

FEBRUARY 2024

PHYSICIANS PRACTICE[®]

2023 RESULTS Staff salary survey



Plus When the 'boomerang employee' tries to return



When the ‘boomerang employee’ tries to return

You know you should have a plan for when an employee leaves, but what if they want to return?

by Neil Baum, M.D.

In my 40+ year career as a physician, I had two employees who left who asked to come back to their previous employment in the practice. The first was an employee who left to take care of a family member. When the family member passed away, the employee asked if they could return to the position they had. The second was an employee who wanted to work for a pharmaceutical company. They were trained by pharma and went into the field and could not handle the pressure and monitoring by their district manager. Ultimately, they decided that being a pharmaceutical sales representative was too stressful and asked to return to my practice. In both situations, I accepted the employee's return.

I have written a blog about the Great Resignation where employees leave because of burnout, higher salary and more benefits. For many health care workers the pandemic was exhausting, anxiety provoking and stressful. Many of those who turned in their

resignations are now interested in returning to the health care sector they left a few years ago. Many didn't realize that when they changed jobs, they were experiencing different kinds of stress and that they didn't have the safety net of the cocoon of being in a health care environment.

I would like to point out some of the advantages to considering the boomerang employee who wishes to return.

First, these boomerang employees become acclimated quickly. They know the process of caring for patients and need little retraining. Perhaps there is some new technology that has been implemented in the practice since they left, and they need training on the procedures and the new software for managing patients.

Second, there are no surprises for the returning employee. There is no buyer's remorse as they know what to expect. Often a boomerang employee will have a greater appreciation for the medical practice because they have

sampled the real world outside of health care.

Finally, the old employer knows what they are getting. They won't have any surprises. They know the returning employee's strengths and weaknesses the day that they return to the practice. This represents less risk for the employer as they know from the first day the employee returns what to expect in terms of productivity and following directions and requests.

Bottom line: I think if employers understand what motivates the employee to return and if the reasons that they departed are reasonable, accepting a former employee back may have benefits and advantages to the practice.

Neil Baum, M.D., is a professor of clinical urology at Tulane University in New Orleans, LA. Dr. Baum is the author of several books, and co-author of the best-selling *Marketing Your Clinical Practice: Ethically, Effectively, Economically*, which has sold over 225,000 copies and has been translated into Spanish.

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2023 RESULTS

Staff salary survey

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The recent Kaiser Permanente strike, which saw more than 75,000 clinical and support workers walk off the job, illustrates the difficulties the practice staff labor market is facing. With that in mind, we asked our audience to describe the staffing situation at their practice.



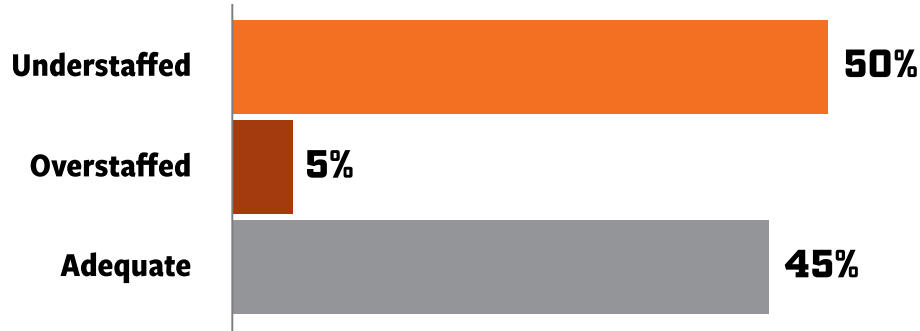
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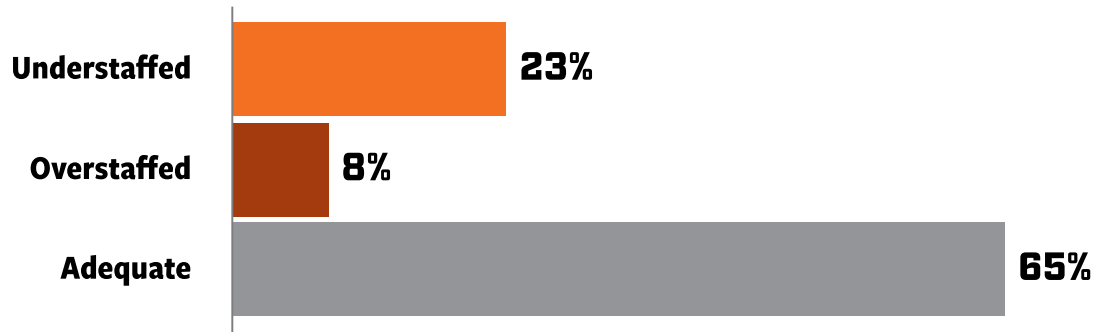
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Staffing Levels

How would you rate your staffing level now?

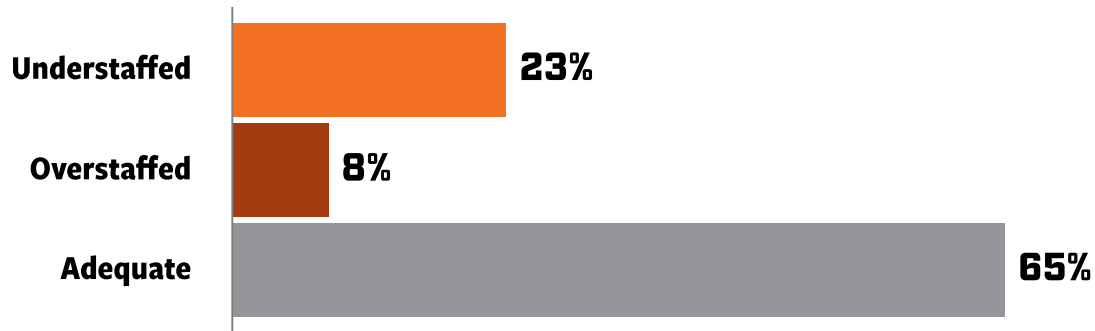


How would you rate your staffing level five years ago?



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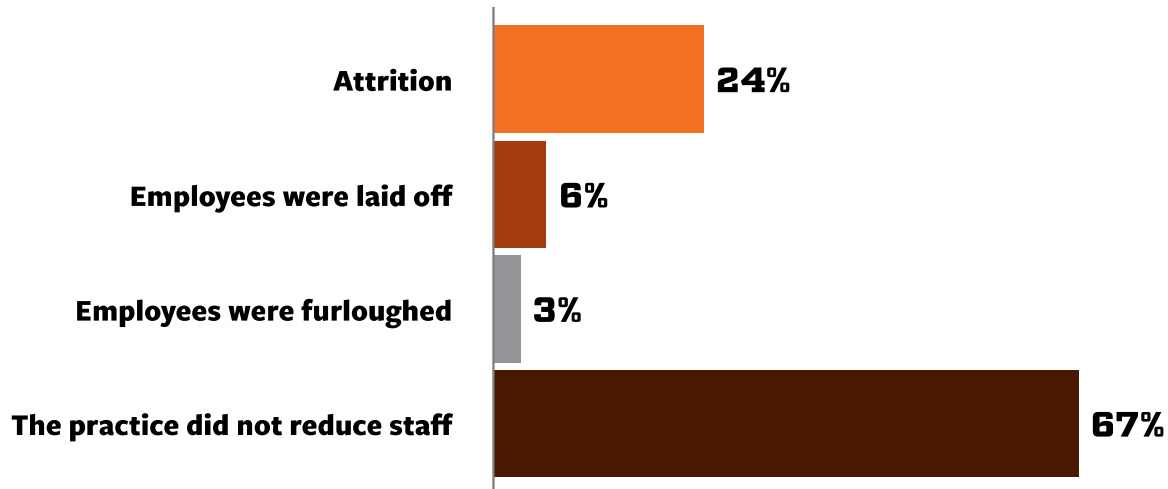
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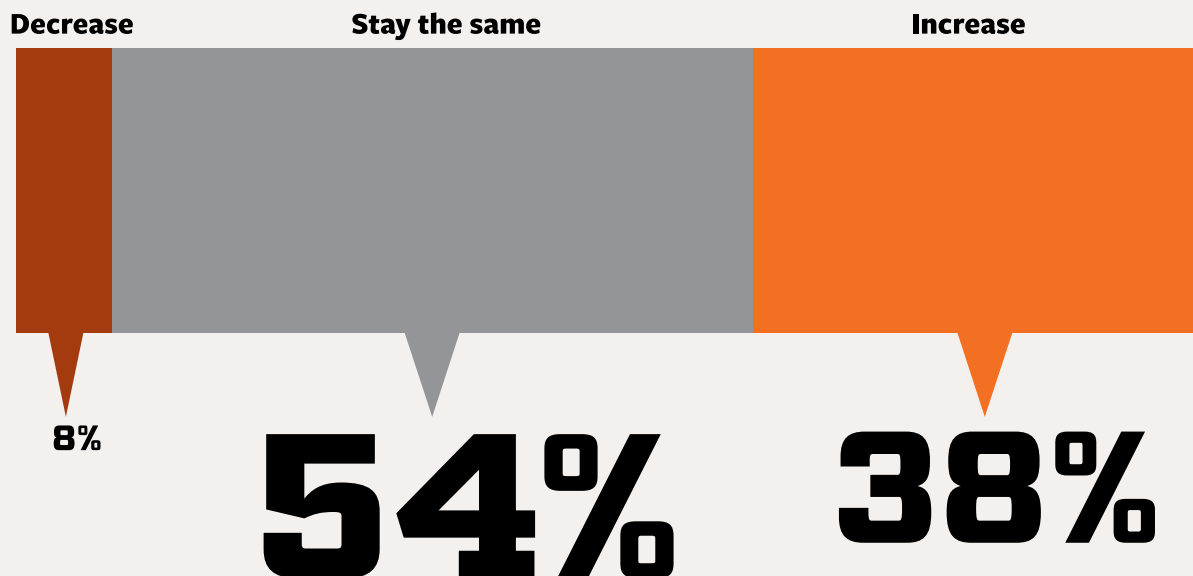
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Staffing Levels

If you have reduced staff in the past five years, what method did you use?

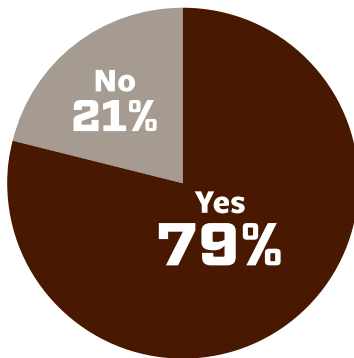


How do you anticipate your staffing level will change in 2024?

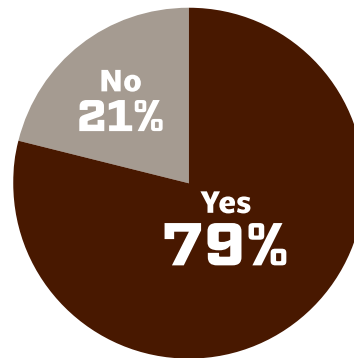


Staff raises

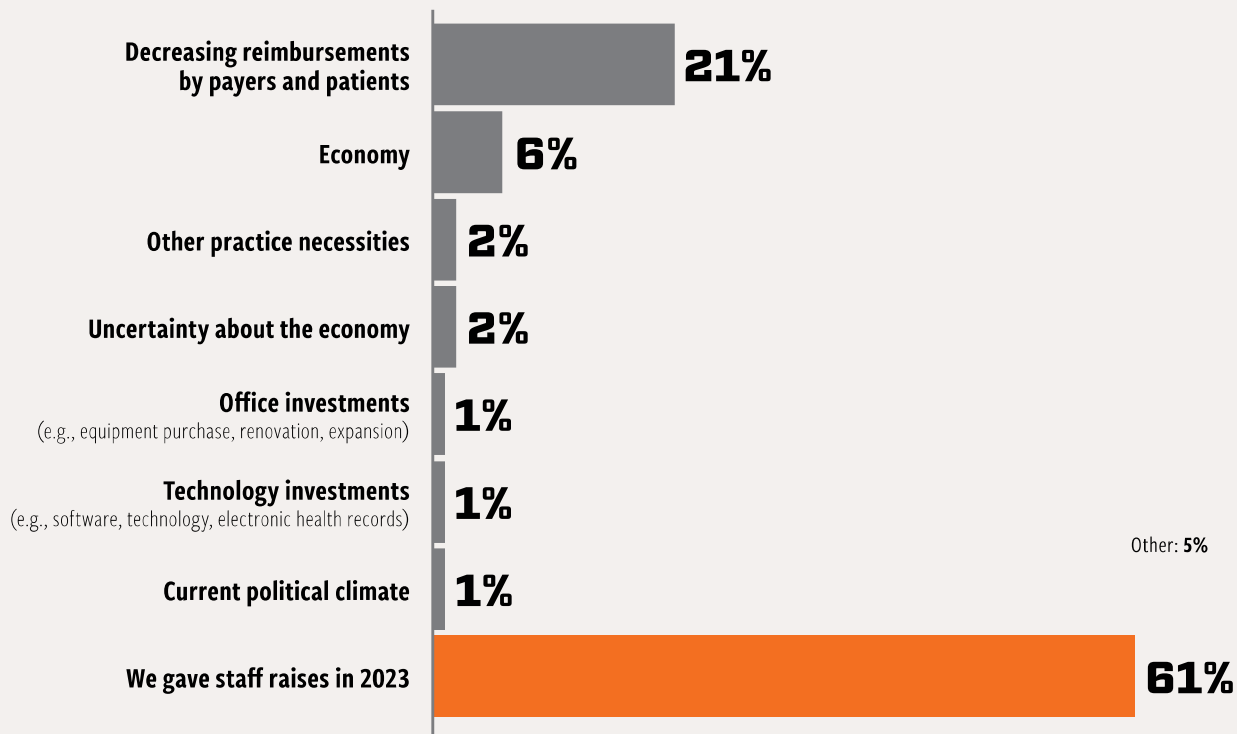
Did your practice give staff raises in 2023?



