

Why female physicians are paid less than men

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In a survey of hospital medical physicians across the United States, women made nearly \$15,000 less than their male counterparts, with a portion of this disparity explained by female doctors' tendency to prioritize collegiality and control over personal time, rather than substantial pay. The figure was determined after controlling for a number of factors, including age, geography, specialty, and amount and type of clinical work.

Optimal workload was the top priority for both male and female physicians, 776 of whom responded to survey questions on work priorities. Substantial pay ranked second in prevalence by men and fourth by [women](#). In this survey women were younger and less likely to be leaders than men. On average, they worked fewer full-time equivalents, worked more nights, and reported fewer daily billable encounters. More women than men were pediatricians, worked in university settings, worked in the Western United States, and were divorced. These variables were accounted for when determining the pay [disparity](#).

The study's investigators noted that strategies to assess and address fair physician compensation are needed to tackle gender inequities and other disparities among physicians.

"In addition to implicit bias and differences in negotiations and social networks, women's tendency to prioritize substantial pay less than men may account for some of the gender pay inequities that exist in our

society. However, substantial pay is different from equal pay. I bet most women still want fair pay," said Dr. A. Charlotta Weaver, lead author of the *Journal of Hospital Medicine* study.

More information: Weaver, A. C., Wetterneck, T. B., Whelan, C. T. and Hinami, K. (2015), A matter of priorities? Exploring the persistent gender pay gap in hospital medicine. *J. Hosp. Med.*, 10: 486-490. [DOI: 10.1002/jhm.2400](https://doi.org/10.1002/jhm.2400)

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