Preventive Medicine Physician Workforce

SUPPLY & DISTRIBUTION

Preventive medicine physicians work at the intersection of clinical medicine and public health. Previous reports reveal an ongoing decline in preventive medicine physicians and residents. The number of PM physicians currently being trained will not reverse this trend.

In 2018, there were 6,866 physicians under age 80 who designated preventive medicine as their practice specialty, or 211 physicians per 100,000 people.

The number of preventive medicine physicians is not likely to match population needs in the United States in the near term and beyond.

AGE & GENDER DISTRIBUTION

The PM specialty has become older. In 2001, 29.6% of active US Preventive Medicine physicians were 60 years or older; by 2017, that proportion increased to 47.1%. Preventive Medicine practitioners have, historically, been more often male but that has been shifting in recent years. In 2001, 24.6% of all active Preventive Medicine physicians were female; in 2017, that proportion rose to 47.1%, nearly half.

Preventive medicine physicians are not proportionately distributed across the rural-urban geography of the US. In 2017, only 2.0% of the total number of active PM physicians were in rural counties. The population in these rural counties is 5.5% of the total US population. Similarly, 6.5% were in “micropolitan” (small city) counties, which account for 8.4% of the total US population.

PM PHYSICIANS PER 100K POPULATION


Data in bars, reporting all AMA Masterfile data in years 1970-1997 and American Medical Association Masterfiles in years 2003-2019 for sales up to 7 years.