Has your practice given or planned to give raises in 2023?



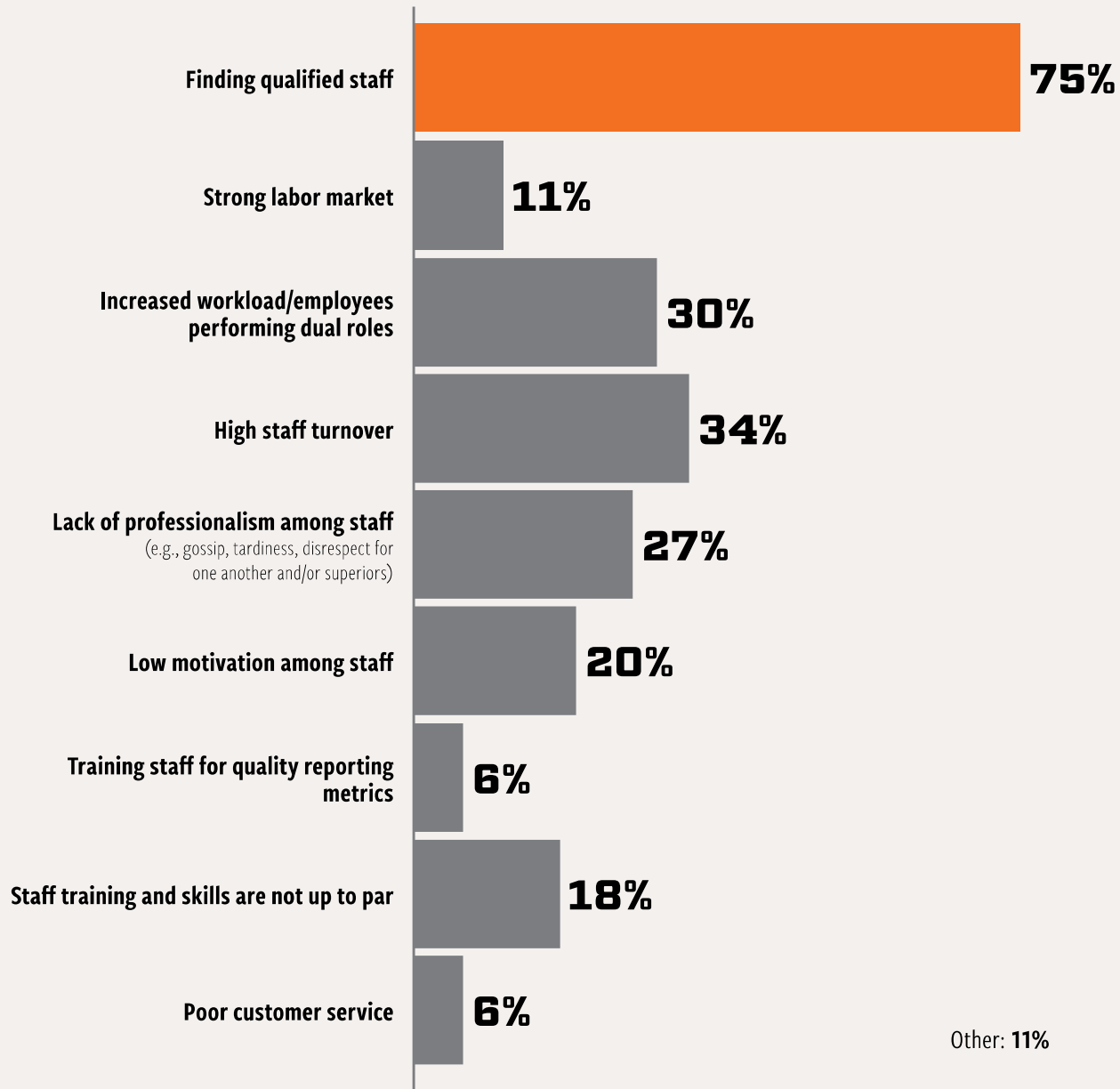
If you did not/do not plan to give raises in 2023, please identify the main reason why:



Staffing Challenges

What is your biggest staffing challenge?

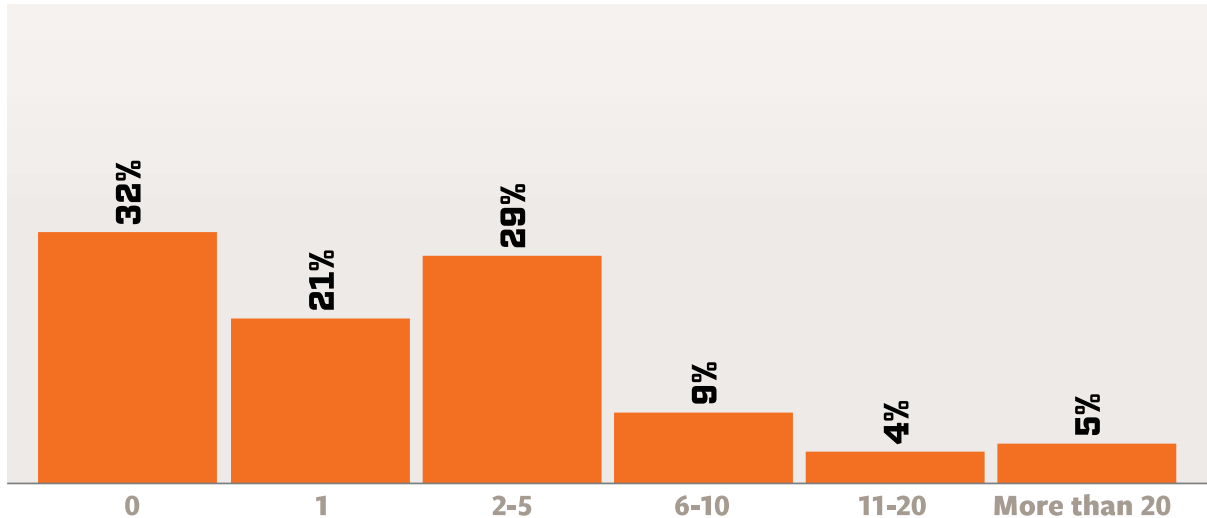
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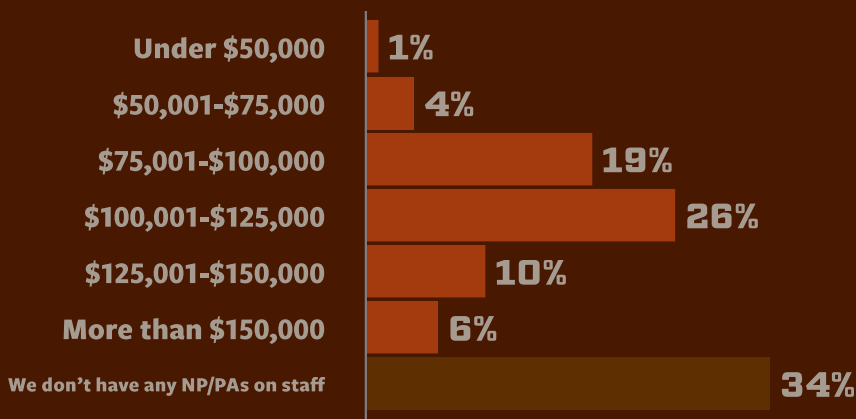
Nonphysician providers

How many nonphysician providers work at your practice?

(e.g., nurse practitioners or physician assistants)



On average, how much does a full-time nurse practitioner/physician assistant (NP/PA) position earn annually at your practice?



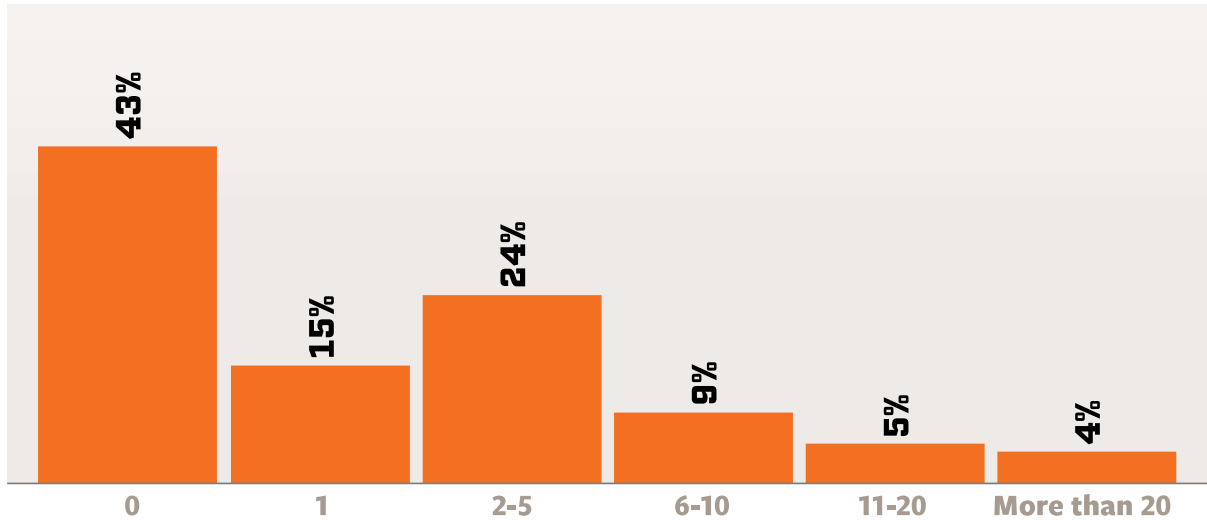
Has the number of nonphysician providers employed at your practice changed in the past five years?



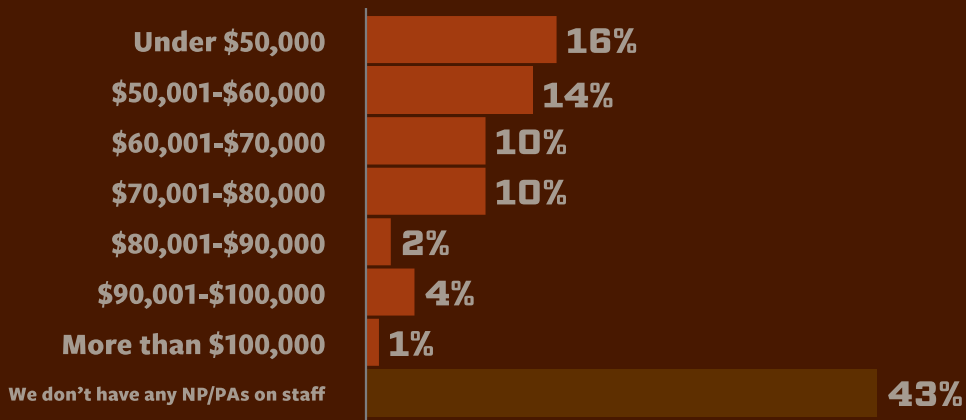
Nurses

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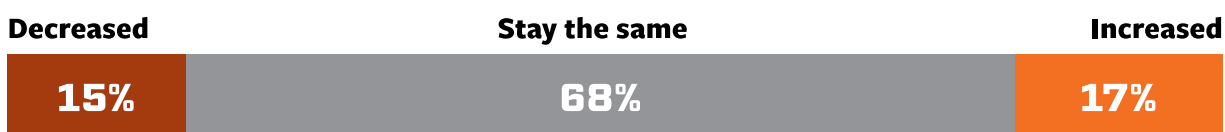
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On average, how much does a full-time nursing position earn annually at your practice?

