



AAMC

Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

# 2018 Physician Specialty Data Report

## Executive Summary

Association of  
American Medical Colleges

This publication provides detailed statistics about active physicians and physicians in training in the specialty groups with the largest number of active physicians in the United States (i.e., specialty groups with more than 2,500 active physicians). The *2018 Physician Specialty Data Report*, updated from the 2016 edition, provides the most current data available about the physician workforce across specialties in a series of figures and tables.

The data report is divided into two sections:

**Section 1: Active Physicians.** This section provides data on active U.S. physicians who are in the 44 largest specialty groups. Data include the number of physicians by specialty group; the number of people per active physician by specialty group; age, sex, and type of medical degree by specialty group; in-state graduate medical education (GME) retention by specialty group; and percentage change in the number of active physicians by specialty group (2012-17).

**Section 2: Residents and Fellows.** This section presents data on physicians in Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) residency and fellowship programs for the 44 largest specialty groups. Data include the number of residents and fellows by specialty, sex, and type of medical degree by specialty, and percentage change in the number of residents and fellows by specialty (2012-17).

Primary data sources:

- The American Medical Association (AMA) 2018 Physician Masterfile (data as of Dec. 31, 2017) provided the data on active physicians. The AMA Physician Masterfile is 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 (Figure 1.2 and Table 1.2).
- GME Track<sup>®</sup>, a resident database and tracking system, provided the data on 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 95%.

### **Key Findings — Active Physicians**

- In 2017, the specialties with the largest numbers of active physicians were the primary care specialties of internal medicine (115,557), family medicine/general practice (113,514), and pediatrics (58,435). (See Table 1.1.)

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- In 2017, more than one-third (35.2%) of the active physician workforce in the United States was female. Percentages of females in the top specialties ranged from a high of 63.3% in pediatrics to a low of 5.3% in orthopedic surgery. (See Table 1.3.)
- In 2017, 44.1% of active physicians in the United States were age 55 or older. Percentages in individual specialties ranged from 88.8% in pulmonary disease to 9.2% in internal medicine/pediatrics. (See 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 (57.8%), family medicine/general practice (56.1%), and psychiatry (55.7%). The specialties with the lowest percentages of active physicians practicing in the same state where they trained were sports medicine (orthopedic surgery) (26.0%), thoracic surgery (29.4%), and neurological surgery (33.5%). (See Table 1.8.)
- The five-year period from 2012 to 2017 saw notable growth in some specialties, particularly interventional cardiology, which grew 58.0%, from 2,435 to 3,847. Other specialties decreased in number, including pulmonary disease (-9.5%) and anatomic/clinical pathology (-8.3%). (See Table 1.9.)

### **Key Findings — Residents and Fellows**

- In 2017, the specialties with the largest number of first-year ACGME residents and fellows were the primary care specialties of internal medicine (9,825), family medicine/general practice (3,886), and pediatrics (2,854). (See Table 2.1.)
- In 2017, 45.6% of the residents and fellows in ACGME-accredited programs were female. Percentages of females in the largest specialties ranged from a high of 82.9% in obstetrics and gynecology residencies to a low of 10.2% in interventional cardiology residencies. (See Table 2.2.)
- In 2017, the largest proportion of residents and fellows in ACGME-accredited programs were U.S. MDs (63.6%), while international medical graduates comprised 23.8% and DOs made up 12.5%. (See Tables 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5.)
- Between 2012 and 2017, vascular and interventional radiology (37.1%), emergency medicine (26.4%), and neuroradiology (26.2%) saw the most growth in the number of first-year ACGME residents and fellows. Nephrology (-15.1%), ophthalmology (-14.7%), and geriatric medicine (-14.3%) saw the biggest decreases. (See Table 2.6.)