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U.S. Physician Employment Report 2018

Introduction

The U.S. economy grew significantly in 2018 and the market for healthcare professionals reflected that strong growth. Nationally, physician employment opportunities grew by 7 percent, outpacing the 5.1 percent growth we saw in our 2017 report. While this is great news for physicians, as it is indicative of a healthy job market, it also implies a growing mismatch between the supply of qualified physicians and the demand for their services.

While the physician shortage in the US has been extensively researched, our data indicates that we may be starting to experience the impact of this trend. Doximity research has previously documented potential shortages across several specialties over the last two years. Our data shows that physician shortages, as they happen, will likely initially present themselves as regional challenges. Smaller cities and rural communities will likely experience shortages of medical talent first, given that many doctors choose to practice in places where they complete their residency programs.

Against this backdrop, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) projects that health spending will grow faster than Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per year from 2017 to 2026, making up 19.7 percent of GDP by 2026.[1] And total healthcare employment is simultaneously growing, with 323,000 healthcare jobs added just over the past year.[2] Physician and surgeon roles specifically, are expected to grow 13 percent from 2016 to 2026, a faster rate in comparison to the average growth of other occupations.[3]

The case that some commentators and tech industry luminaries have made recently, that new technology innovations will reduce clinical employment, is simply not born out by our data. If anything, the introduction of technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning in disease diagnosis, is correlating to increases in clinical employment opportunities nationally.

This year we added several data points on nurse practitioners (NPs) to our report, to gain a broader view of clinician employment trends. NPs experienced a growth of roughly 3 percent in average compensation nationally, which is perhaps unsurprising in light of the growing demand for clinical care staff.

This report draws on Doximity's database of clinical job postings and 2018 compensation survey results.
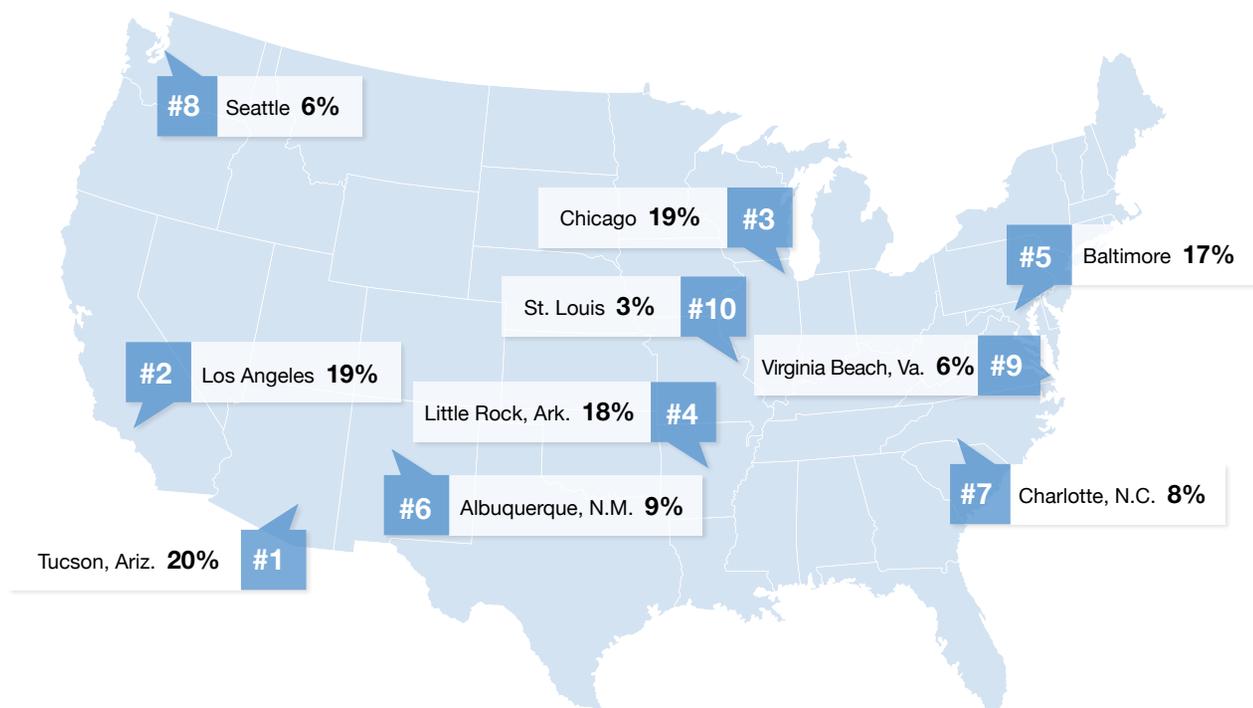
Metros where doctors are in **MOST** demand