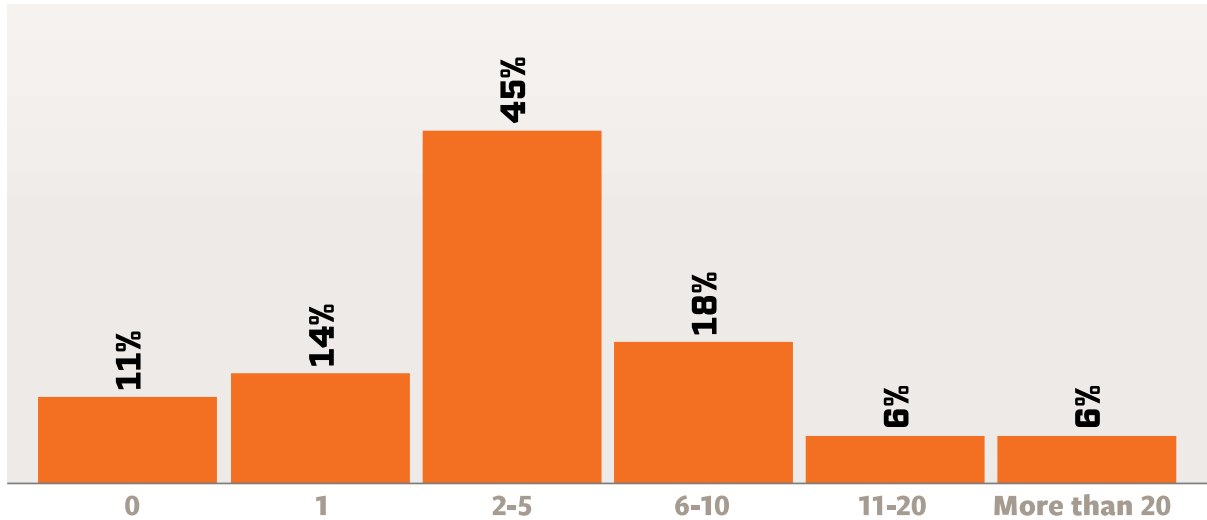


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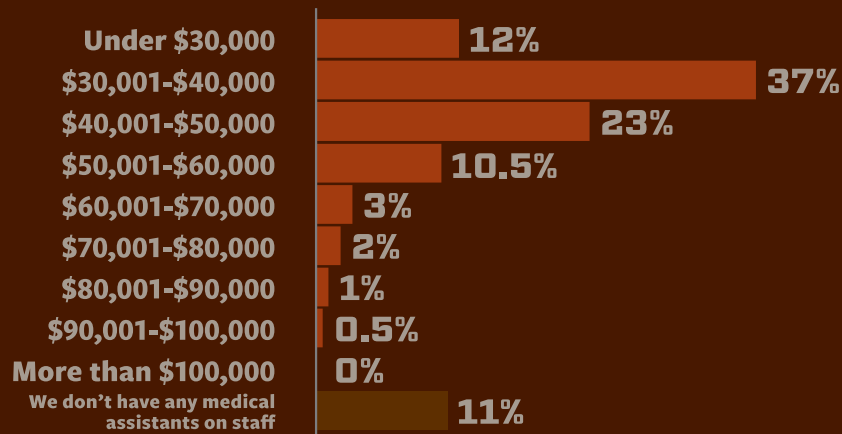
Medical assistants

How many medical assistants work at your practice?



On average, how much does a medical assistant earn annually?

Please include only direct monetary compensation. Also, please calculate all employees as full time.

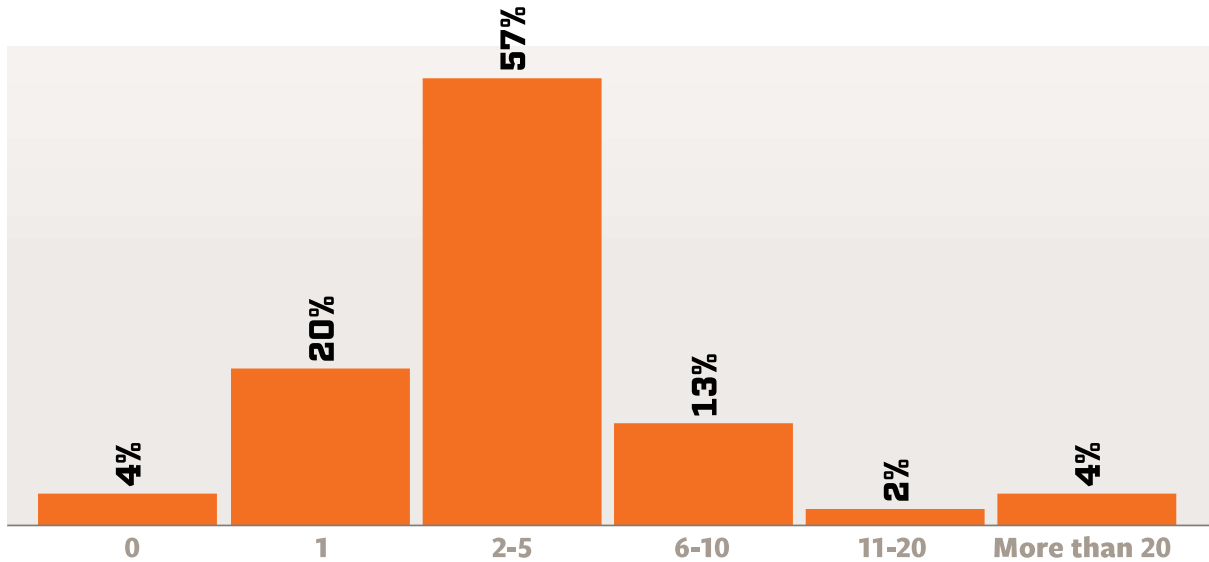


Has the number of medical assistants employed at your practice changed in the past five years?

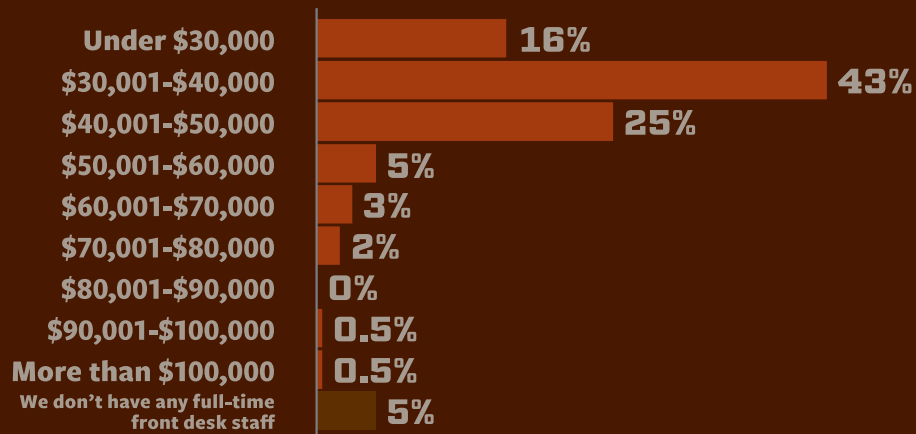


Front desk staff

How many front desk staff work at your practice?



On average, how much does a full-time front desk staff member earn annually?

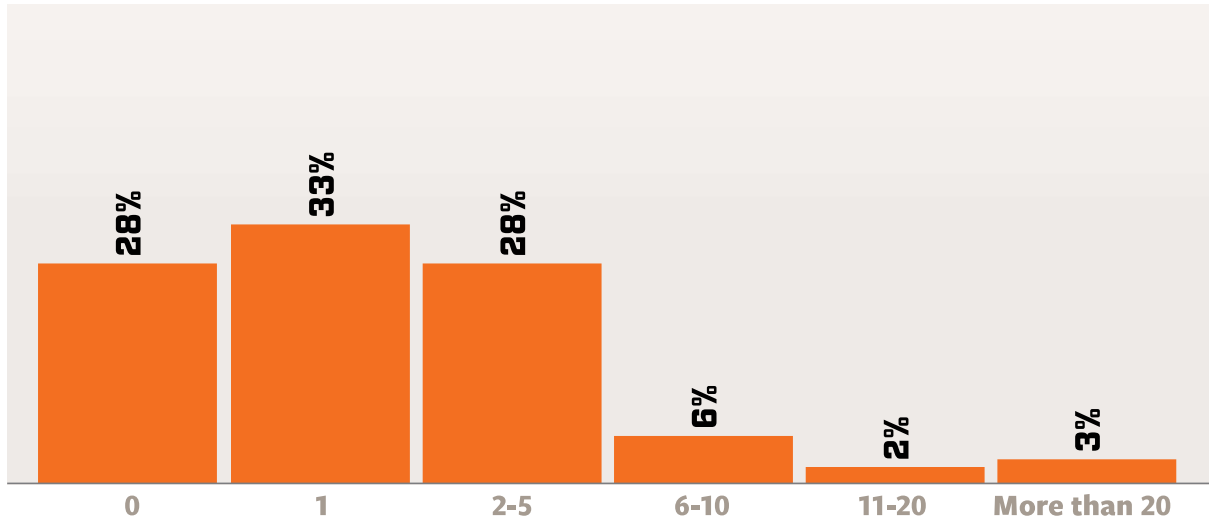


Has the number of front desk staff employed at your practice changed in the past five years?

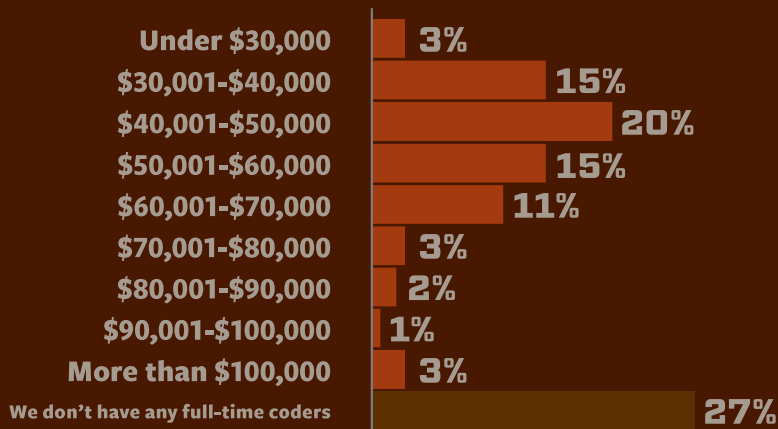


Billers/coders

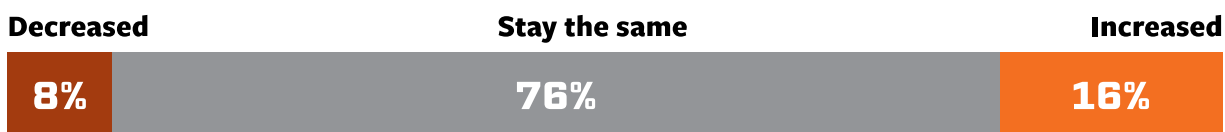
How many billers/coders work at your practice?



On average, how much does a full-time biller/coder position earn annually?

