

# Minnesota's Physician Workforce, 2015

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2015 PHYSICIAN WORKFORCE SURVEY<sup>i</sup>

### Overall

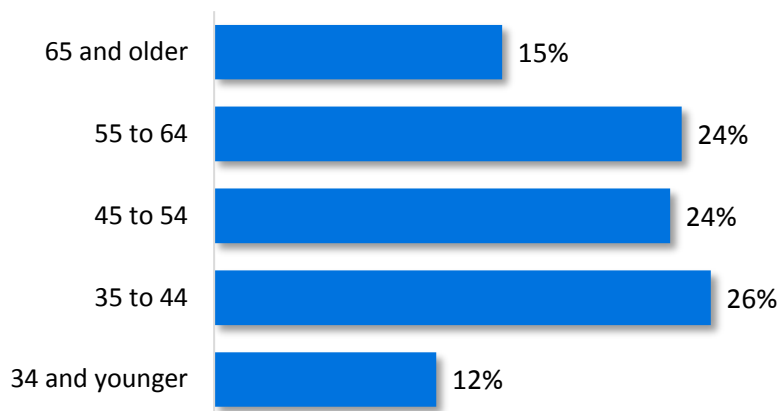
According to the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice, as of November 2015, there were **22,353** actively licensed physicians.<sup>ii</sup> The data in this fact sheet includes both primary care physicians as well as physicians with other specialties.

### Demographics

**Sex.** In general, healthcare professions tend to be female-dominated, but physicians are still a majority male profession. Approximately 66 percent of Minnesota physicians are male. This is changing, however. Younger cohorts of physicians are more heavily female, and among those physicians under the age of 35, half are female (analysis not shown).

**Age.** Physicians are fairly evenly distributed across the age spectrum, with even shares in their mid-thirties to mid-sixties. The median age of physicians is 50.

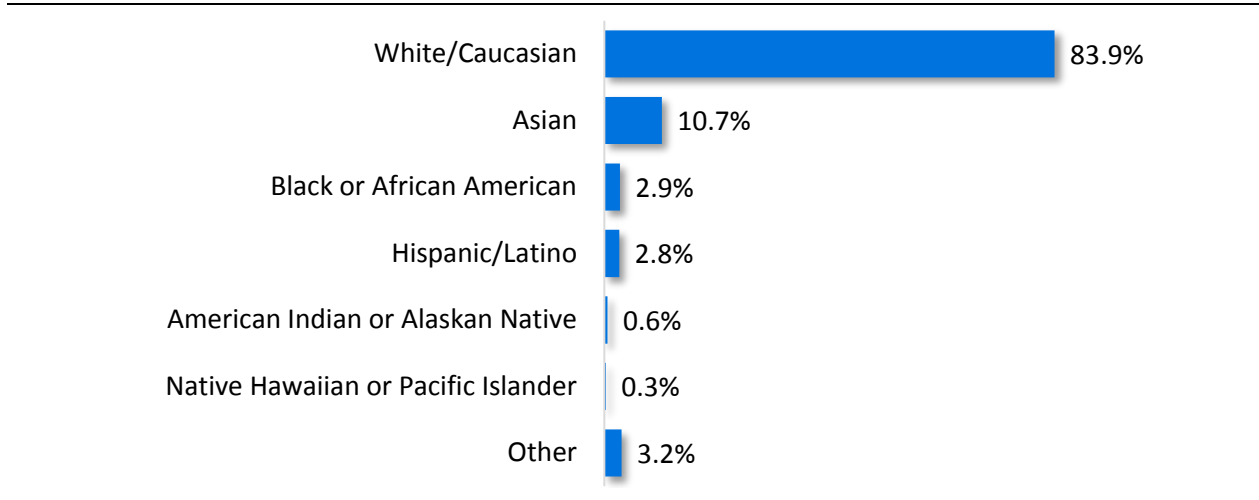
**Age of Minnesota Physicians**



*Source: Minnesota Board of Medical Practice, November 2015. Analysis done by MDH. Percentages are based on 22,351 Minnesota licensed physicians who provided valid birth dates to the Board.*

**Race.** Typical of racial patterns among most healthcare professionals, the majority (83.9 percent) of physicians indicated that they were white. The second most common race for physicians was Asian.

