

Most doctors are over-extended or at full capacity

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(HealthDay)—Most physicians report being over-extended or at full capacity, according to a survey conducted by Merritt Hawkins for The Physicians Foundation.

The researchers used data from 20,088 [physicians](#) across the United States who responded to a survey about physician practice patterns and perspectives.

According to the [survey](#), 81 percent of physicians described themselves as at full capacity or over-extended; 19 percent indicated that they have time to see more patients. Close to half (44 percent) of physicians intend to take steps that would reduce patient access to their services, including reducing the number of patients they see, retiring, working part-time, or

seeking non-clinical jobs. Furthermore, only 17 percent of physicians were in solo practice and 35 percent were independent practice owners, down from 25 and 49 percent, respectively, in 2012. Many employed physicians (68 percent) were concerned about clinical autonomy and their ability to make the best decisions for patients.

"These trends carry significant implications for patient access to care," Walker Ray, M.D., vice president of The Physicians Foundation and chair of its Research Committee, said in a Foundation news release.

"With more physicians retiring and an increasing number of doctors, particularly younger physicians, planning to switch in whole or in part to concierge medicine, we could see a limiting effect on physician supply and, ultimately, on the ability of the U.S. health care system to properly care for millions of new [patients](#)."

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