

New Survey Highlights Demand For Newly Trained MS Doctors

In a clear sign that demand for physicians is outpacing supply, a new survey shows that half of new doctors received 100 or more job solicitations during their training.

Conducted by Merritt Hawkins, a national physician search firm and MHA Solutions' sole endorsed physician search provider, the survey examines the career plans and expectations of 935 physicians in their final year of residency training.

Seventy percent of those surveyed indicated they received 50 or more job solicitations during their training, while 50 percent received 100 or more job solicitations, the highest number of medical residents reporting 100 or more job solicitations since Merritt Hawkins began conducting the survey in 1991. Job solicitations came in the form of phone calls, emails, and direct mail from recruiters at hospitals, medical groups and physician recruiting firms.

With a ratio of 164.4 physicians per 100,000 population, the lowest in the country, health facilities in Mississippi are particularly motivated to recruit physicians coming out of training, but the competition is steep, the survey shows.

“The search for newly trained physicians is on the verge of becoming a feeding frenzy,” said Kurt Mosley, vice president of strategic alliances for Merritt Hawkins. “There are simply not enough physicians coming out of training to go around.”

Primary care residents, including those in family medicine, internal medicine and pediatrics, are particularly sought after. Seventy-six percent of primary care residents received 50 or more job solicitations during their training while 55 percent received 100 or more. Psychiatrists also are in great demand. Seventy-eight percent of psychiatry residents received 50 or more job solicitations while 48 percent received 100 or more.

Other types of physicians, including surgical and diagnostic specialists, also received numerous job solicitations, though somewhat fewer than primary care and psychiatry residents. Sixty-four percent of surgical and diagnostic specialists received 50 or more job solicitations during their training, while 46 percent received 100 or more.

Bad News for Rural Areas.

The survey conveys some bad news for rural areas, which traditionally have had a difficult time attracting physicians. Only one percent of residents would prefer to practice in communities of 10,000 people or fewer and only three percent would prefer to practice in communities of 25,000 people or fewer.

The survey also indicates that a majority of newly trained physicians would prefer to be employed and that few seek an independent, private practice setting. Forty-one percent would prefer employment with a hospital, while 34 percent would prefer employment with a medical group. Only one percent would prefer a solo practice setting. When selecting a first practice, the availability of free time is the number one consideration of most residents, explaining in part their preference for employment, which offers more regular schedules than does private practice.

“The days of new doctors hanging out a shingle in an independent solo practice are over,” Mosley said. “Most new doctors prefer to be employed rather than deal with the financial uncertainty and time demands of private practice.”

Despite a favorable job market, some new doctors are unhappy about their choice of a profession, according to Mosley. The survey asked new doctors if they would study medicine if they had their education to do over again, or whether they would select another field. Almost one in four (22 percent) said they would select another field.

The overall margin of error of the survey is +/- 3.2 percent as determined by statistical response experts at the University of Tennessee.

(Source: MHA News Now)