#8	Seattle	**6%**
#3	Chicago	**19%**
#5	Baltimore	**17%**
#10	St. Louis	**3%**
#2	Los Angeles	**19%**
#9	Virginia Beach, Va.	**6%**
#4	Little Rock, Ark.	**18%**
#6	Albuquerque, N.M.	**9%**
#7	Charlotte, N.C.	**8%**
#1	Tucson, Ariz.	**20%**

KEY FINDINGS

Metros with the highest physician job growth

We evaluated how many open physician positions were advertised on the Doximity network in large U.S. metropolitan areas in 2017 and 2018. Nationally, physician jobs grew by 7 percent. Physician job postings have also grown significantly year-over-year in many of the largest metropolitan areas. Demand for physicians varies widely across geographic markets.

Rank	Metro	Job Growth		Rank	Metro	Job Growth
1	Tucson, Ariz.	20%		6	Albuquerque, N.M.	9%
2	Los Angeles	19%		7	Charlotte, N.C.	8%
3	Chicago	19%		8	Seattle	6%
4	Little Rock, Ark.	18%		9	Virginia Beach, Va.	6%
5	Baltimore	17%		10	St. Louis	3%

Medical specialties **MOST** in demand for physicians

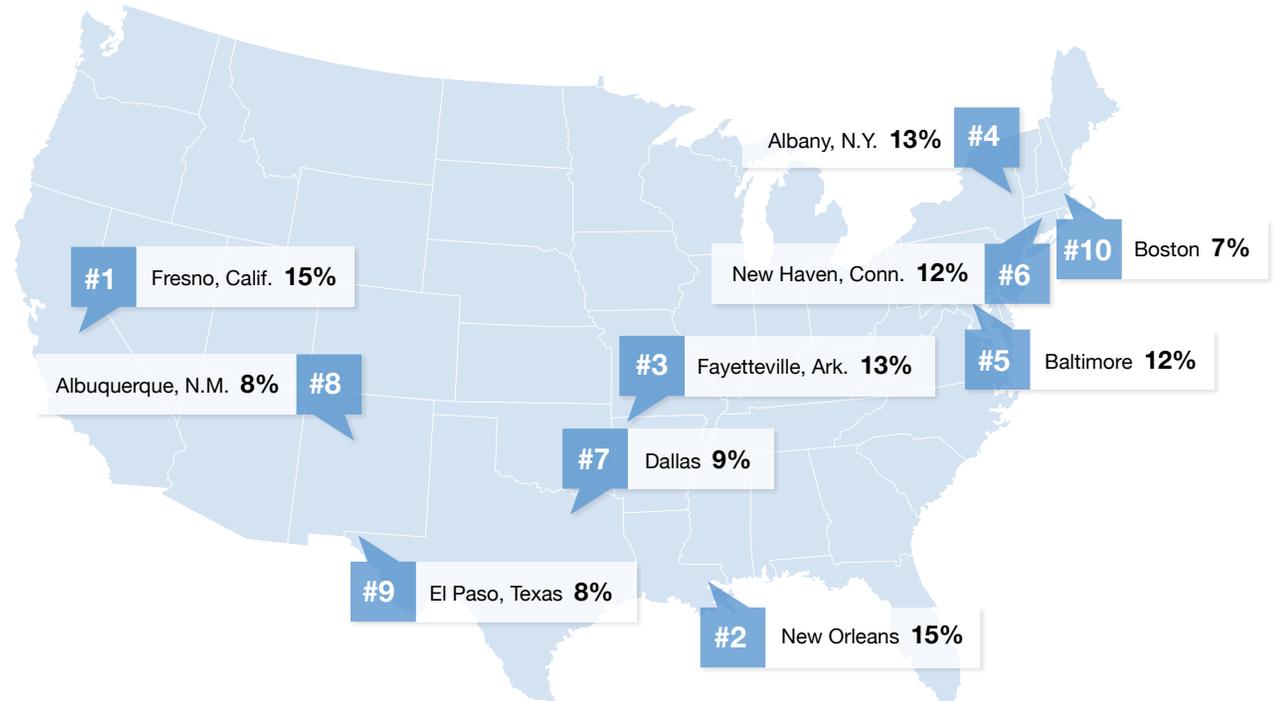|	
1	Family Medicine
2	Internal Medicine
3	Emergency Medicine
4	Psychiatry
5	Obstetrics & Gynecology
6	Neurology
7	Radiology
8	Gastroenterology
9	Geriatrics
10	Pediatrics
11	Anesthesiology
12	Urology
13	General Surgery
14	Orthopedic Surgery
15	Pulmonology

KEY FINDINGS

Demand for specialists

Our study also ranked the demand for the top 15 most common medical specialties and subspecialties across the nation. Family and internal medicine specialists are most in demand, followed by emergency medicine and psychiatry.

