

Report outlines opportunities, challenges for kidney health workforce

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The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) released a new analysis of the kidney health workforce that outlines a mixed picture for the specialty. Authored by researchers from the George Washington University (GWU) Health Workforce Institute, The US Adult Nephrology Workforce 2016: Developments and Trends is available online at <http://www.asn-online.org/workforce>.

"The research gives us a snapshot of our specialty, highlighting complex problems that nephrologists are uniquely qualified to address," said ASN President Raymond C. Harris, MD, FASN. "This and other data collection and analysis efforts underway at ASN are critical to informing the society's efforts to overcome these challenges and support nephrologists at every stage of their career in providing the optimum level of care for patients with kidney diseases."

The report is the latest in a series produced in collaboration with the GWU Health Workforce Institute research team led by Edward Salsberg, MPA.

"Our third annual report on the nephrology workforce finds a mixed picture overall, with both positive and negative signs," said Salsberg. "For example, while the job market for new nephrologists is still challenging, there were some bright spots especially for US medical school graduates (USMGs) as job prospects improved along with incomes. And a new survey of nephrologists over 55 found that most were satisfied with their specialty, practice, and income."

In addition to surveying nephrologists 55 and older, GWU conducted the annual Nephrology Fellows Survey and examined the potential of recently introduced ESRD Seamless Care Organization (ESCO) demonstration projects to influence nephrologist demand.

Among the report's key findings:

- The job market improved slightly for USMGs, although it remains challenging for international medical graduates
- The number of nephrology fellows in training has remained steady
- Nephrologists 55 and over are generally satisfied with the specialty, their job, and their income
- The ESCOs are an encouraging model for patients and nephrologists, and may make the specialty more fulfilling and economically rewarding. However, training programs may need to modify their curriculum to better prepare nephrologists for more comprehensive team practice in ambulatory settings
- Modeling conducted in collaboration with the Sheps Center at the University of North Carolina project the number of adult nephrologists per 10,000 population will grow by 58% between 2016 and 2030

Nephrology workforce research is one part of ASN's commitment to empower current and future members of the nephrology workforce and advance their professional goals and success. The society recently coalesced its workforce-centered programs into a new Workforce and Career Advancement Department to foster career development for all [kidney](#) health professionals. Among its portfolio are Kidney STARS, Kidney TREKS, and the ASN Foundation for Kidney Research grants programs to which ASN commits more than \$3 million each year. More than 40 physician volunteers serving on the newly created Career Advancement, Diversity and Inclusion, and Workforce and Training

Committees will inform the Department's strategic initiatives.

Provided by American Society of Nephrology

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