

# Across specialties, female physicians spend more time on electronic health records than men

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A new retrospective study from the Brigham's Department of Medicine analyzed how the time spent working on Electronic Health Records

(EHR) differs between male and female physicians in ambulatory services. While previous studies have analyzed gender-based EHR differences among primary care physicians (PCPs), this analysis of 318 physicians included about 54 percent PCPs, with the rest being medical and surgical specialists.

The results show that, on average, [female physicians](#) spent 5.81 hours per day on the EHR compared to male physicians, who spend an average of 5.23 hours per day on the EHR. Both male and female physicians were found to put in EHR time outside of work; however, female physicians were spending 0.91 hours on the EHR outside of work, compared to 0.75 EHR hours from their male counterparts. Lastly, female physicians spent an average of 2.03 hours on clinical documentation, whereas male physicians spent an average 1.67 hours.

"These differences persisted after accounting for hours worked, physician specialty, and other characteristics, despite female physicians caring for slightly fewer patients on average," said Lisa Rotenstein, MD, MBA, of the Brigham's Department of Medicine. "Our findings provide a potential mechanism for the gender gap in burnout, which has implications for workforce mental health and physician retention. They suggest that women physicians may benefit from policy changes, workflows, and technologies that reduce documentation burden, including scribes, team documentation and [artificial intelligence](#)-powered solutions."

The study is published in *JAMA Network Open*.

**More information:** Gender Differences in Time Spent on Documentation and the Electronic Health Record in a Large Ambulatory Network, *JAMA Network Open* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.3935](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.3935)

Provided by Brigham and Women's Hospital

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