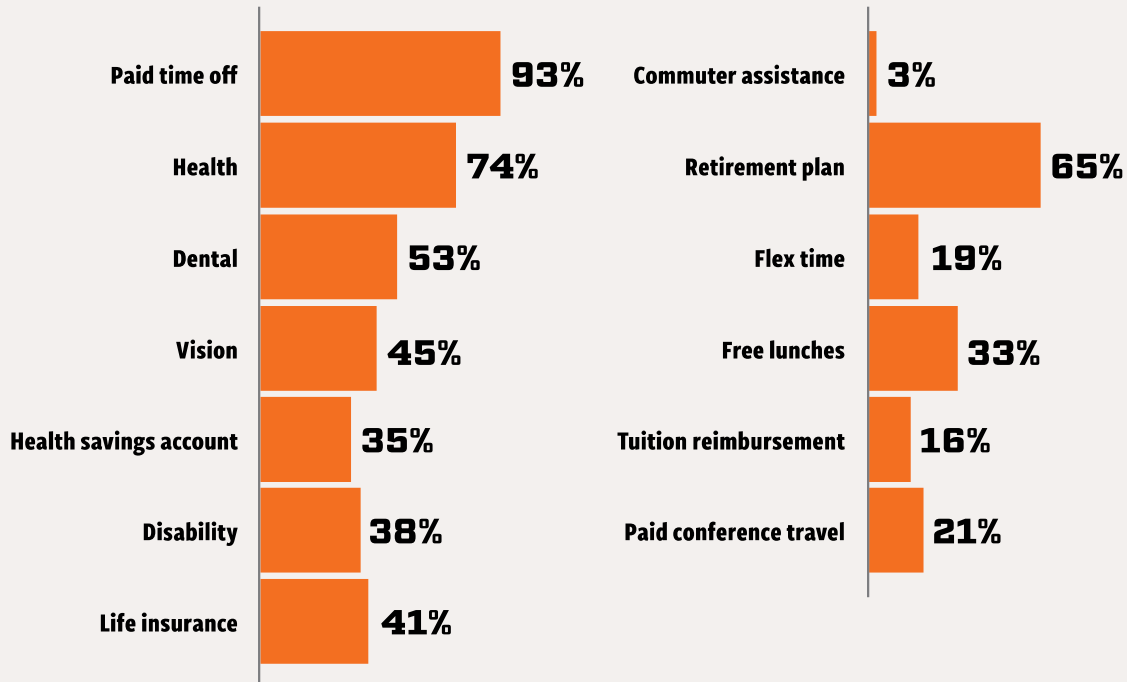


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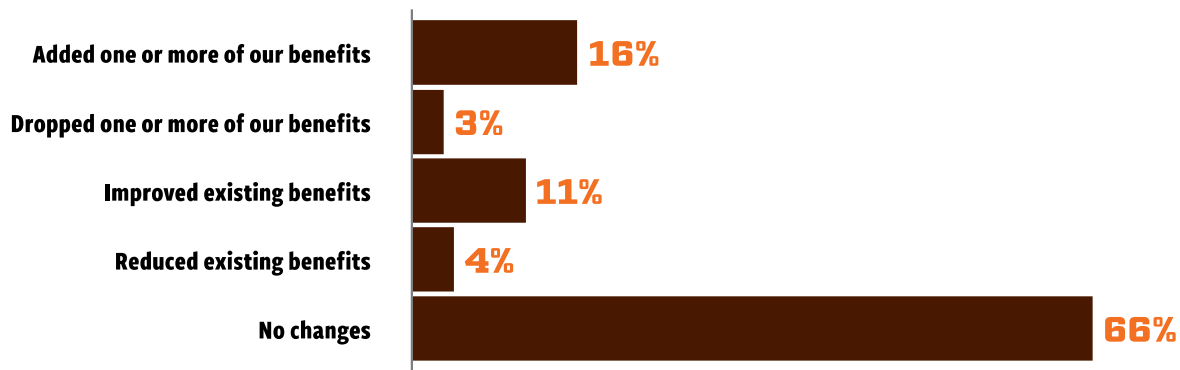


Benefits

Please indicate which of the following benefits your practice offers its nonphysician employees. Choose as many answers as are relevant.



Has your medical practice made any changes to offered benefits in the past year?



Lessons learned

What advice about staffing or managing a practice would you like to give to your peers?

“Staffing is crucial to provide adequate service to patients; however, compensation is also crucial to keep efficient and effective staff in place. Don’t be afraid to spend the money to keep good people.”

“Be sure to hire qualified personnel. Removing a challenging staff member from your practice takes a long time.”

“Focus on the needs of the practice to grow and sustain that growth.”

“Share the wins with your staff. Show gratitude and recognition, which are small tokens of appreciation to celebrate milestones. Celebrate their special days. Meet with staff regularly to listen to their concerns, challenges and suggestions.”

“Taking care of my staff means they are happy to work here, they are less worried about their own situation and they can take better care of our patients. Little things like birthday cake and gift cards for coffee or lunch make a big difference in morale.”

“You need to have at least a one-month trial period. Many employees start out strong and then taper off in terms of their productivity and attitude.”

“Compensate the employees who work hard and do a good job. Stop hiring people at a higher rate than your tenured employees but expect the tenured employees to do more.”

“Get good staff and hang on to them by any means necessary. Treat them with respect and as peers and not as people who are under you.”

“Learn to do more with fewer people.”

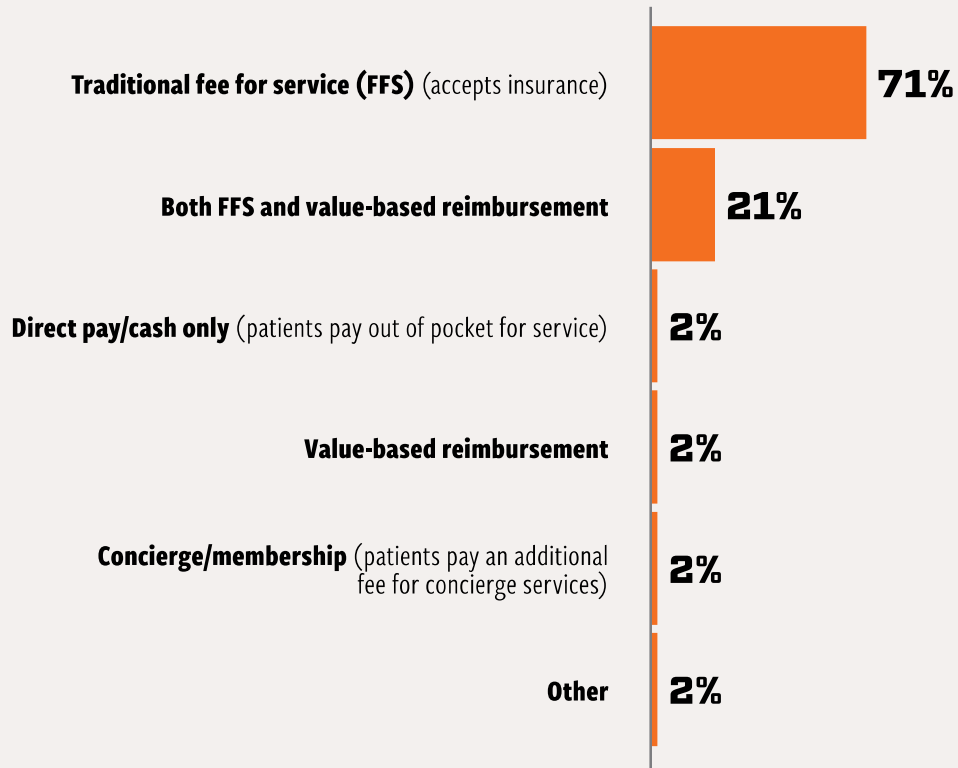
“Treat staff as the professionals that they are.”

“Keep interviewing candidates, even if you have enough people. The market is very volatile, and people can walk out of their positions at any time. We are always ready but very happy and blessed with our staff overall.”

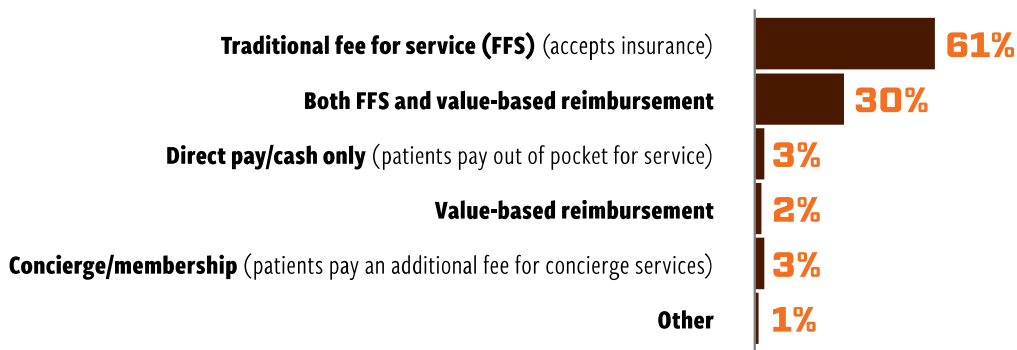
“Have compassion, understand work-life balance and review salary bands each year.”

Reimbursement

What was the primary reimbursement method at your practice before the COVID-19 pandemic?

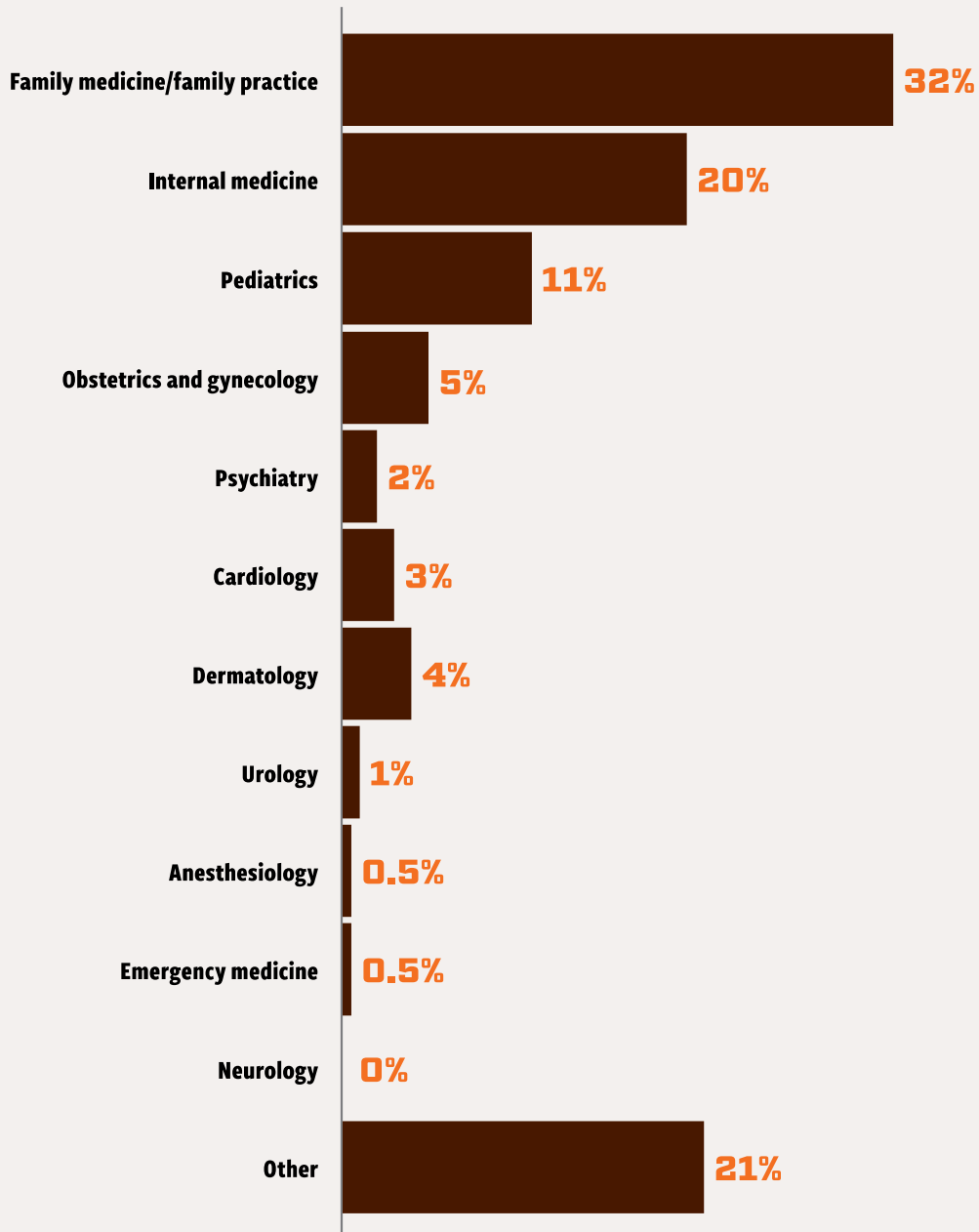


What is the primary reimbursement method at your practice now in 2023?