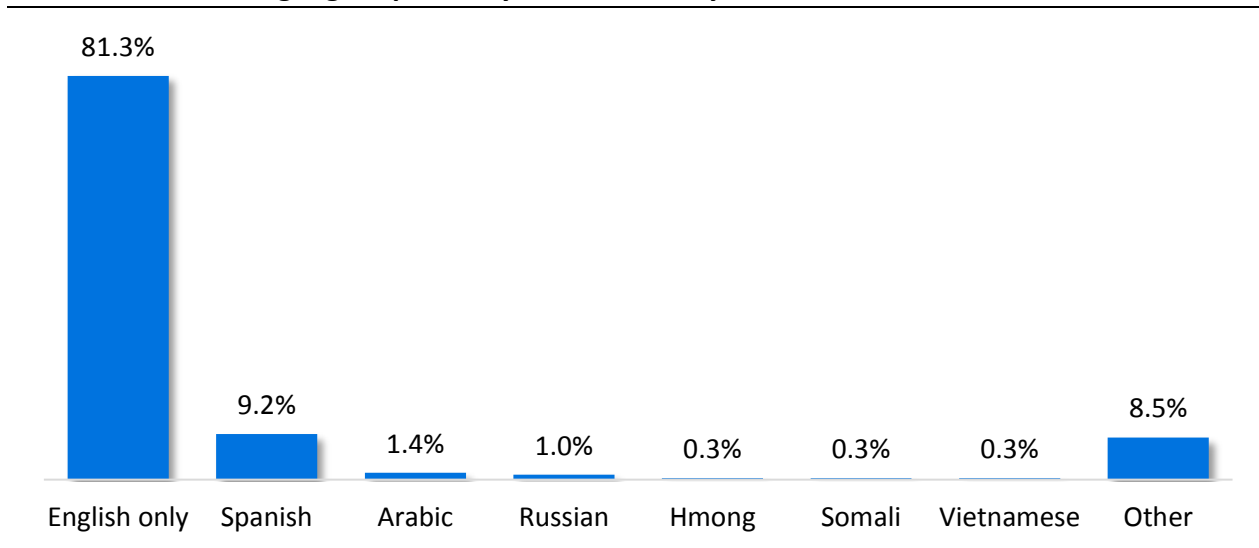
**Race of Minnesota Physicians**



Source: MDH Physician Workforce Questionnaire, 2015. Respondents could select as many races as applicable.

**Languages Spoken in Practice.** The majority of physicians—over 80 percent—indicated that they spoke only English in their practice. Another 9.2 percent spoke Spanish, and just a small handful of physicians spoke other languages. The “other” language category included very small shares (less than 1 percent each) of physicians who reported speaking Hindi, Amharic, Khmer, Lao, Oromo, Serbo-Croatian, Swahili, Sign Language, Chinese, French, Urdu, or some other language.

**Languages Spoken by Minnesota Physicians in their Practices**



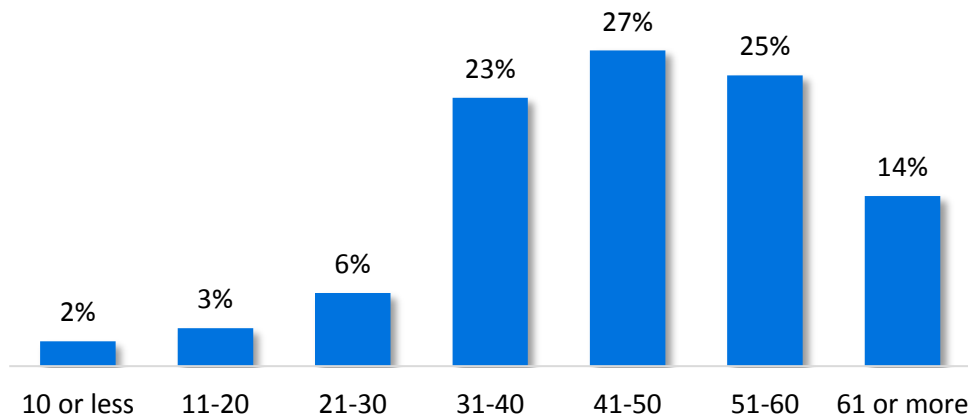
Source: MDH Physician Workforce Questionnaire, 2015. Respondents could select as many languages as applicable.

