

COVID-19's Impact on the Job Market for New Physicians

Presented by: Jinman Pang, PhD Candidate

Research Scientist

Center for Health Workforce Studies

School of Public Health | University at Albany, SUNY

jpang@albany.edu

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Center for Health Workforce Studies

- Established in 1996
- Based at the University at Albany School of Public Health
- Committed to collecting and analyzing data to understand workforce dynamics and trends
- Goal: Assisting health workforce planners to understand issues related to the supply, demand, distribution, and the use of health workers

Background

- COVID-19 had been found to have an impact on graduate medical education, especially physicians' training, practice decisions, and their ability to search for a job and find a job
- This study further explores the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on the job market for new physicians and examines new physician job market indicators since 2018

New York Resident Exit Survey

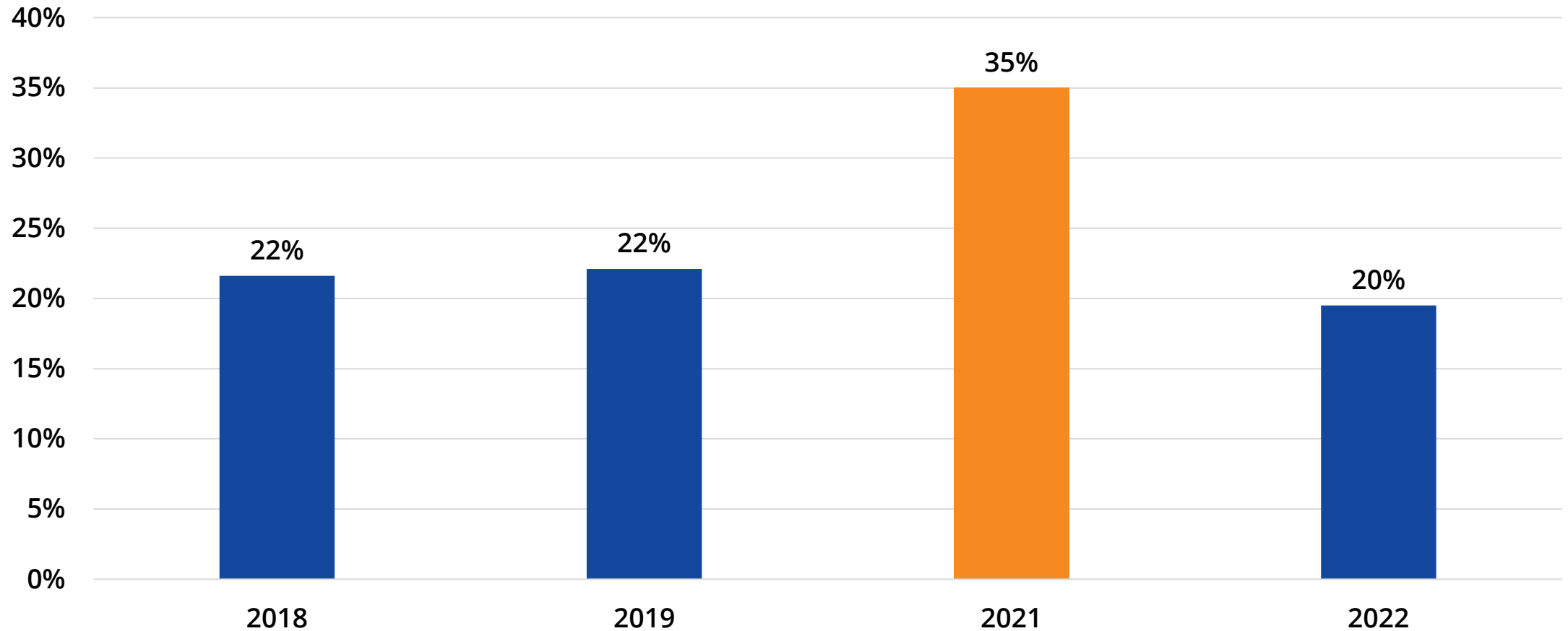
- New York State annually trains more than 18,000 physicians and each year more than 5,000 physicians complete a training program
- The New York Resident Exit Survey has been conducted annually since 1998 (except for 2004, 2006, and 2020)
 - A survey of all residents and fellows completing training in New York
 - Average annual response rate of 60%
 - Monitors trends over time
- Survey collects information on demographics, upcoming practice characteristics, expected starting income, and job market experiences, among others