Survey demographics

What is your specialty?



Survey demographics

Where is your practice located?

Alabama	2.53%	Nebraska	0.00%
Alaska	0.00%	Nevada	1.27%
Arizona	1.27%	New Hampshire	0.42%
Arkansas	0.42%	New Jersey	3.80%
California	10.97%	New Mexico	0.42%
Colorado	2.11%	New York	5.91%
Connecticut	1.69%	North Carolina	5.49%
Delaware	0.00%	North Dakota	0.00%
Florida	7.59%	Ohio	3.38%
Georgia	2.53%	Oklahoma	0.84%
Hawaii	0.42%	Oregon	0.84%
Idaho	0.42%	Pennsylvania	2.53%
Illinois	4.22%	Rhode Island	0.00%
Indiana	3.80%	South Carolina	1.69%
Iowa	2.11%	South Dakota	0.00%
Kansas	0.84%	Tennessee	1.27%
Kentucky	0.42%	Texas	8.86%
Louisiana	0.84%	Utah	0.42%
Maine	0.42%	Vermont	0.00%
Maryland	1.69%	Virginia	3.38%
Massachusetts	4.22%	Washington	0.84%
Michigan	2.95%	Washington, D.C.	0.00%
Minnesota	0.84%	West Virginia	0.42%
Mississippi	1.69%	Wisconsin	0.84%
Missouri	2.95%	Wyoming	0.42%
Montana	0.00%		

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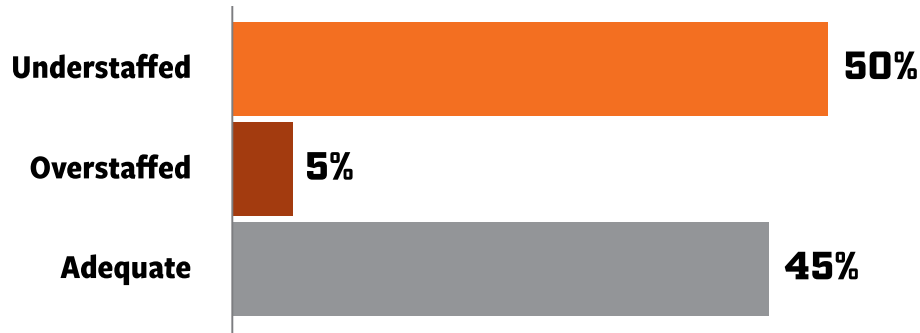
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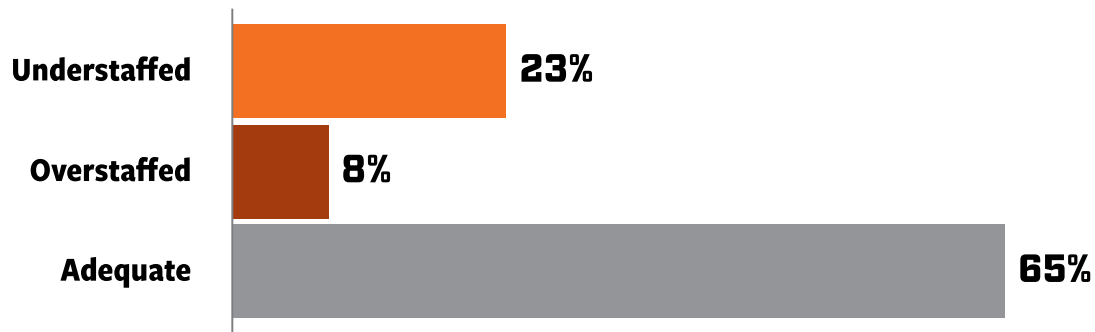
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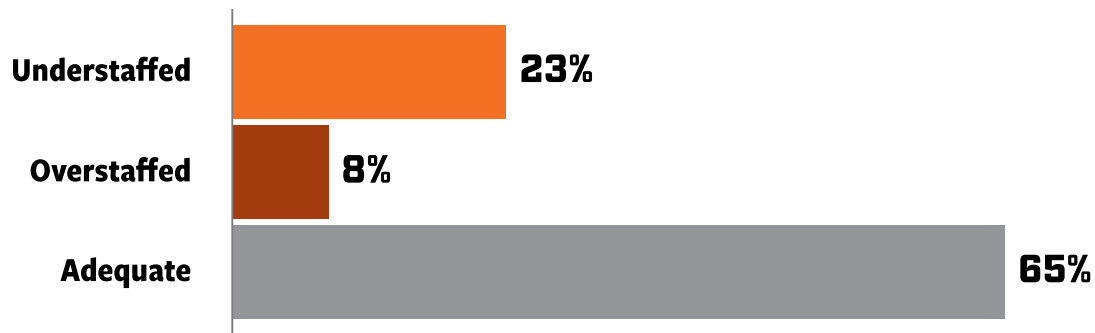


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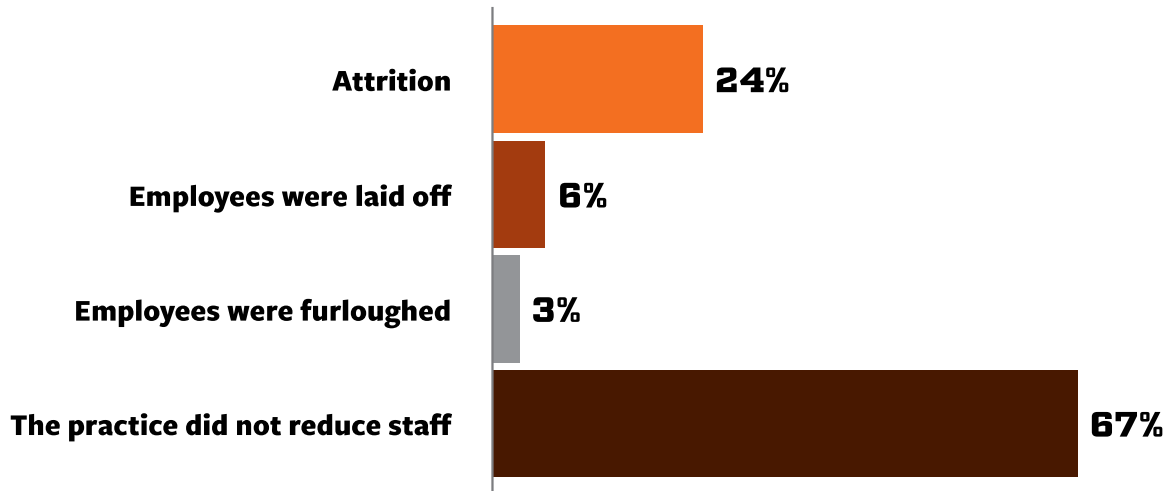
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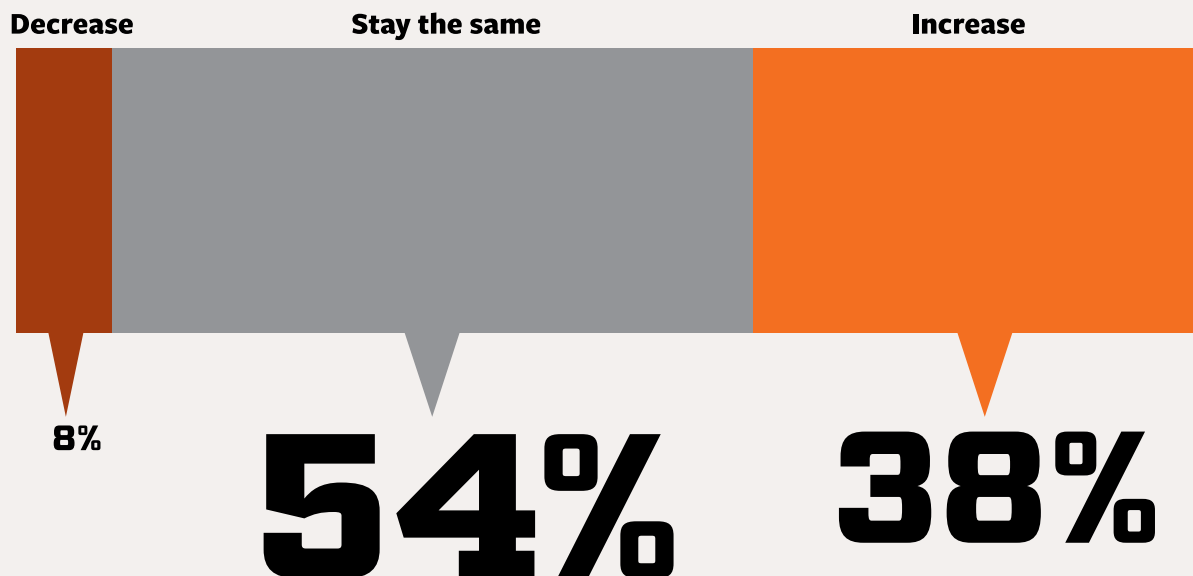
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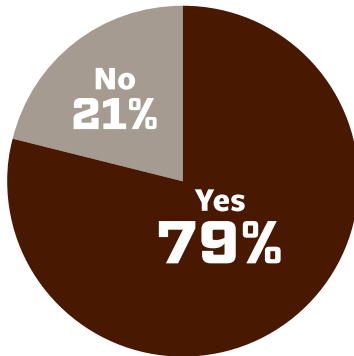


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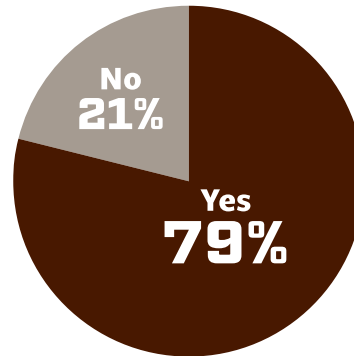