Metros with the **HIGHEST** pay growth for physicians

Albany, N.Y. **13%** #4

#10 Boston **7%**

New Haven, Conn. **12%** #6

#1 Fresno, Calif. **15%**

#5 Baltimore **12%**

#3 Fayetteville, Ark. **13%**

Albuquerque, N.M. **8%** #8

#7 Dallas **9%**

#9 El Paso, Texas **8%**

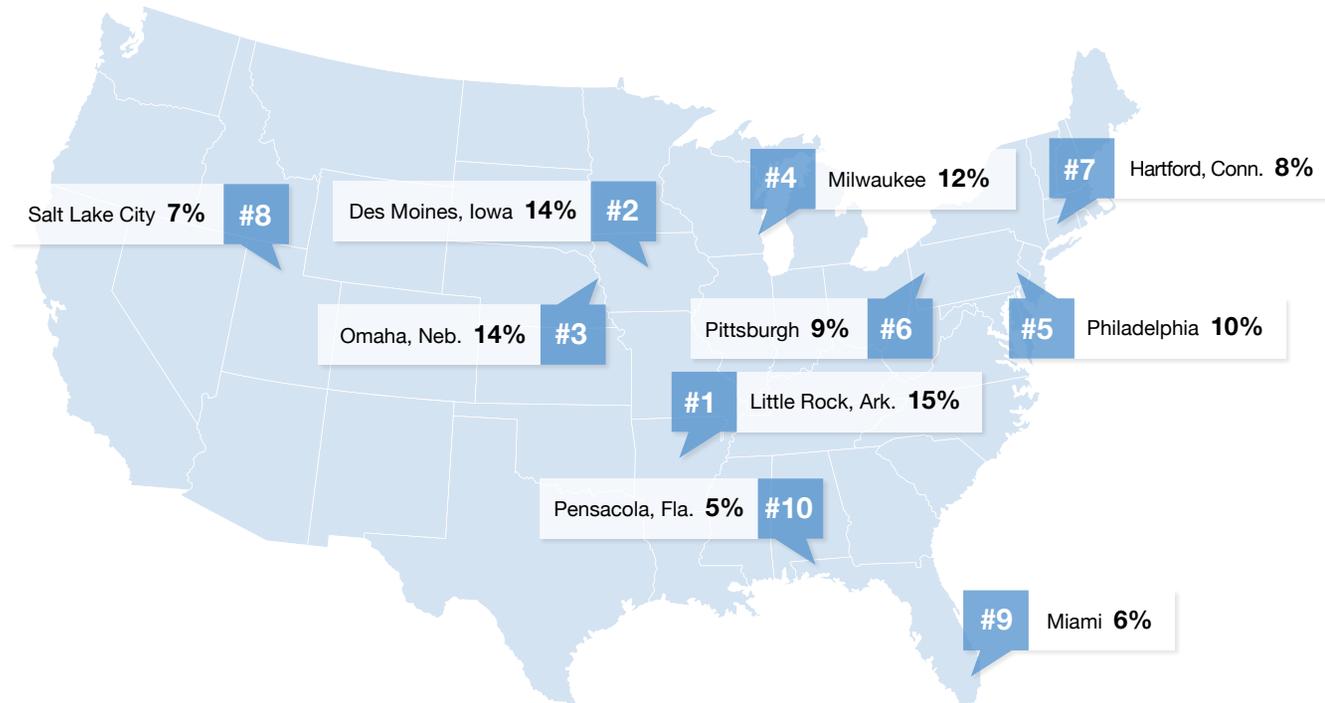#2 New Orleans **15%**

KEY FINDINGS

Regional Compensation Changes

When comparing compensation growth to demand, the study found that high demand for physicians does not always correlate with pay increases and that other factors beyond the parameters of this study are impacting growth in compensation packages.

