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# 2022 Physician Specialty Data Report

Executive Summary

Association of  
American Medical Colleges

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This publication provides detailed statistics about active physicians and physicians in training in the specialties with the largest numbers of active physicians in the United States (i.e., specialties with more than 2,500 active physicians). The *2022 Physician Specialty Data Report*, updated from the 2020 edition, provides the most current data available about the physician workforce across specialties in a series of figures and tables.

The report is divided into two sections:

**Section 1: Active Physicians.** This section provides data for active physicians practicing in the 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico who are in the 48 most-reported specialties. Data include the number of physicians by specialty; the number of people per active physician by specialty; age, sex, race/ethnicity, and type of medical degree by specialty; in-state graduate medical education (GME) retention by specialty; and percentage change in the number of active physicians by specialty from 2016 to 2021.

**Section 2: Residents and Fellows.** This section presents data for physicians in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) residencies and fellowship programs for the 48 most-reported specialties. Data include the number of residents and fellows by specialty, sex, and type of medical degree (also by specialty) and the percentage change in the number of residents and fellows by specialty from 2016 to 2021.

### Primary Data Sources

- The 2022 American Medical Association (AMA) Physician Masterfile (data as of Dec. 31, 2021) provided the data about active physicians. The AMA Physician Masterfile data for physicians are updated annually from a variety of sources, including a survey of physicians.
- U.S. Census Bureau population estimates were used in calculations of the number of people per active physician. (Refer to Figure 1.1 and Table 1.1.)
- GME Track<sup>®</sup>, a resident database and tracking system, provided the data for residents and fellows. The Resident Survey in GME Track is an annual survey sponsored by the AMA and the AAMC and typically receives a response rate of about 94%.

### Key Findings — Active Physicians

- In 2021, the specialties with the largest numbers of active physicians were the primary care specialties of internal medicine (120,342 physicians), family medicine/general practice (118,641), and pediatrics (60,305). (Refer to Table 1.2.)

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- In 2021, more than one-third (37.1%) of the active physician workforce in the United States was female. Percentages of females in the 48 top specialties ranged from a high of 65.0% in pediatrics to a low of 5.9% in orthopedic surgery. (Refer to Table 1.3.)
- In 2021, 46.7% of active physicians in the United States were age 55 or older. Percentages of this age group in individual specialties ranged from 92.4% in pulmonary disease to 9.0% in sports medicine. (Refer to Table 1.4.)
- The specialties with the highest percentages of active physicians practicing in the same state where they trained were child and adolescent psychiatry (57.0%), family medicine/general practice (56.0%), and psychiatry (55.5%). The specialties with the lowest percentages of active physicians practicing in the same state where they trained were sports medicine (orthopedic surgery) (24.3%), thoracic surgery (29.2%), and plastic surgery (33.0%). (Refer to Table 1.8.)
- The five-year period from 2016 to 2021 saw remarkable growth in some specialties, particularly sports medicine, which grew by 42.5%, from 2,252 to 3,208 practicing physicians. (Refer to Table 1.9.)
- In the late 1980s, pulmonary disease began to evolve into what is now known as pulmonary critical care. The decrease in the number of physicians in this single specialty is most likely due to pulmonary disease being replaced by pulmonary critical care. (Refer to Table 1.9.)
- Physician race/ethnicity data are published for the first time in this report. In 2021, 63.9% of practicing physicians identified as White, 20.6% as Asian, 6.9% as Hispanic (regardless of race), 5.7% as Black or African American, and less than 1.5% identified as Multiple Race (1.3%), Other (1.1%), American Indian or Alaska Native (0.3%), or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (0.1%). (Refer to Tables 1.10a-1.10h.)
- Since at least 2005, pathology has subspecialized rapidly. The definition used in this report does not reflect that but remains as is to facilitate comparison with earlier editions of this report. In collaboration with the College of American Pathologists, the AAMC is conducting research in which the pathology workforce has been redefined to take into account its subspecialization. A new definition of pathologists, based on that research, will be used in future AAMC reports.

### Key Findings — Residents and Fellows

- In 2021, the specialties with the largest numbers of first-year ACGME residents and fellows were the primary care specialties of internal medicine (11,297), family medicine/general practice (4,856), and pediatrics (3,143). (Refer to Table 2.1.)

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- In 2021, 47.3% of the residents and fellows in ACGME-accredited programs were female. Percentages of females in the 48 largest specialties ranged from a high of 86.4% in obstetrics and gynecology residencies to a low of 10.7% in sports medicine (orthopedic surgery) residencies. (Refer to Table 2.2.)
- In 2021, the largest proportion of residents and fellows in ACGME-accredited programs was U.S. MDs (60.1%), while DOs made up 16.9% and international medical graduates (IMGs) made up 22.9%. (Refer to Tables 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5.)
- Between 2016 and 2021, sports medicine (+27.2%) and psychiatry (+26.3%) saw the most growth in the numbers of first-year ACGME residents and fellows. Preventive medicine (-39.4%) and pediatric anesthesiology (-16.0%) saw the biggest decreases. (Refer to Table 2.6.)