The Impact of COVID-19 on Physicians Completing Training in New York

Presented by: David Armstrong, PhD
Project Director
Center for Health Workforce Studies
School of Public Health | University at Albany, SUNY
dparmstrong@albany.edu

May 4, 2023
AAMC Health Workforce Research Conference
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

www.chwsny.org
Background

• COVID-19 had a profound impact on graduate medical education (GME)

• This was especially the case in New York City where most of the state’s GME programs are located

• This study explores how the pandemic affected physicians’ training, practice decisions, and their ability to search for and find a job
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):
  o A survey of all residents and fellows completing training in New York
  o Average annual response rate of 60%

• Survey collects information on demographics, upcoming practice characteristics, expected starting income, and job market experiences, among other topics.
5 Pandemic Related Questions Were Added to Exit Survey in 2021 and 2022

• 5 new questions were added to the Exit Survey in 2021 and 2022 about the pandemic’s impact on training and the job market
  o As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, did you consider extended training, a position with limited patient contact, leaving training, or leaving medicine?
  o Was your search for a job affected by COVID-19?
    - How was your Job search affected?
  o Did COVID-19 impact your ability to find a job?
    - How was your ability to find a job affected?

• Compared the responses to these questions in 2021 and 2022
Two Logistic Regression Models on COVID-19’s Impact on Physicians’ Job Search and Ability to Find a Job in 2021

• Conducted 2 multivariate logistic regressions to determine which specialties were most impacted by COVID-19 in 2021

• Dependent Variables
  o Job Search
  o Ability to Find a Job

• Independent Variables
  o 25 Physician Specialties (reference category: family medicine), Location of Training, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Age, Citizenship Status, Marital Status, Having Dependent Children, Education Debt, Having a Physician Partner, Education Type (MD/DO), HPSA Work Obligation
16% of Physicians Considered Extending Their Training Because of COVID-19 in 2021

As a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I Considered:

- Extending Training: 16% in 2021, 9% in 2022
- Position With Limited Patient Contact: 7% in 2021, 5% in 2022
- Leaving Training: 5% in 2021, 4% in 2022
- Leaving Medicine: 6% in 2021, 9% in 2022

CHWS Logo

www.chwsny.org
52% of Physicians Reported That Their Job Search Was Affected by COVID-19 in 2021

Was Your Search for a Job Affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic?

![Bar chart showing the percentage of physicians who reported their job search was affected by COVID-19 in 2021.](chart.png)

- **Yes**: 52% (2021) vs 17% (2022)
- **No**: 68% (2021) vs 36% (2022)
- **I Don't Know**: 11% (2021) vs 16% (2022)
13% of Physicians Reconsidered Their Practice Location Because of the Pandemic in 2021

How Was Your Job Search Affected?

- Delayed Looking for a Job: 8% in 2021, 2% in 2022
- Reconsidered Practice Location: 13% in 2021, 4% in 2022
- Reconsidered Practice Setting(s): 10% in 2021, 4% in 2022
- Other: 20% in 2021, 5% in 2022

www.chwsny.org
The Job Search of Emergency Medicine, Hematology/Oncology, and Gastroenterology Physicians Were Most Affected by COVID-19 in 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialties Most Impacted in 2021</th>
<th>&gt;65%</th>
<th>β&gt;2.750</th>
<th>Dependent Variable: Job Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>6.098*</td>
<td>*P&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hematology/Oncology</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>4.230*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastroenterology</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>4.551*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulmonary Disease</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>3.489*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatric Subspecialties</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>4.178*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>4.577*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialties Least Impacted in 2021</th>
<th>&lt;30%</th>
<th>β</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Psychiatry</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>1.114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urology</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>1.047</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Medicine</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reference Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geriatrics</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>1.101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Surgery</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Other Significant Variables: None
40% of Physicians Reported That Their Ability to Find a Job Was Impacted by COVID-19 in 2021

Did the COVID-19 Pandemic Impact Your Ability to Find a Job?

- Yes: 40% (2021) vs. 11% (2022)
- No: 71% (2021) vs. 44% (2022)
- I Don't Know: 15% (2021) vs. 18% (2022)
28% of Physicians Reported That Their Ability to Find a Job Was Impacted by a Limited Number of Practice Opportunities

How Did the COVID-19 Pandemic Impact Your Ability to Find a Job?

- Interview Process Challenging: 17% (2021), 4% (2022)
- Limited Practice Opportunities: 28% (2021), 6% (2022)
- Less Time to Find a Job: 4% (2021), 2% (2022)
- Other: 3% (2021), 7% (2022)
The Ability of Emergency Medicine Physicians to Find a Job Was Affected Most by COVID-19 in 2021

- Specialty Impacted Most in 2021
  - Emergency Medicine: 87% (4.775*)
  - Hematology/Oncology: 69% (3.198*)
  - Pediatric Subspecialties: 68% (3.549*)
  - Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation: 65% (3.833*)
  - Pulmonary Disease: 57% (2.991*)

- Specialty Impacted Least in 2021
  - Family Medicine: 18% (Reference Category)
  - Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: 18% (0.460)
  - Obstetrics/Gynecology: 16% (0.676)
  - Geriatrics: 11% (1.411)
  - Anesthesiology: 10% (-0.925)
  - Adult Psychiatry: 9% (-0.249)

- Other Significant Factors: Having Dependent Children (-0.499); Asian (0.551); HPSA Work Obligation (-1.662)
Summary

• Physicians were more likely to consider extending their training in 2021 than in 2022.

• Physicians had more difficulty searching for and finding a job in 2021 than in 2022 because of the pandemic.

• Emergency Medicine and Hematology/Oncology physicians had more difficulty searching for and finding a job than other physicians in 2021.
Contact Information

• For more information, please email me at: dparmstrong@albany.edu

• Visit us at:
  
  @CHWS_NY
  
  @Centerforhealthworkforcestudies
  
  /company/center-for-health-workforce-studies

www.chwsny.org