Rank	Metro	Pay Growth
1	Fresno, Calif.	15%
2	New Orleans	15%
3	Fayetteville, Ark.	13%
4	Albany, N.Y.	13%
5	Baltimore	12%
6	New Haven, Conn.	12%
7	Dallas	9%
8	Albuquerque, N.M.	8%

Rank	Metro	Pay Growth
9	El Paso, Texas	8%
10	Boston	7%
11	Seattle	5%
12	Los Angeles	5%
13	Raleigh, N.C.	4%
14	Louisville, K.Y.	3%
15	San Francisco	2%

Metros with the **HIGHEST** pay growth for nurse practitioners

Salt Lake City **7%** #8

Des Moines, Iowa **14%** #2

#4 Milwaukee **12%**

#7 Hartford, Conn. **8%**

Omaha, Neb. **14%** #3

Pittsburgh **9%** #6

#5 Philadelphia **10%**

#1 Little Rock, Ark. **15%**

Pensacola, Fla. **5%** #10

#9 Miami **6%**

KEY FINDINGS

Nurse Practitioners (NPs) Compensation Growth

New to this study is a ranking of the top 15 metros with the highest compensation growth for NPs. Similar to physician compensation, wage growth for NPs grew in large and small cities. Wage growth ranged from 15 percent in Little Rock, Ark. to three percent in Columbus, Ohio.

Rank	Metro	Pay Growth	Rank	Metro	Pay Growth
1	Little Rock, Ark.	15%	9	Miami	6%
2	Des Moines, Iowa	14%	10	Pensacola, Fla.	5%
3	Omaha, Neb.	14%	11	Atlanta	5%
4	Milwaukee	12%	12	Houston	4%
5	Philadelphia	10%	13	Orlando	4%
6	Pittsburgh	9%	14	Minneapolis	4%
7	Hartford, Conn.	8%	15	Columbus, Ohio	3%
8	Salt Lake City	7%			

KEY FINDINGS

Specialties with the highest demand for nurse practitioners

Also, new to this study is a ranking of the top 10 NP and DNP specialties in demand across the nation. Family, general and adult care NP job postings made up the top three, while pediatric, occupational health and certified nurse midwife made up the bottom three. Five NP and DNP specialties correlated with the areas of medicine in most demand among physicians – family medicine, psychiatry, obstetrics & gynecology, geriatrics and pediatrics.

Medical specialties **MOST** in demand
for nurse practitioners

1   Family Nurse Practitioner

2   General Nurse Practitioner

3   Adult Care Nurse Practitioner

4   Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

5   Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

6   Geriatric Nurse Practitioner

7   Neonatal Nurse Practitioner

8   Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

9   Occupational Health Nurse Practitioner

10   Certified Nurse Midwife

Implications for 2019

We anticipate 2019 will be another strong year for the physician workforce based on the trends from the last several years. We expect that:

AI will not impact the demand for physicians: Overall, strong employment growth should continue for physicians, as well as a general uptrend in physician compensation. From 2017 to 2018, physician job postings and physician compensation grew significantly in many of the largest metropolitan areas. As the U.S. population ages and the number of Americans over 65 increases, the need for more physicians will likely expand and drive up employment opportunities and compensation in concert.

Demand will not grow symmetrically across U.S. markets: There may be differences in compensation and employment growth across major metros due to local market factors. There are a number of possible influences including changes to and local implementation of government programs such as Medicare, Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act. Other possible factors include potential changes to the structure of local insurance markets and growth of large-scale health systems, changes in payment programs (e.g. ACOs, bundled payments and capitated contracts), and lastly, general economic trends. Any change that could affect the total number of patients with access to healthcare or conversely, reimbursements for services, has the potential to result in flattening or declining compensation in local markets.

Conclusion

Understanding the demand for new physicians across metropolitan areas and medical specialties can help ensure more patients have access to the care they need. This study cannot determine causation for the variation in demand across metropolitan areas or medical specialties, but we hope it can serve as a baseline and prove relevant to employers, recruiters and others interested in the topic.

This information may also be helpful for physicians looking to identify where there may be an increasing need for their skills – from both a geographic and specialty perspective. As this research found that the growth in demand for physicians is unevenly distributed across geographic regions and specialties, physicians can use the insights developed in this report to identify the markets in-demand for their skills.

Methodology

This study is based on approximately 8,000 physician jobs posted on Doximity in 2017 and 2018. This report analyzed data on 50 metropolitan statistical areas and 15 medical specialties based on the number of job postings on the Doximity network in 2017. Compensation growth was drawn from Doximity's self-reported compensation surveys of approximately 70,000 full-time, licensed U.S. physicians and 7,500 nurses who practice at least 40 hours per week between 2017 and 2018.

References

1. U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Health Expenditure Projects 2017-2026. Baltimore: 2017. https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/NationalHealthExpendData/Downloads/ForecastSummary.pdf

2. "Employment Situation Summary," Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, November 2, 2018. https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm

3. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Physicians and Surgeons, on the Internet at https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physicians-and-surgeons.htm

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Founded in 2011, Doximity connects physicians and advanced practice clinicians to make them more successful and productive. Doximity is the largest secure medical network with over 70 percent of all U.S. physicians as members, enabling collaboration across specialties and every major medical center. Doximity is based in San Francisco, California.

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