Six Questions Were Used to Evaluate the Job Market

- Questions about the experience in the job market for new physicians
 - Did you have difficulty finding a practice position you were satisfied with?
 - What would you say was the main reason?
 - Did you have to change your plans because of limited practice opportunities?
 - How many offers for practice positions did you receive (excluding fellowships, chief residency, and other training positions)?
 - What is your overall assessment of practice opportunities in your specialty, and within 50 miles of the site where you trained?
 - What is your overall assessment of practice opportunities in your specialty nationally?
- Comparing the responses to these questions from 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2022 (no data collected in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic)

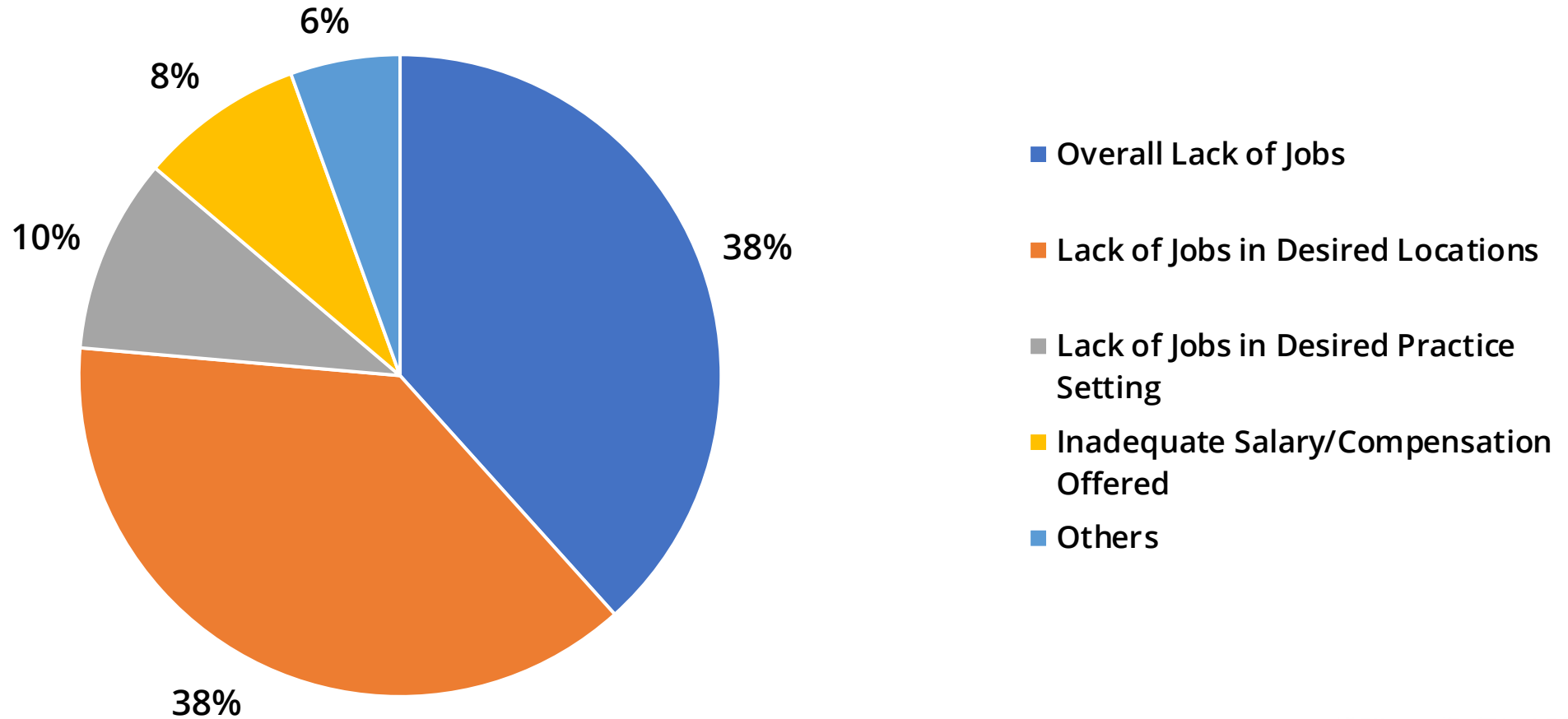
35% of Physicians Reported They Had Difficulty Finding a Satisfactory Practice Position in 2021

Percent of Respondents Having Difficulty Finding a Satisfactory Practice Position