## Employment

**Share of Physicians Employed.** An estimated **91.6 percent** of Minnesota licensed physicians reported on the MDH questionnaire that they were “working in a paid or unpaid position as a physician.” Of the small share *not* working as a physician, the vast majority indicated that they were retired. It is not uncommon for retired physicians to maintain their medical license.

**Hours Worked.** Physicians are a hard-working group. The median work week was 50 hours, and a substantial share of physicians worked more than 60 hours per week. Very few physicians worked fewer than 30 hours per week.

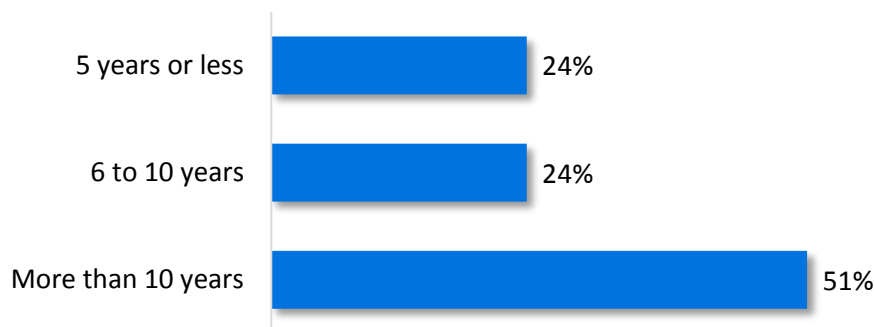
Hours Worked in a Typical Week



Source: MDH Physician Workforce Questionnaire, 2016. The chart is based on 13,417 survey responses.

**Future Plans.** Just under one quarter of physicians who were practicing in Minnesota indicated that they planned to leave the field within five years. Of those planning to leave, slightly over half indicated that they planned to retire.

“How long do you plan to continue practicing as a physician in Minnesota?”



Source: MDH Physician Workforce Questionnaire, 2015. The chart is based on 11,279 responses.

**Work Setting.** The questionnaire asked physicians to identify their primary work setting. Nearly half of all physicians reported that their primary work setting was an office or clinic, and another 24.3 percent reported that they primarily worked in an inpatient hospital facility.<sup>iii</sup> Only a very small share of physicians are primarily employed by long-term care facilities such as nursing homes, treatment facilities, or hospice care.

### Physicians' Work Setting

Setting	Share of Physicians Working in this Setting
Office/Clinic	49.4%
Hospital – Inpatient	24.3%
Hospital – Outpatient	10.9%
Hospital – Emergency Department	6.2%
Medical School	2.1%
Research/Laboratory	1.7%
Nursing Home or Extended Care Facility	0.7%
Treatment Facility	0.3%
Hospice Care	0.2%
Other	4.3%

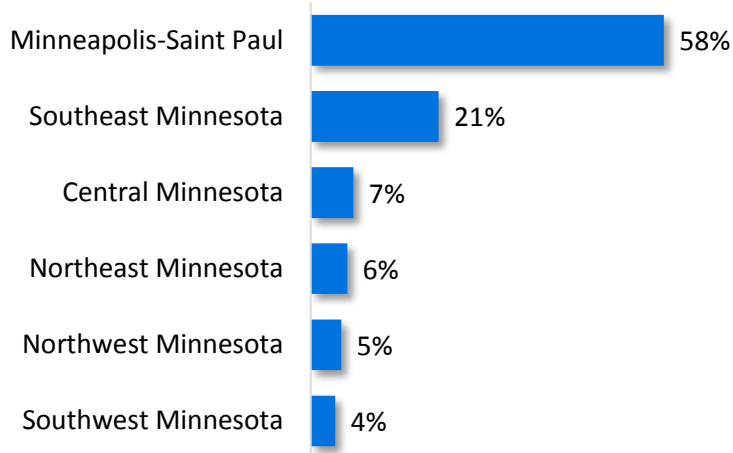
Source: MDH Physician Workforce Questionnaire, 2015. The chart is based on 13,141 survey responses.

