

Kentucky Physician Update

Primary Care Physician Shortage Continues to Widen; Physician Workforce Aging Faster than Supply



Number of Primary Care Physicians are Not Improving Fast Enough to Meet Demand

According to a 2020 report, an additional **246** primary care physicians (PCPs) will be needed per year for KY to achieve the national ratio of 1 PCP per 1,104 persons by the end of 2029.

Based on calculations using the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure data, only 51 PCPs have been added to the workforce since 2019, an **88%** net loss.



A Maldistribution of PCPs in Rural and Urban Counties Continues to Worsen

Both rural and urban Kentucky counties are losing PCPs, however, rural counties continue to decrease in PCPs at a higher and faster rate.

65% of the Kentucky PCPs practice in an urban county.

Fayette and Jefferson county account for 24% of the Kentucky population and yet, 35% of all Kentucky primary care physicians practice in those counties.



Rural Counties Face the Worst PCP Shortage

	Ratio
United States	1:1,588
Kentucky	1:1,646
Urban Kentucky	1:1,478
Rural Kentucky	1:1,924

Ratios represent one physician to the number of individuals served in a defined area. The higher the ratio, the more population for which the PCP is responsible.



Kentucky's Aging Physician Population

10,072 physicians are practicing in Kentucky.

53% of all Kentucky physicians have been licensed between 21-50 years.

16% of all Kentucky physicians have been licensed for 41-50 years.

Controlling for Fayette and Jefferson Counties, 53% of Kentucky physicians licensed for 41-50 years practice in rural counties.

The number of aging physicians, who could potentially retire, will have a profound impact on the workforce.

Methodology

Data was requested from the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure (2021). Frequencies and descriptives were calculated using SPSS version 26. Primary care parameters include setting (hospital, private practice), specialties (adolescent medicine, family medicine, general medicine, geriatric medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics). Population estimates were retrieved from the Census Bureau (2020).