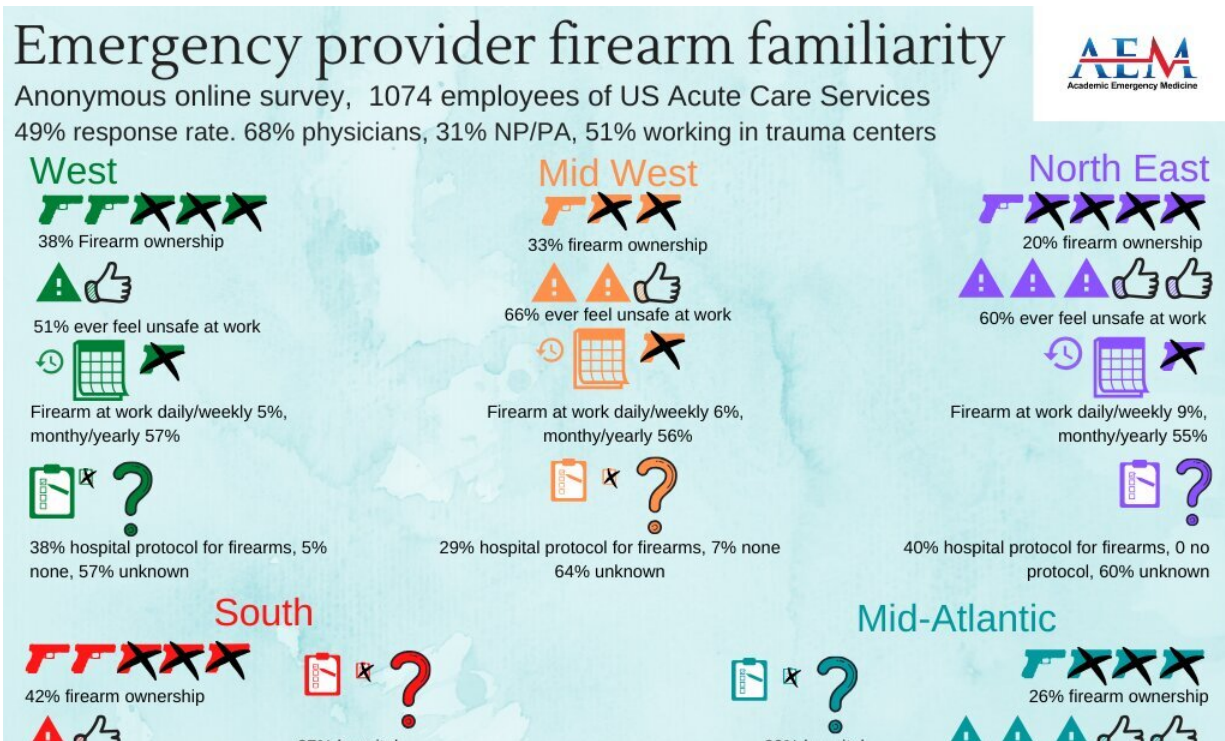


# Survey shows emergency physicians may benefit from training on safely handling firearms

March 11 2020



Anonymous online survey of 1,074 employees of U.S. acute care services.  
Credit: KIRSTY CHALLEN, B.SC., MBCHB, MRES, PH.D., LANCASHIRE TEACHING HOSPITALS, UNITED KINGDOM

Emergency physicians may benefit from training on safely handling firearms, according to the findings of a survey to be published in the

March 2020 issue of *Academic Emergency Medicine* (AEM), a journal of the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine (SAEM).

The lead author of the [study](#) is Andrew Ketterer, MD, MA, assistant program director, Harvard Affiliated Emergency Medicine Residency, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. The findings of the study are discussed in a recent AEM podcast: [Emergency Providers' Familiarity with Firearms: A National Survey](#) and further highlighted in [commentary](#) by AEM Editor-in-Chief Jeffery A. Kline, MD:

Ketterer *et al.* found that the majority of survey respondents (more than one-half of the 1,074 surveyed) encountered firearms at work at least once per year, but under one-half of all respondents felt confident in their ability to deal with a firearm found on a patient. Firearm experience by the respondent corresponded with feelings of high self-confidence in this ability and was associated with comfort in managing firearms found in patients' possession. This finding suggests that emergency physicians may benefit from educational interventions targeting firearms safety.

Commenting on the study is Dr. Megan L. Ranney, an associate professor in the department of emergency medicine at Brown University and chief research officer for AFFIRM Research:

"This study reinforces what many of us know anecdotally: most emergency physicians have encountered a firearm at work in the last year, and lack of confidence in how to handle the firearm correlates with our feeling unsafe. As we begin to develop approaches to firearm injury prevention as a health problem, it's essential for us to include the voices of [firearm](#) owners and trainers, to improve our comfort with handling these challenging clinical situations."

The survey represents the largest study to date detailing the personal

experience of [emergency physicians](#) with the safe handling of firearms.

**More information:** Andrew R. Ketterer et al, Emergency Providers' Familiarity with Firearms: A National Survey, *Academic Emergency Medicine* (2020). [DOI: 10.1111/acem.13849](https://doi.org/10.1111/acem.13849)

Provided by Society for Academic Emergency Medicine

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