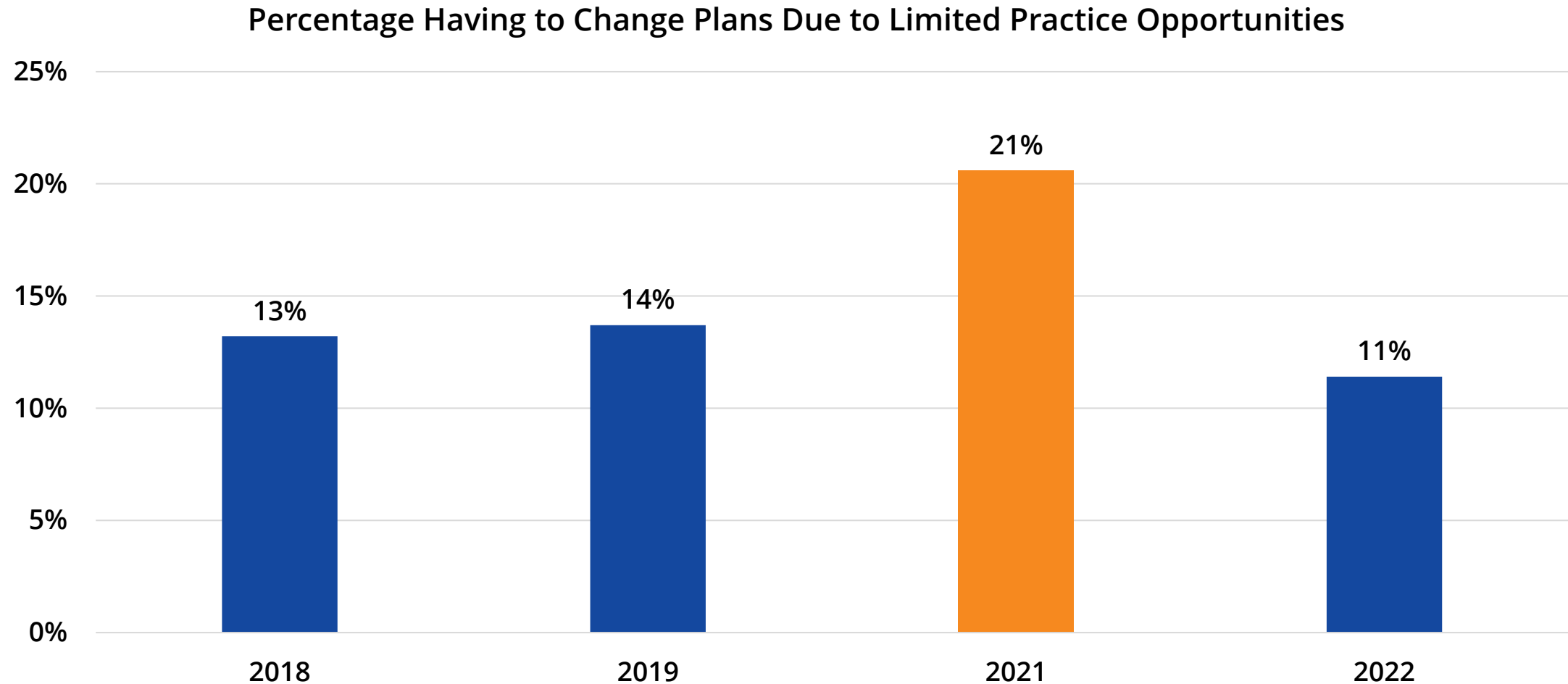


Overall Lack of Jobs and Lack of Jobs in Desired Locations Were Main Reasons for Difficulty Finding a Satisfactory Practice Position in 2021

What was the main reason for the difficulty?

