

Mississippi Ranked as Best State To Practice Medicine in 2017 Survey

[Physicians Practice Magazine](#) has ranked Mississippi as the best state for physicians to either set up their own practice or become employed in their annual state review.

Surveyed factors include cost of living, tax climate (state collections per capita), physician density, and Medicare's Geographic Practice Cost Index (which adjusts physician reimbursement based on regional variation in the cost to treat patients). The state finished in the top 10 of all six [metrics](#) five times, the most of any other state. Other states that round out the top five include Texas, Alaska, California, and Arkansas.

The publication partnered with Doximity, an online social networking service for U.S. clinicians, to use their "Residency Navigator" to monitor post-residency retention rate by state, from one to nine years following completion of residency training. The publication also partnered with medical malpractice insurance specialists, Cunningham Group, to determine malpractice premium averages.

Katherine Patterson, MD, a family physician and obstetrician based in Indianola, praised Mississippi's physician workforce. "We have a genuinely caring population of physicians. If we're from Mississippi, we are very proud to be from Mississippi and we want to take very good care of the patients that live in our state," says Patterson.

Growing up, Patterson was a military child, living in different locations throughout the southeast before her parents ultimately settled down in Hattiesburg. Patterson, a family physician and obstetrician, has been practicing in Indianola since 2007.

Living close to her family, the state's actions toward tort reform, and helping underserved communities are just a few of the reasons Patterson continues to practice in Mississippi. "When patients [in Mississippi] find a physician they feel they identify with, they establish a relationship. That relationship can go on for as long as the physician or patient lives ... our patient population is hungry for that long-lasting therapeutic relationship with a physician," says Patterson.

Furthermore, being a family physician has given Patterson a great appreciation for Mississippi's strict vaccine laws. "We have a very high rate of vaccination of children. Because of this, we don't see many outbreaks of diseases that other states have seen," says Patterson.

When she is not practicing medicine, Patterson enjoys the beautiful state parks, lakes, and coastline that Mississippi has to offer. "My children, husband, and I also like to go to sporting events. We have two Southeastern Conference [college] teams here in Mississippi and football is really big," says Patterson.

"From music, to art and food, Mississippi has a rich history," she says. "People travel from all over the country to visit the BB King Museum," located in Indianola.