

Abstract for IHWC submission

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Abstract:

Context: Community Health Centers (CHCs) receive \$2.9 billion in federal funding to provide primary care to 20 million people annually, and these numbers are increasing. Understanding of physician satisfaction in CHCs may help guide recruitment and retention efforts aimed at expanding CHC programs.

Objective: Contrast career satisfaction of physicians working in CHCs to career satisfaction of physicians working in other practice settings.

Design: Cross-sectional survey

Setting: Ambulatory care practices in the United States

Participants: Recent residency graduates from the WWAMI Family Medicine Residency Network.

Survey conducted every three years, 1997-2009. Excluded physicians reporting <50% FTE.

Main outcome measures: Self-reported satisfaction on a 1=low to 5=high scale.

Results: 1038 family physician respondents (response rate 68.5%), 928 eligible for the study. 133 CHC physicians, 795 non-CHC physicians. Proportions of CHC vs. non-CHC physicians highly satisfied with: residency training 76% (95% CI 69, 83%) vs. 61% (58, 64%), $p=0.001$, choice of specialty 74% (67, 82%) vs. 61% (57, 64%) $p=0.0023$, and employer 62% (53, 70%) vs. 73% (70%, 76%) $p=0.0063$. After adjustment for physician, practice and community characteristics, CHC physicians were more likely to be highly satisfied with their training (OR 2.6, 95% CI 1.4, 4.4, $p=0.001$) and their specialty (OR 1.7, 95% CI

1.1, 2.8, $p=0.031$). CHC physicians were less likely to be highly satisfied with their employers (OR 0.5, 95% CI 0.3, 0.8, $p=0.005$).

Conclusions: The lower level of satisfaction reported by CHC physicians with their employer has implications for workforce recruitment and retention in CHC settings. In an era of CHC growth, efforts to improve physician relationships with employers may be a potential target for enhancing the physician workforce in CHCs.