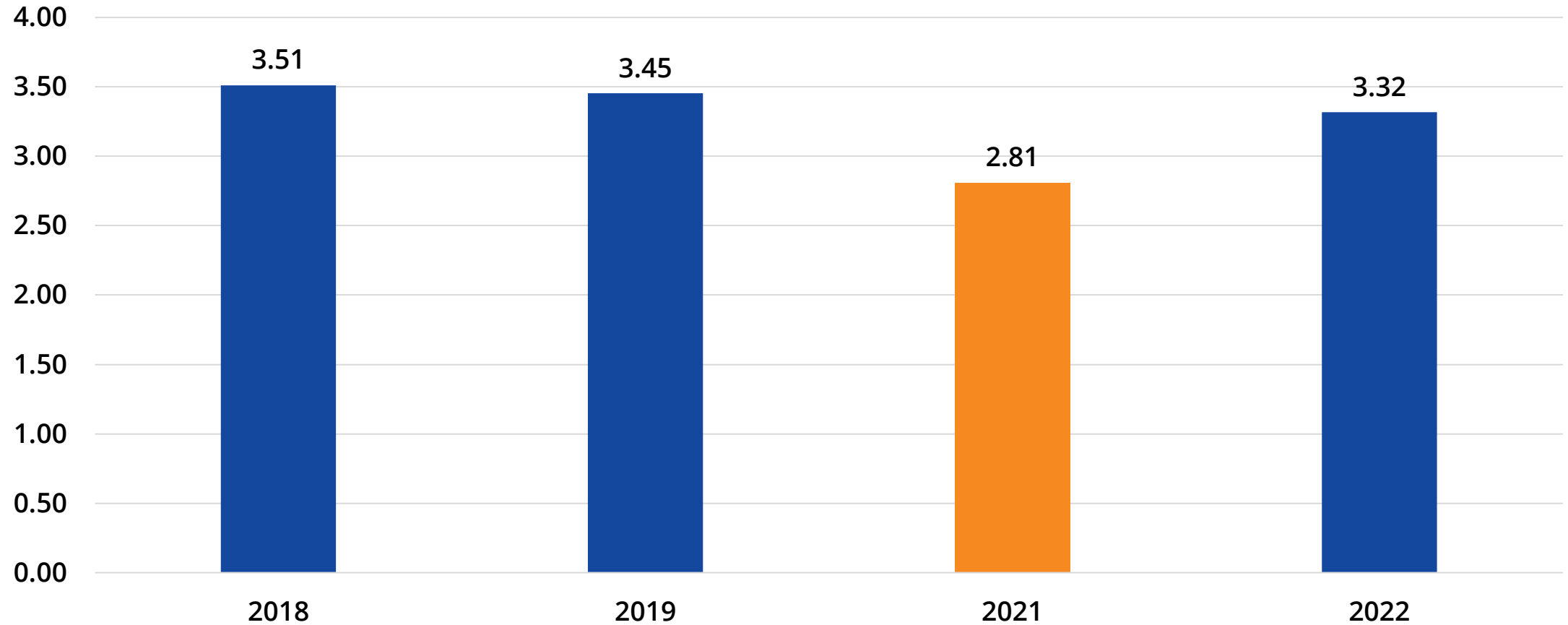


21% of Physicians Reported That They Had to Change Plans Due to Limited Practice Opportunities in 2021



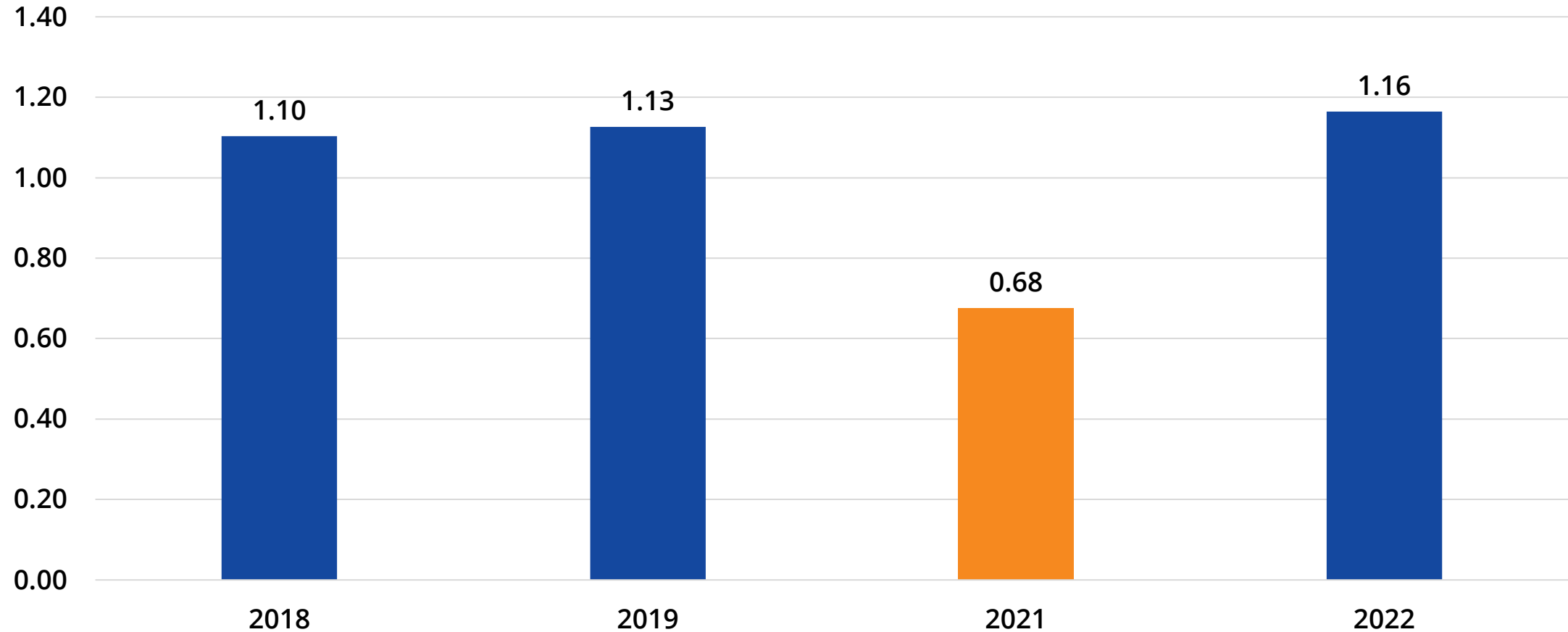
Physicians Had Less Than 3 Job Offers on Average in 2021