Staff raises

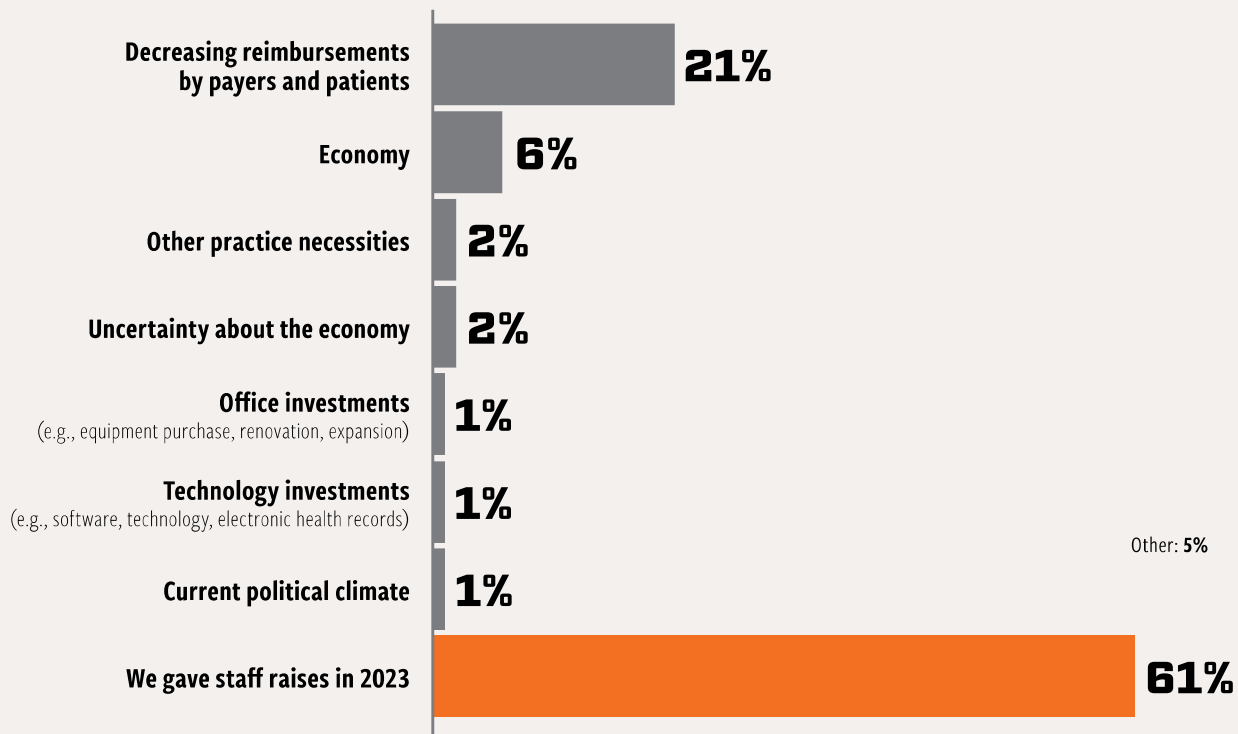
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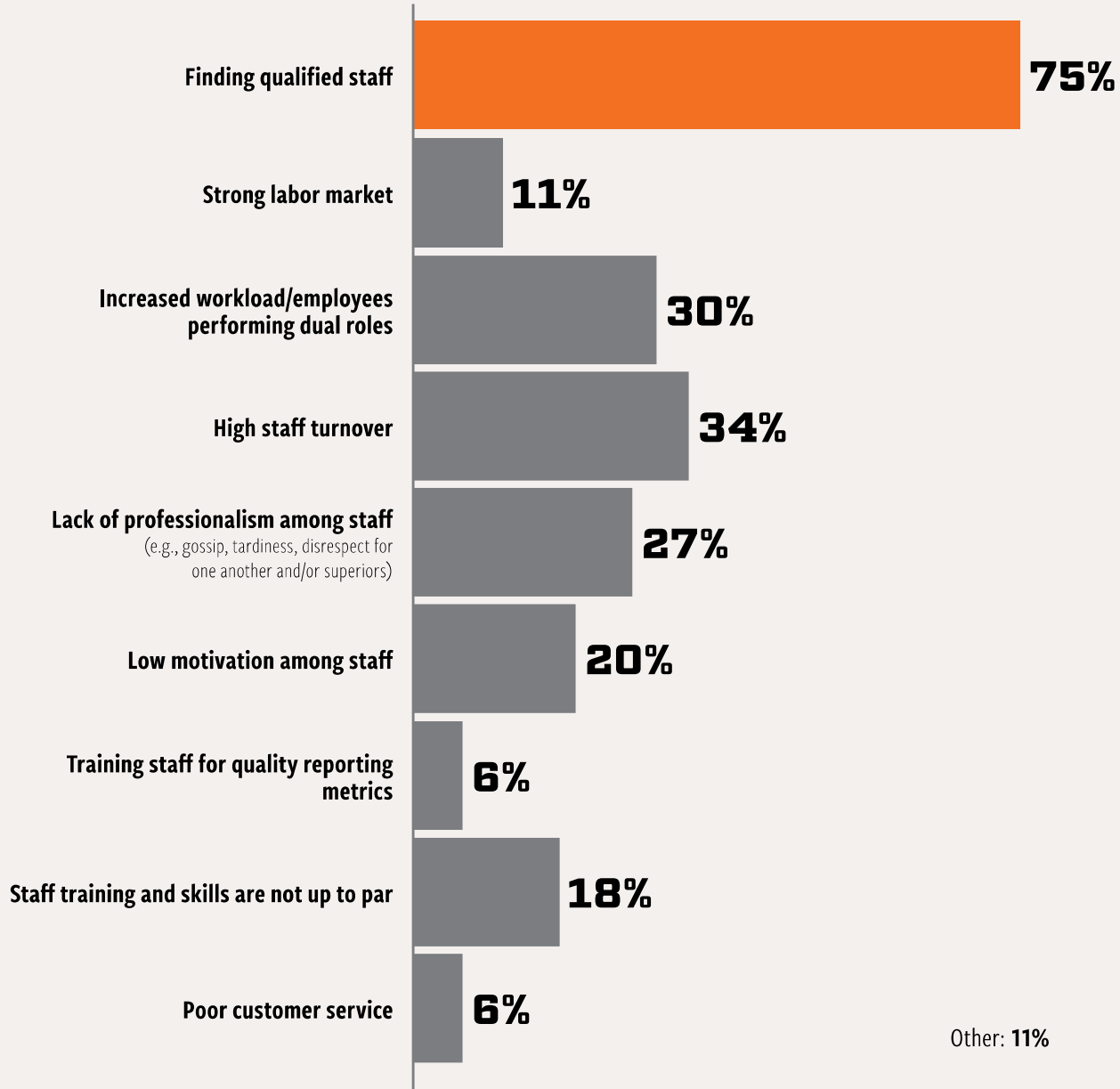
If you did not/do not plan to give raises in 2023, please identify the main reason why:



Staffing Challenges

What is your biggest staffing challenge?

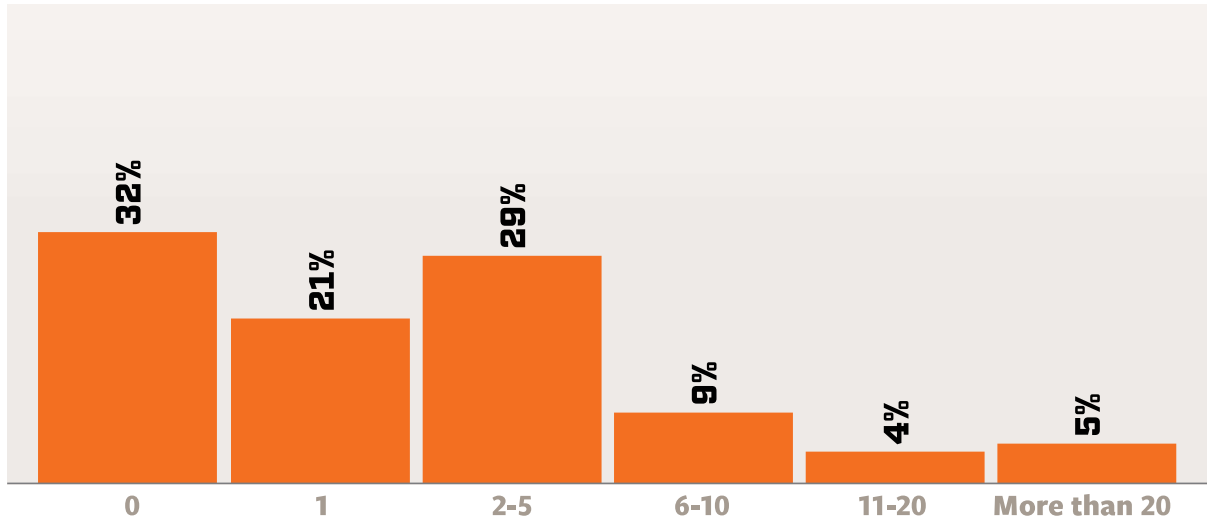
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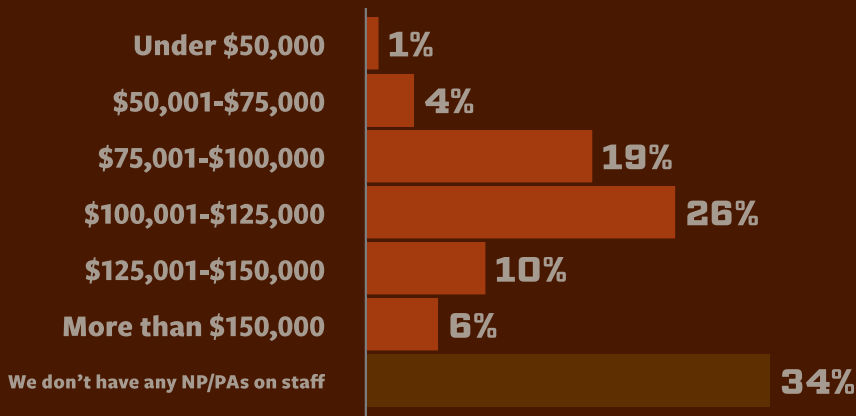
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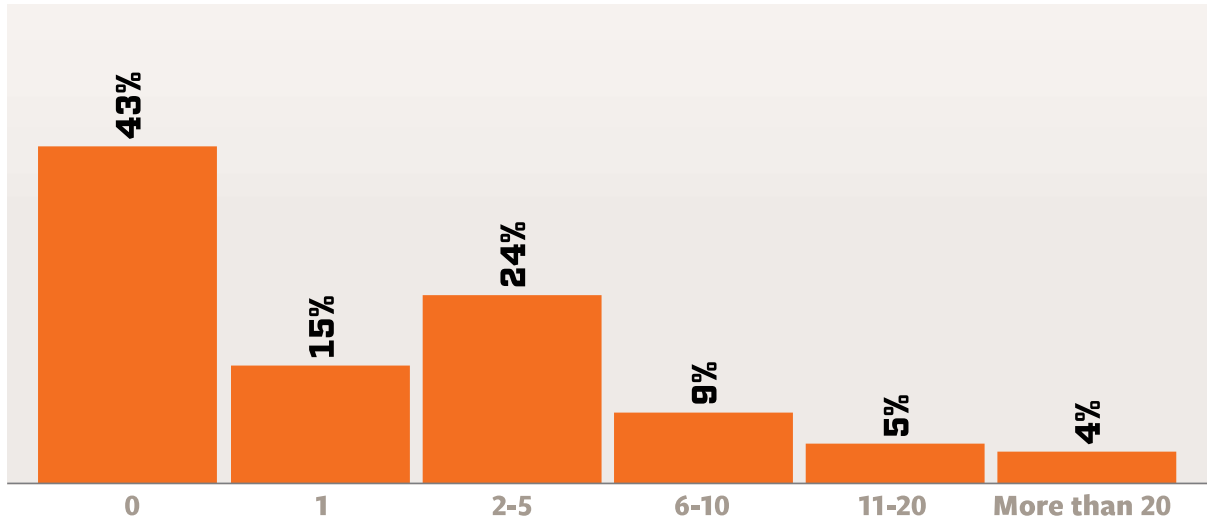
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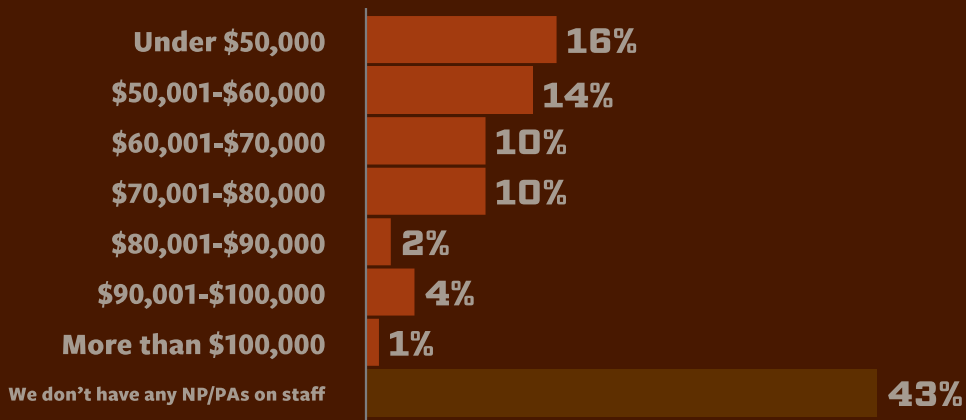
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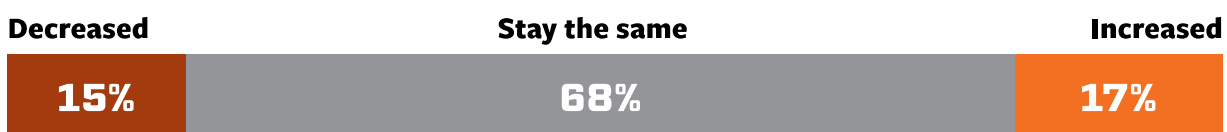
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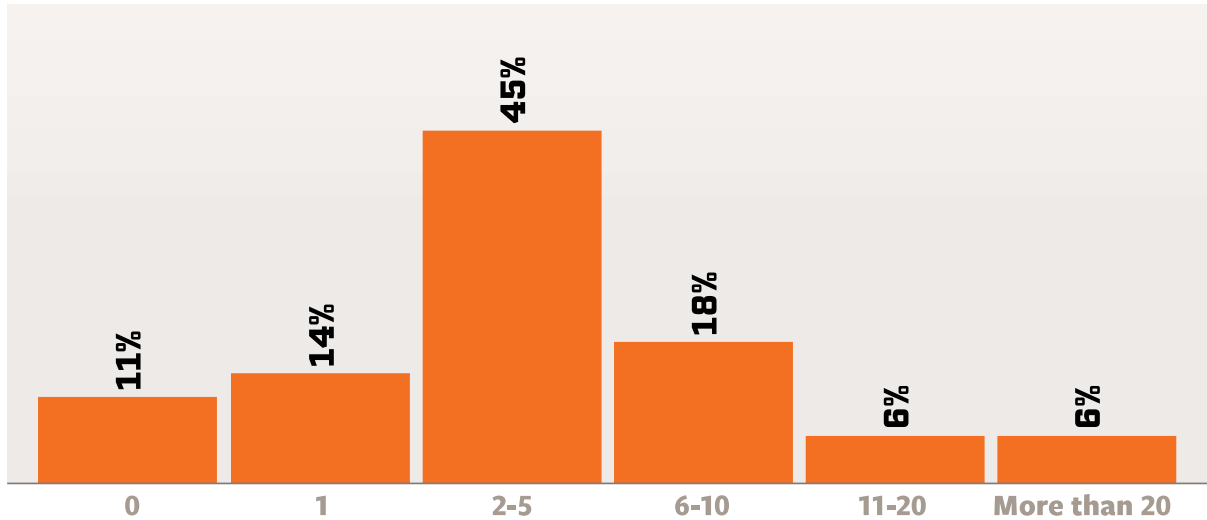


Has the number of nurses employed at your practice changed in the past five years?



