

# Female physicians estimated to earn \$2 million less over 40-year career

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(HealthDay)—During the course of a 40-year career, female physicians

are estimated to earn \$2 million less than male physicians, according to a study published in the December issue of *Health Affairs*.

Christopher M. Whaley, Ph.D., from the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, California, and colleagues estimated career differences in income between men and women using earnings data from 80,342 full-time U.S. physicians surveyed during 2014 to 2019 (74.8 percent men and 25.2 percent women).

The researchers found that the most rapid increase in the differences in annual income between male and [female physicians](#) that were observed in simulations occurred during the initial years of practice. On average, in the first year of practice, [male physicians](#) had [higher incomes](#) than female physicians (unadjusted difference, \$42,454); during the first 10 years of practice, this difference increased in absolute terms, then remained stable. During the course of a simulated 40-year career, male and female physicians earned an average adjusted gross income of \$8,307,327 and \$6,263,446, respectively, for an absolute difference of \$2,043,881 (24.6 percent). The largest gender differences in career earnings were seen for surgical specialists followed by nonsurgical specialists and primary care physicians (\$2.5 million, \$1.6 million, and \$0.9 million difference, respectively).

"The magnitude of these career differences suggests that policies that address underlying causes of gender differences in physician income may have large economic impacts over the course of a career," the authors write.

One author disclosed [financial ties](#) to Doximity; a second author disclosed ties to the [pharmaceutical industry](#) and holding stock in Doximity as well as income from book rights.

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