Mean Number of Offers for Employment/Practice Opportunities



Physicians Indicated that the Regional Job Market Had Few But Not Some Jobs in 2021

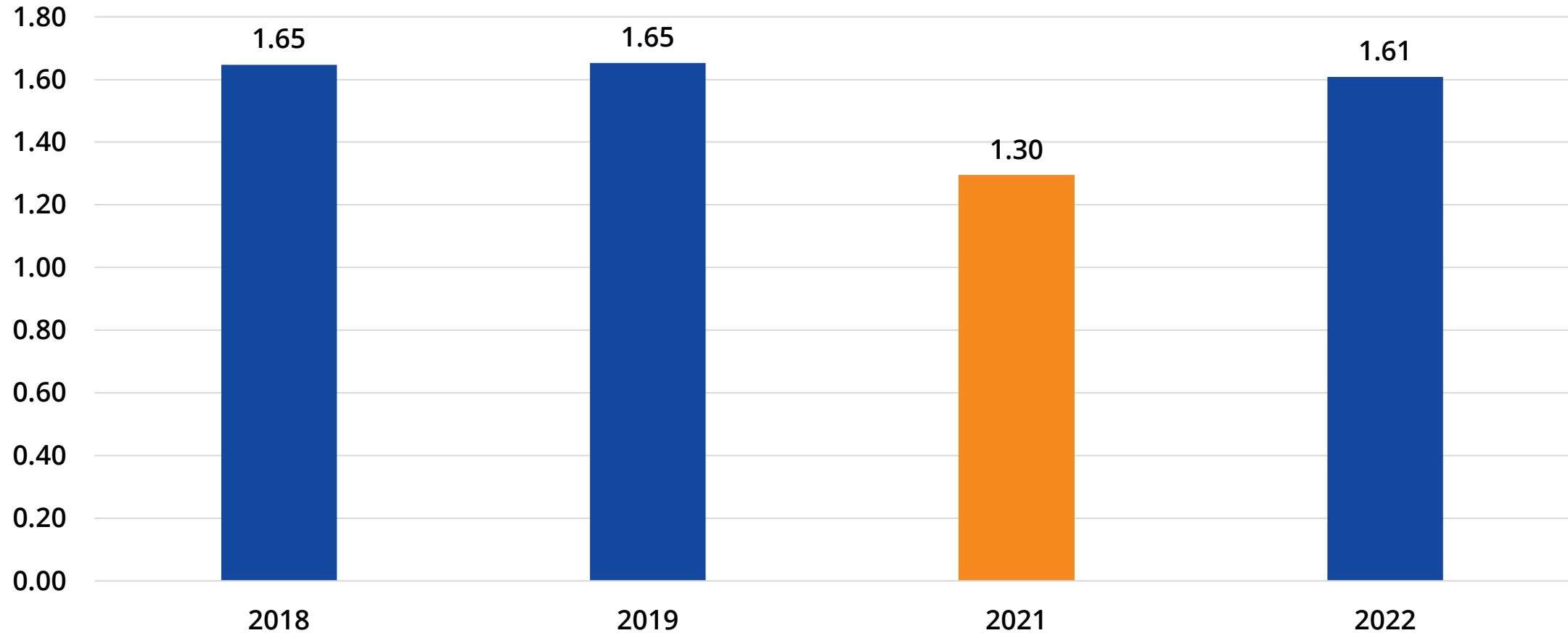
Likert Scores for Perceptions of the Regional Job Market