## Geographic Distribution

To get a sense of the accessibility of physicians' services around the state, the next two charts provide two different views of the geographic distribution of physicians. These analyses are based on geocoded practice addresses that are supplied to the Board of Medical Practice at the time of license renewal.<sup>iv</sup>

**Distribution by Region.** The first chart shows the distribution of physicians across the six planning areas around Minnesota. As shown, slightly over half of physicians (58 percent) are practicing in the Twin Cities metro area, with another 21 percent in the Southeast region, reflecting the substantial pull of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. The remainder of the state is home to significantly smaller shares of physicians. For reference, the Twin Cities metro area houses approximately 54 percent of the state's population, with all other regions housing between 7 and 13 percent of Minnesotans. This suggests that the location of physicians—and therefore the accessibility of medical services—is heavily concentrated in the Twin Cities and Rochester areas.

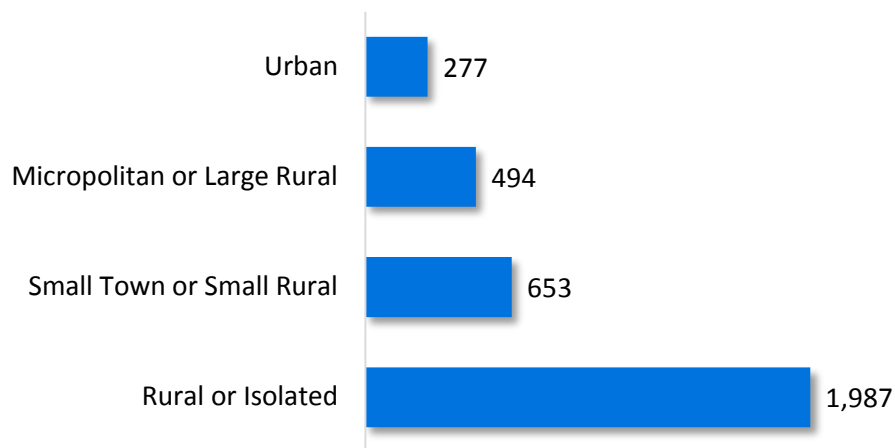
**Physicians by Minnesota Region**



Source: Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) geocoding and analysis of November, 2015 Minnesota Board of Medical Practice business address data. Percentages above are based on 15,991 valid Minnesota addresses.

**Distribution across urban and rural areas.** The chart below provides another view of the geographic distribution of physicians, showing the size of the population for every one physician in urban, micropolitan, small town, and rural areas. The chart includes *both* primary care and other physicians. (Approximately one-third of all physicians practice primary care medicine.) As shown, there are 277 people for every one physician in urban areas of Minnesota, compared to nearly eight times that many in the most rural areas of the state. This pattern is typical of other healthcare professions, and reflects the relative inaccessibility of care in sparsely populated areas of Minnesota.

**Minnesota Population-to-Physician Ratio**



Source: Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) analysis of November 2015 Minnesota Board of Medical Practice address data. Percentages above are based on 15,991 valid Minnesota addresses.

Visit our website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/index.html> to learn about the Minnesota healthcare workforce. County-level data for this profession is available at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/database/index.html>.

Minnesota Department of Health  
Office of Rural Health and Primary Care  
85 East 7<sup>th</sup> Place, Suite 220  
Saint Paul, MN 55117  
(651) 201-3838  
[health.orhpc@state.mn.us](mailto:health.orhpc@state.mn.us)



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<sup>i</sup> The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), in cooperation with the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice, collected information on demographics, education, career and future plans of physicians during a workforce questionnaire in 2015. Unless noted, all data are based on information collected from that survey. The response rate for the 2015 physician survey was 76.9 percent.

<sup>iii</sup> Of the total licensed professionals, 4,651 listed a practice address outside of Minnesota; 1,708 did not provide a practice address, and based on survey responses, 8.4% of the total licensees are not currently practicing as a physician. Thus, not all actively licensed physicians are part of the Minnesota physician workforce.

<sup>iii</sup> Note that many physicians work in more than one setting. It is common for a physician to work in a clinic as well as at least one hospital.

<sup>iv</sup> Addresses are generally practice locations, but a small number of physicians who are not working report home addresses. Additionally, approximately 28.4 percent of physicians reported either an out-of-state address (20.8 percent) or no address (7.6 percent) to the Board; these professionals may or may not be providing services in Minnesota, but in any case, they could not be geocoded.