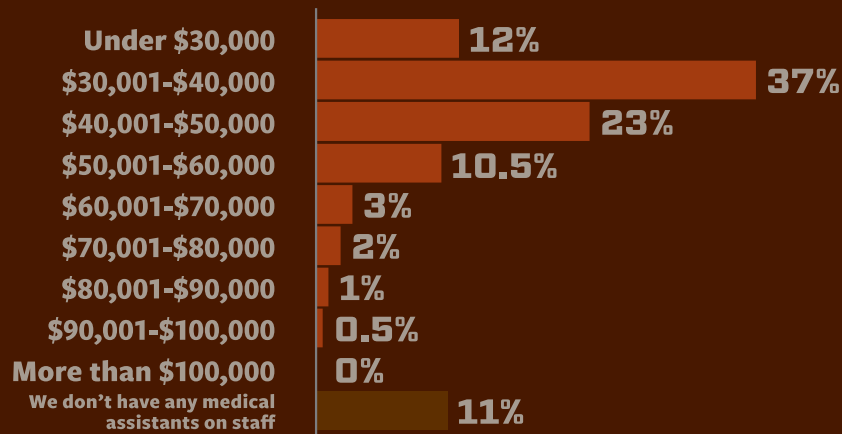
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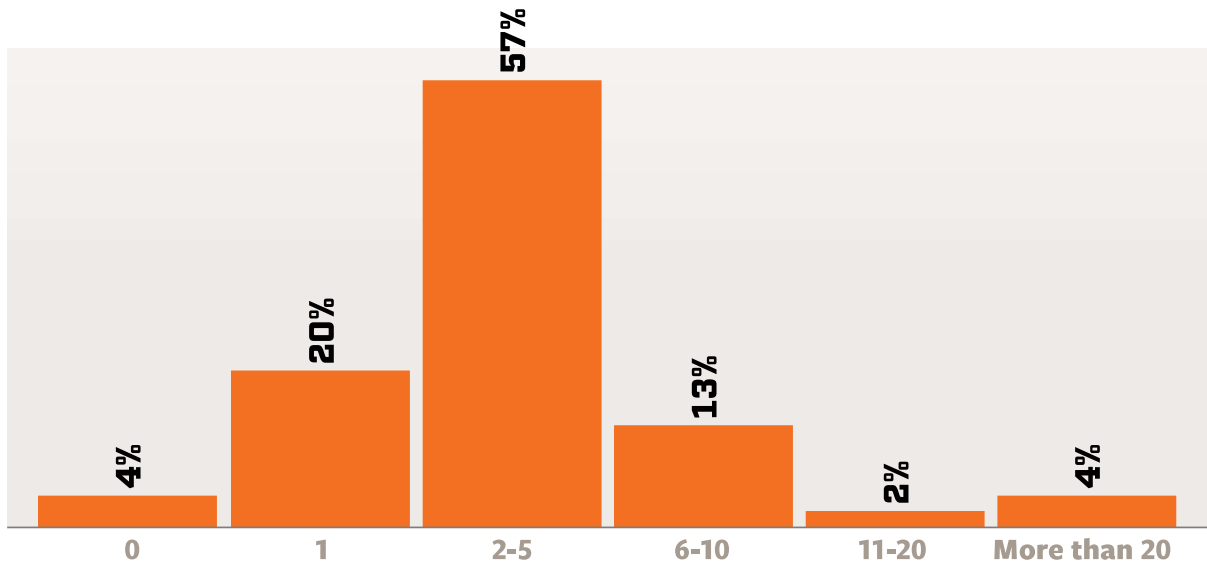


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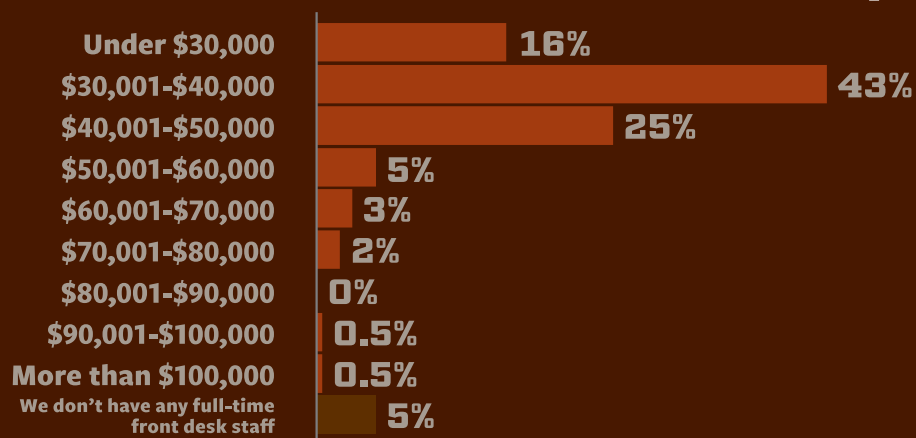


Front desk staff

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On average, how much does a full-time front desk staff member earn annually?

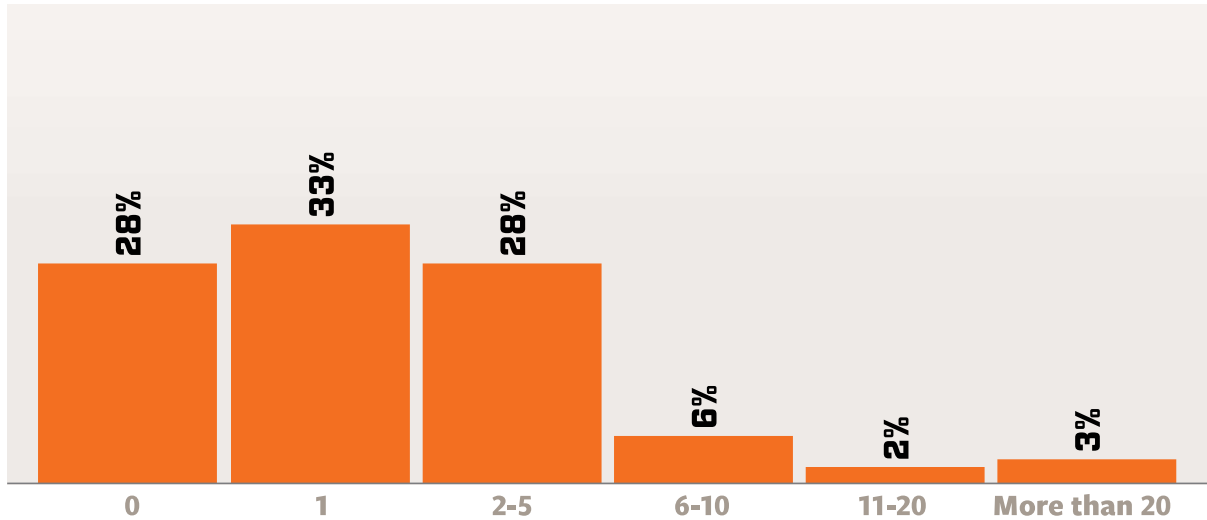


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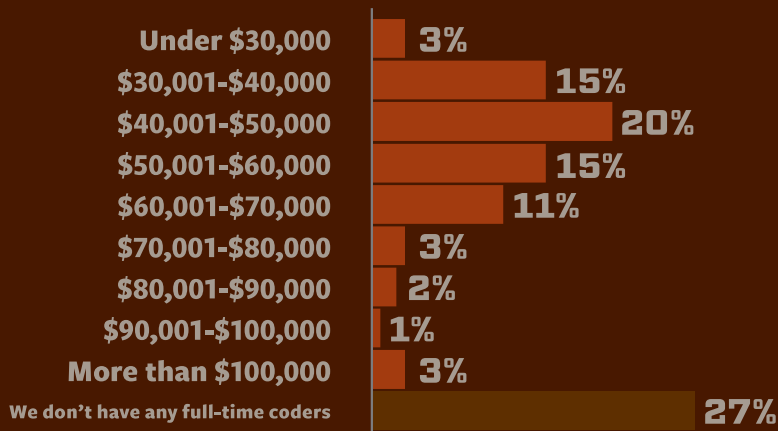


Billers/coders

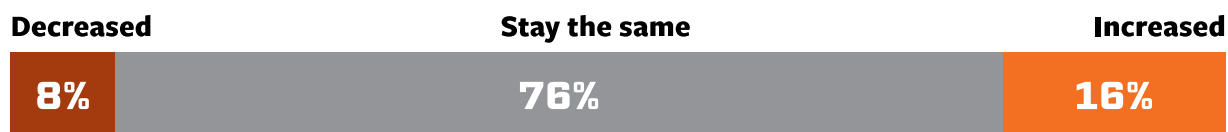
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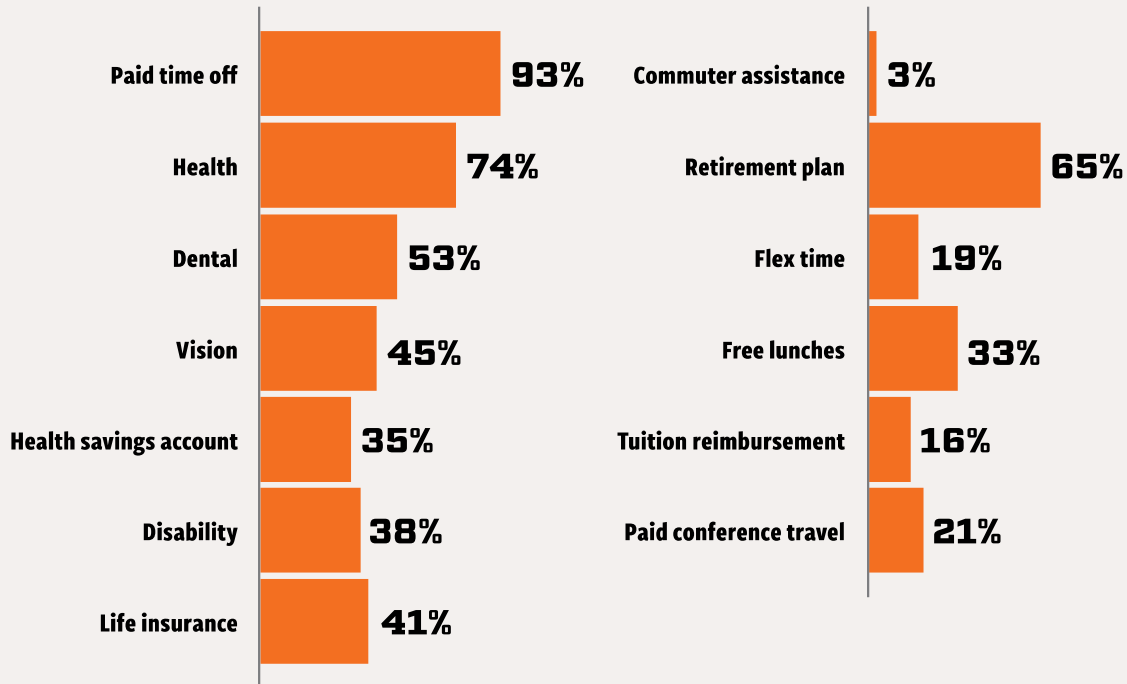


