

Gender gap persists in starting salary for physicians

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The gender gap in starting salary for physicians persists, although it is

unclear which factors account for this gap, according to a report published online Jan. 22 in *Health Affairs*.

Anthony T. Lo Sasso, Ph.D., from DePaul University in Chicago, and colleagues examined how the [gender gap](#) in total starting pay evolved for new physicians who accepted positions in patient care for 1999 to 2017. The extent to which preferences in [work-life balance](#) factors influence the gap was assessed.

The researchers found that during the study period, the physician earning gap between men and women persisted. Specialty consistently explained 40 to 55 percent of the differences in total starting [salary](#), with a mean share of 46 percent during the study period. Despite important [gender differences](#) in preferences for control over work-life balance, these factors could not explain the gender differences in salary; the factors explained less than 1 percent of the difference in starting salary. On average, 39 percent of the total salary difference was unexplained.

"Our analysis showed that physician-stated preferences for controlling work-life balance, including having predictable hours, the length of the work day, the frequency of being on call overnight, and the frequency of weekend duty, had virtually no effect on the starting salary differential between men and women," the authors write. "Research to learn more about nonmonetary job characteristics will be important in the future."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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