

Rheumatology workforce increased 20 percent from 2009 to 2019

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The overall number of clinically active rheumatology providers grew more than 20 percent during the last decade, according to a [study](#)

published online Feb. 25 in *Arthritis & Rheumatology*.

Melissa L. Mannion, M.D., from University of Alabama at Birmingham, and colleagues assessed change in rheumatology providers over time and sought to identify variation in rheumatology practice characteristics. The analysis included clinically active rheumatology physicians and advanced practice providers (APP) identified through Medicare claims data (2006 to 2020).

The researchers found that the clinically active adult rheumatology workforce in 2019 included 5,667 rheumatologists and 379 APP. The number of rheumatologists increased 23 percent from 2009 to 2020, while the number of APP increased 141 percent.

Over time, there was an increase in female rheumatologists, reaching 43 percent in 2019. Women and rheumatology providers employed by a [health care system](#) were more likely to exit, while those in a small [practice](#) or in the South were less likely to exit.

"Even with the growth of the [rheumatology](#) workforce supply identified in this analysis, there remains a greater demand for rheumatologic care that may need to be solved with more efficient care through digital health tools such as remote therapeutic monitoring, precision medicine, and others," the authors write.

More information: Melissa L Mannion et al, Changes in the Workforce Characteristics of Providers who Care for Adult Patients with Rheumatologic and Musculoskeletal Disease in the United States, *Arthritis & Rheumatology* (2024). [DOI: 10.1002/art.42833](https://doi.org/10.1002/art.42833)

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