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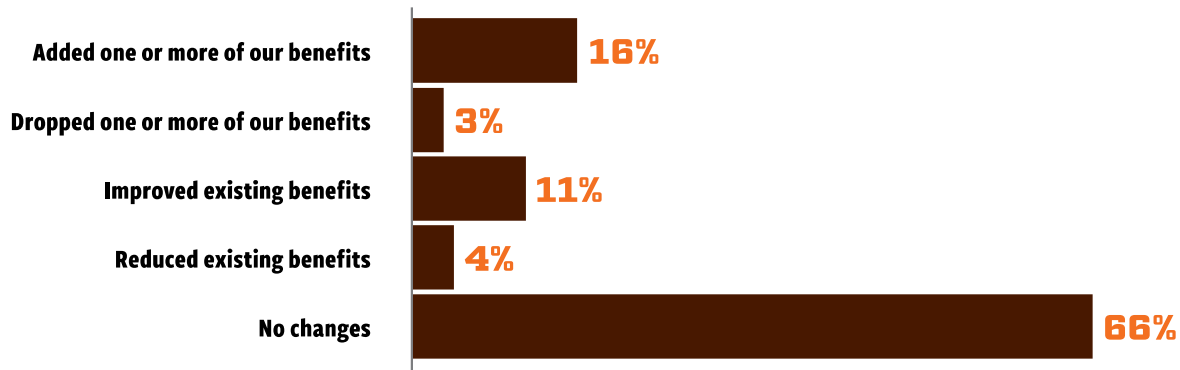


Benefits

Please indicate which of the following benefits your practice offers its nonphysician employees. Choose as many answers as are relevant.



Has your medical practice made any changes to offered benefits in the past year?



Lessons learned

What advice about staffing or managing a practice would you like to give to your peers?

“Staffing is crucial to provide adequate service to patients; however, compensation is also crucial to keep efficient and effective staff in place. Don’t be afraid to spend the money to keep good people.”

“Be sure to hire qualified personnel. Removing a challenging staff member from your practice takes a long time.”

“Focus on the needs of the practice to grow and sustain that growth.”

“Share the wins with your staff. Show gratitude and recognition, which are small tokens of appreciation to celebrate milestones. Celebrate their special days. Meet with staff regularly to listen to their concerns, challenges and suggestions.”

“Taking care of my staff means they are happy to work here, they are less worried about their own situation and they can take better care of our patients. Little things like birthday cake and gift cards for coffee or lunch make a big difference in morale.”

“You need to have at least a one-month trial period. Many employees start out strong and then taper off in terms of their productivity and attitude.”

“Compensate the employees who work hard and do a good job. Stop hiring people at a higher rate than your tenured employees but expect the tenured employees to do more.”

“Get good staff and hang on to them by any means necessary. Treat them with respect and as peers and not as people who are under you.”

“Learn to do more with fewer people.”

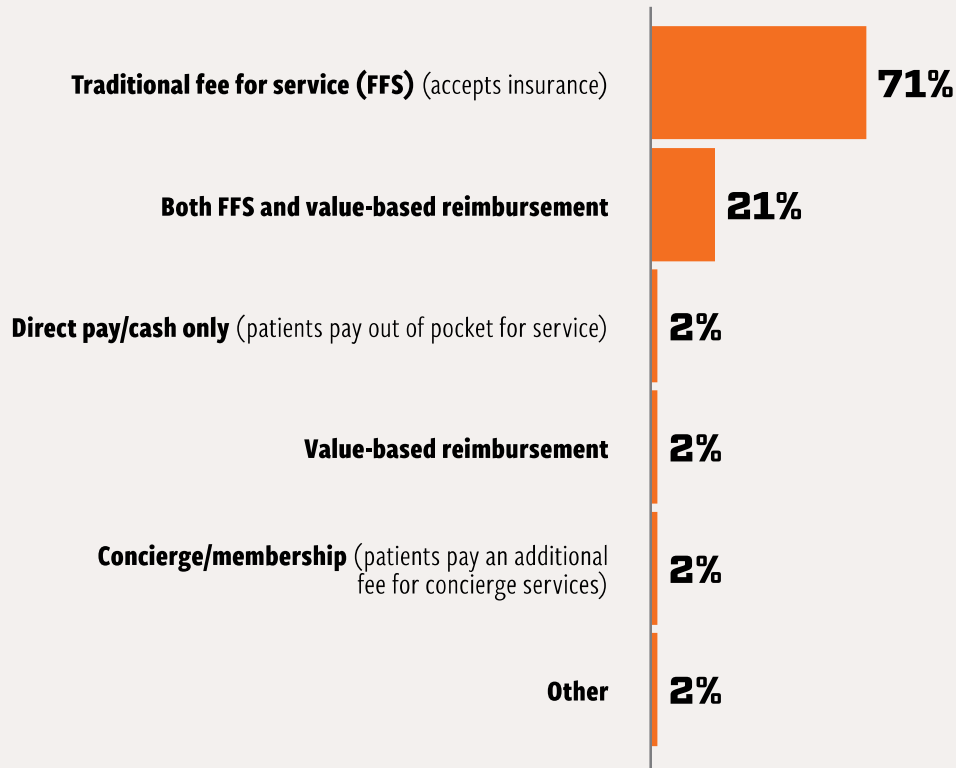
“Treat staff as the professionals that they are.”

“Keep interviewing candidates, even if you have enough people. The market is very volatile, and people can walk out of their positions at any time. We are always ready but very happy and blessed with our staff overall.”

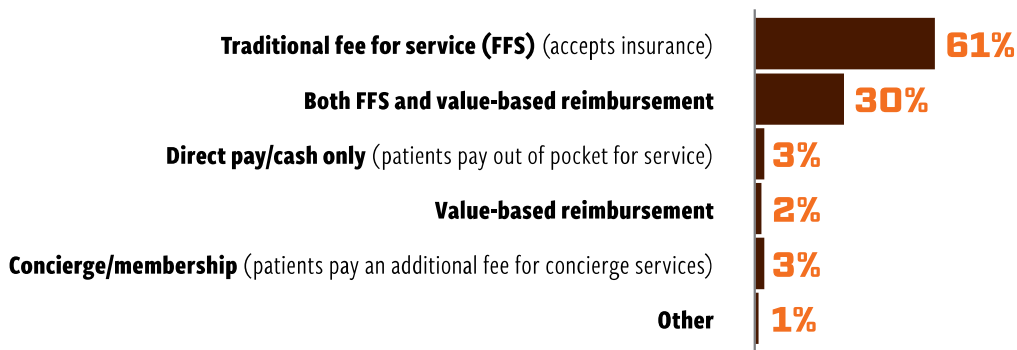
“Have compassion, understand work-life balance and review salary bands each year.”

Reimbursement

What was the primary reimbursement method at your practice before the COVID-19 pandemic?

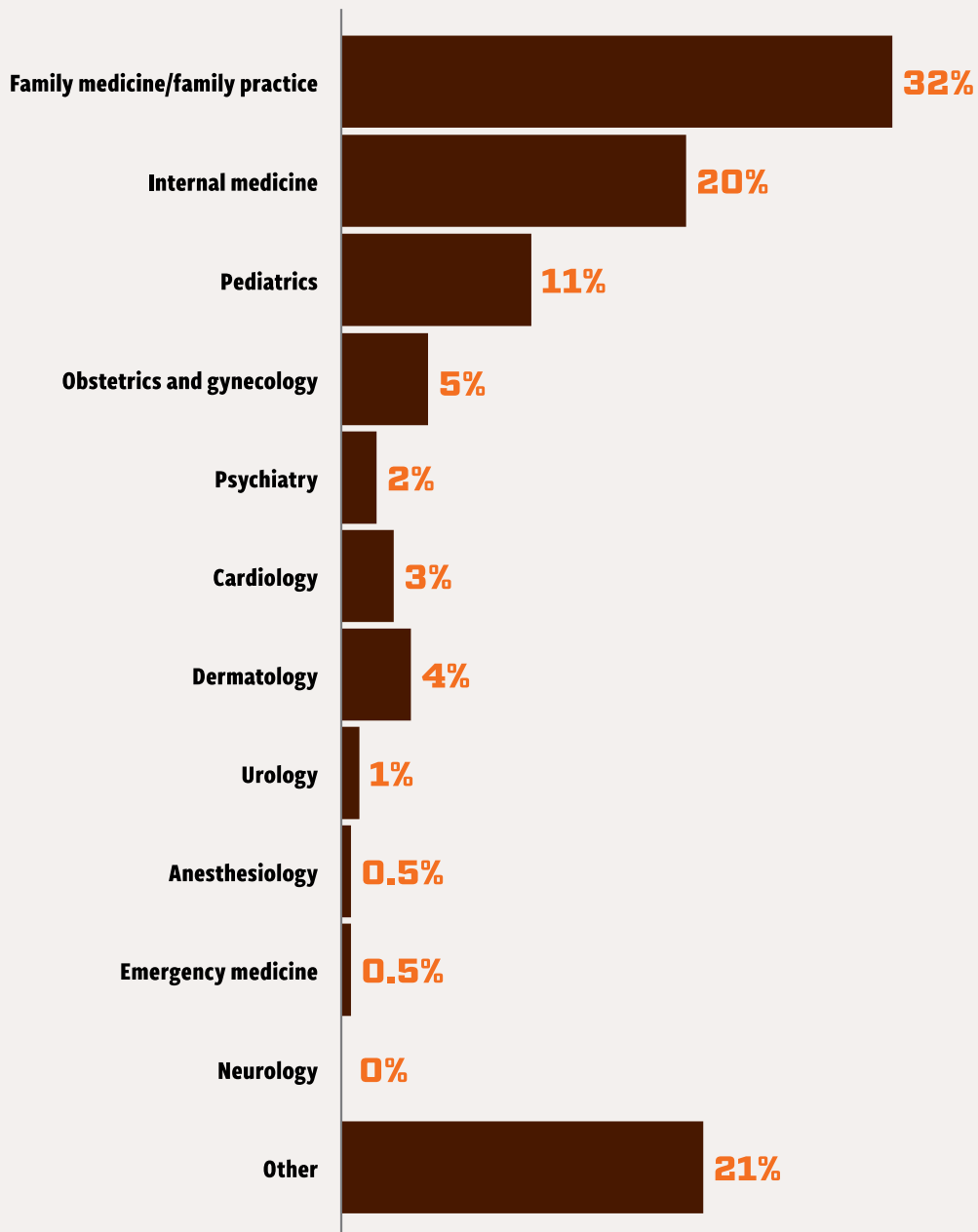


What is the primary reimbursement method at your practice now in 2023?



Survey demographics

What is your specialty?



Survey demographics

Where is your practice located?

Alabama	2.53%	Nebraska	0.00%
Alaska	0.00%	Nevada	1.27%
Arizona	1.27%	New Hampshire	0.42%
Arkansas	0.42%	New Jersey	3.80%
California	10.97%	New Mexico	0.42%
Colorado	2.11%	New York	5.91%
Connecticut	1.69%	North Carolina	5.49%
Delaware	0.00%	North Dakota	0.00%
Florida	7.59%	Ohio	3.38%
Georgia	2.53%	Oklahoma	0.84%
Hawaii	0.42%	Oregon	0.84%
Idaho	0.42%	Pennsylvania	2.53%
Illinois	4.22%	Rhode Island	0.00%
Indiana	3.80%	South Carolina	1.69%
Iowa	2.11%	South Dakota	0.00%
Kansas	0.84%	Tennessee	1.27%
Kentucky	0.42%	Texas	8.86%
Louisiana	0.84%	Utah	0.42%
Maine	0.42%	Vermont	0.00%
Maryland	1.69%	Virginia	3.38%
Massachusetts	4.22%	Washington	0.84%
Michigan	2.95%	Washington, D.C.	0.00%
Minnesota	0.84%	West Virginia	0.42%
Mississippi	1.69%	Wisconsin	0.84%
Missouri	2.95%	Wyoming	0.42%
Montana	0.00%		

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