



Survey Shows Wide Earnings Gap Persists Between Male and Female Physicians in Maryland

March 8, 2022

BALTIMORE, Md.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- A new survey indicates that wide pay gaps persist between male and female physicians in Maryland, and that Maryland physicians earn less on average than physicians nationwide.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220308005305/en/>

Conducted by Merritt Hawkins, a national physician search and consulting firm and a company of AMN Healthcare, on behalf of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, the survey tracks compensation, benefits and practice metrics of Maryland physicians and compares them to physicians nationally. It benchmarks compensation among Maryland physicians by gender, age, ethnicity and practice status, and also examines how Maryland physicians were affected by Covid-19.

The survey shows that average annual 2020 pre-tax income for male Maryland physicians was \$320,000 compared to \$213,000 for female physicians, a difference of 49.6%. This is virtually the same disparity found in a similar survey Merritt Hawkins conducted for MedChi in 2018 examining the 2016 incomes Maryland physicians.

"The fact that significant gender-based income disparities persist among Maryland physicians is both disappointing and perplexing," said Gene Ransom, chief executive officer with MedChi. "We expected to see at least some closure of this gap, but it remains as wide as ever."

Even when compared by specialty groupings, male Maryland physicians earn considerably more than female physicians in the state, the survey indicates. The average 2020 pre-tax income for male primary care physicians in Maryland was \$262,542, compared to \$172,542 for females, a difference of 41.2%. The average 2020 pre-tax income for male surgical, diagnostic and other specialists was \$350,625, compared to \$250,115 for females, a difference of 33.5%. Male physicians in Maryland who are in private practice make 30.9% more than female physicians in private practice, while employed Maryland male physicians make 39.3% more than female employed physicians.

The survey found that male and female physicians in Maryland work virtually the same number of hours per week, 48 for male physicians compared to 48.3 for female physicians, suggesting that gender-based physician income disparities in the state are not a result of longer hours worked by male physicians.

What accounts for these differences is difficult to determine, according to executives at AMN Healthcare/Merritt Hawkins.

"We see little difference in the employment contracts of male and female physicians," said James Taylor, Group President and CEO of AMN Healthcare's Leadership Solutions division, which includes Merritt Hawkins. "Nevertheless, the data show that female Maryland physicians earn less than males, even when specialty, hours worked, practice status and age are factored into the equation."

MedChi has established a Gender Pay Equity Committee to examine and address gender-based income disparities, according to Ransom.

Income disparities among Maryland physicians also are seen among different ethnic groups. The average annual 2020 income for Maryland Asian/Asian American physicians tracked in the survey was \$325,000, compared to \$268,000 for white physicians and \$225,000 for Black/African American physicians in the state.

Maryland Physicians Earn Less

The survey suggests that the pandemic has had an inhibiting effect on the incomes of Maryland physicians. The average pre-tax 2020 income of Maryland physicians responding to the survey was \$276,000, compared to \$299,000 in 2016, well before the pandemic hit, a 7.7% decline.

Compared to physicians nationally, Maryland physicians are toward the bottom of the income scale, the survey indicates. For example, Maryland pediatricians reported average annual compensation of \$165,000, compared to a national starting salary in the specialty of \$236,000. Orthopedic surgeons in the state reported an average annual salary of \$394,000, compared to a national starting salary of \$546,000.

"The fact that the total compensation of many Maryland physicians lags what typically is offered as a starting salary nationally underscores the relatively low incomes of physicians in our state," said Loralie D. Ma, MD, president of Medchi.

Despite this, the majority of Maryland physicians (52.3%) described their income as somewhat or extremely reasonable given their effort and expertise, compared to 33.8% who described their income as somewhat to extremely unreasonable.

Covid-19 and Workforce Volatility

One half of Maryland physicians surveyed (50.3%) said they were not professionally affected by Covid-19, a surprisingly high number given the widespread disruption caused by the pandemic. However, many were affected. Approximately 5% closed their practices due to the virus, 4.3% joined another practice, 3.7% were furloughed, 3% found work in another field, 1.2% were laid off and 1.2% retired.

"Covid-19 caused a surge in physician workforce volatility in Maryland," said Dr. Ma. "Practice closures, physician layoffs and physician exits from medicine are likely to compound staffing challenges at healthcare facilities throughout the state."

Survey data is based on responses from 506 Maryland physicians with a margin of error of +/- 4.0%. A copy of a report on the survey's findings can be accessed at www.medchi.org.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.

About Merritt Hawkins and AMN Healthcare

Merritt Hawkins is the leading physician search and consulting firm in the United States and is a company of AMN Healthcare (NYSE: AMN), the largest healthcare talent solutions organization in the country. For more information visit www.merrithawkins.com and www.amnhealthcare.com.

View source version on businesswire.com: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20220308005305/en/>

Contact for Merritt Hawkins

Phillip Miller

Phil.miller@amnhealthcare.com

469-524-1420

Source: AMN Healthcare