Likert Scale: "Many Jobs"=+2, "Some Jobs"=+1, "Few Jobs"=0, "Very Few Jobs"=-1, "No Jobs"=-2

Physicians Indicated that the National Job Market Had Some But Not Many Jobs in 2021

Mean Likert Scores for Perceptions of the National Job Market



Likert Scale: "Many Jobs"=+2, "Some Jobs"=+1, "Few Jobs"=0, "Very Few Jobs"=-1, "No Jobs"=-2

Logistic Regression Models

- Conducted a multivariate logistic regression model and a multivariate ordered logistic regression model to explore which specialties were most impacted by COVID-19 in 2021
- Dependent Variables
 - Plans Changed Due to Limited Practice Opportunities
 - Likert Scores for Perceptions of the Regional Job Market
- Independent Variables
 - 25 Physician Specialties (reference category: family medicine)
 - Demographics of Practice Area
 - Principal Practice Setting
 - Demographic Information (Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Age, Citizenship, Marital Status, Having Dependent Children, Education Debt, Having a Physician Partner, Education Type (MD/DO), HPSA Work Obligation)

50% of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Physicians Had to Change Plans Due to Limited Practice Opportunities in 2021

- | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Specialties most impacted in 2021 | >30% | $\beta > 3.000$ | <i>Dependent Variable: Plans Change</i>
<i>*P<0.05</i> |
| ○ Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation | 50% | 3.411* | |
| ○ Geriatrics | 44% | 4.406* | |
| ○ Emergency Medicine | 44% | 3.032* | |
| ○ Pulmonary Disease | 39% | 3.383* | |
| ○ Cardiology Subspecialties | 35% | 3.315* | |
| • Specialties least impacted in 2021 | <15% | β | |
| ○ Neurology | 14% | 0.364 | |
| ○ Family Medicine | 13% | <i>Reference Category</i> | |
| ○ Dermatology | 12% | 1.675 | |
| ○ Obstetrics/Gynecology | 10% | 1.814 | |
| ○ Adult Psychiatry | 6% | 0.000 | |
| ○ Anesthesiology | 3% | 0.910 | |
| • Other Significant Variables: Group Practice (0.951*) | | | |

General Surgery and Emergency Medicine Physicians Had Least Favorable View of the Regional Job Market in 2021

	<u><0.25</u>	<u>β>2.750</u>	<i>Dependent Variable: Regional Job Market</i>
• Specialties Most Impacted in 2021			<i>*P<0.05</i>
○ General Surgery	-0.55	-2.736*	
○ Emergency Medicine	-0.49	-3.575*	
○ Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	0.07	-2.211*	
○ Pediatric Subspecialties	0.10	-2.590*	
○ Nephrology	0.22	-3.029*	
• Specialties Least Impacted in 2021	<u>>1.25</u>	<u>β</u>	
○ Urology	1.43	0.255	
○ Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	1.47	1.047	
○ Anesthesiology	1.67	1.297	
○ Adult Psychiatry	1.79	1.569*	
• Other Significant Variables: Partnership (2 person) (2.171*)			

Summary

- In 2021, physicians had more difficulty finding a satisfactory practice position compared to other years, mainly due to an overall lack of jobs and a lack of jobs in desired locations
- Physicians were more likely to change plans due to limited practice opportunities and had a fewer number of job offers in 2021 compared to other years
- The regional and national job markets for new physicians were less favorable in 2021
- Job market indicators in 2022 for new physicians were comparable to the job market indicators in 2018 and 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is consistent with the findings of Telesford et al. (2023)

Reference

- Telesford I, Wager E, Hughes-Cromwick P, Amin K, Cox C. How has health sector employment recovered since the pandemic? Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker website. Published January 20, 2023. Accessed April 25, 2023.
<https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/chart-collection/what-impact-has-the-coronavirus-pandemic-had-on-healthcare-employment/>

Contact Information

- For more information, please email me at: jpang@albany.edu
- Visit us at:



@CHWS_NY



@Centerforhealthworkforcestudies



/company/center-for-health-workforce-studies