

One in 15 family docs focus time on emergency/urgent care

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(HealthDay)—Approximately one in 15 family physicians spend at least 80 percent of their time in emergency or urgent care, with higher percentages seen for doctors in rural areas, according to a report published by the American Academy of Family Physicians. The findings were published in the July-August issue of the *Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*.

Using data from the Maintenance of Certification for Family Physicians examination applications, physicians were categorized according to their geographic work setting, from urban to small rural, and frontier.

According to the report, in frontier areas, more than 8 percent of family physicians devote 80 percent or more of their time to emergency or

urgent care. The figure decreased to just above 3 percent for urban areas.

"It makes sense in that physicians located in more isolated areas have a broader scope of practice than in urban/metropolitan areas," Kathleen Klink, M.D., medical director for health policy at the Robert Graham Center in Washington, D.C., told the AAFP. "We know that [family physicians](#) are providing a service in some emergency care settings that other specialties are not available to provide and enhancing access to care for patients."

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