#), which explores how the practice environment affects physicians and clinicians. As part of our sponsorship, Health Affairs Editor-in-Chief Alan Weil hosted a webinar, "[How the Ownership and Structure of Health Care Entities Affect Clinicians & Patients](#)." Additionally, we co-funded [research](#) with the Physician's Advocacy Institute (PAI) to understand the impact of physician-owned hospitals on the cost of health care.

We are immensely proud of the strides our Foundation has made this past year. In 2024, we will continue building on these efforts to ensure that physicians remain the foundation of our health care system. In the year ahead, we will remain focused in our mission to improve physician wellbeing, address DOH, empower physician leaders and highlight the perspectives of physicians. We look forward to another year of driving solutions forward for our nation's physicians—and we look forward to a brighter future, in which our health care system can stand strong in providing high-quality, cost-efficient health care to all.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment.

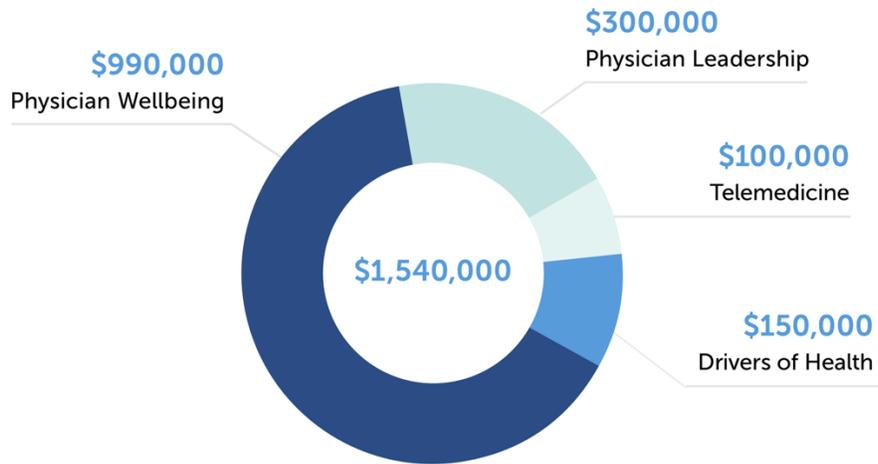


Gary Price, MD, FACS, President

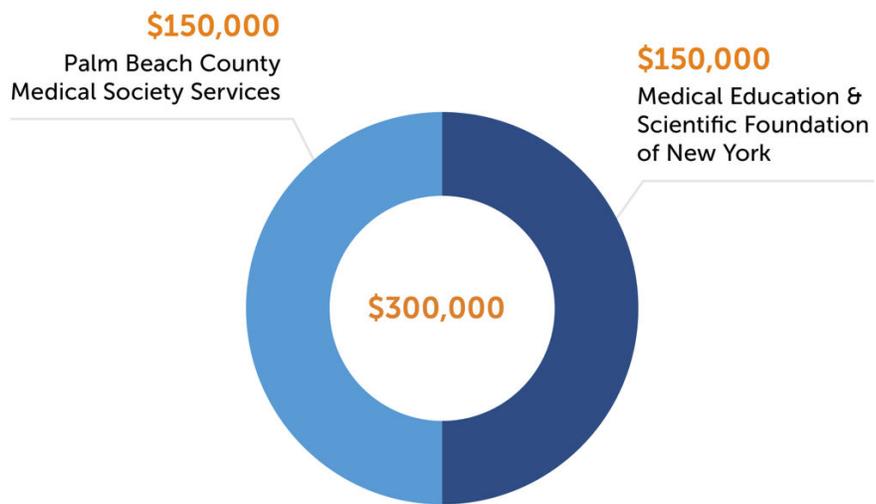


Robert Seligson, Chief Executive Officer

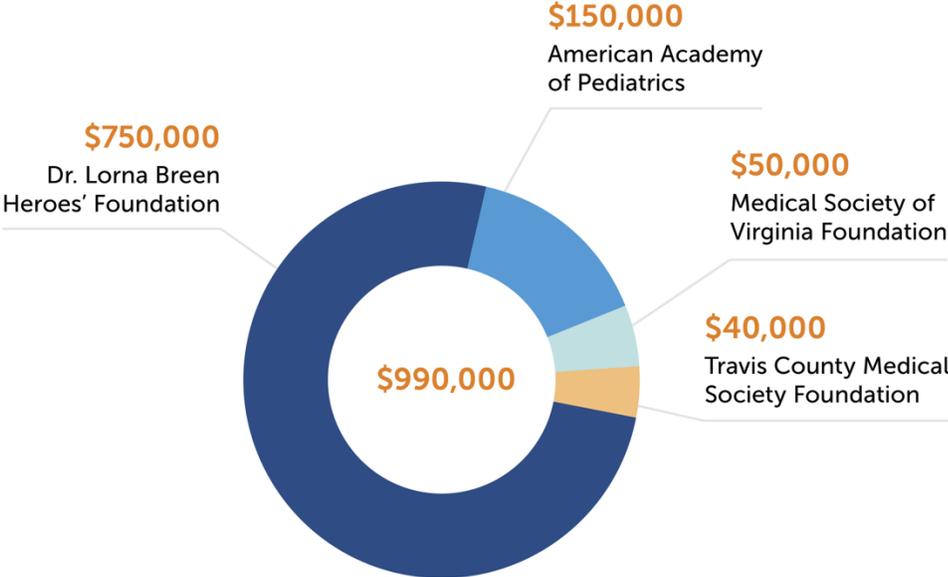
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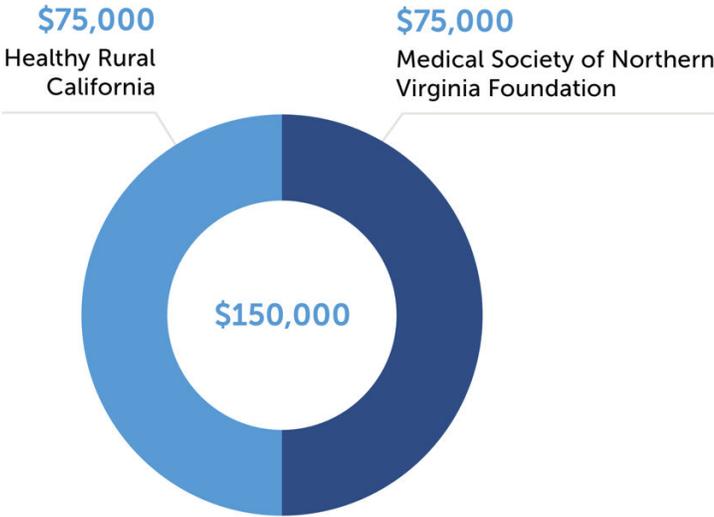
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