



2026 National Physician & Healthcare Provider Preference & Insights Survey

*A comprehensive view of the evolving priorities, expectations,
and behaviors shaping today's healthcare workforce.*

 **The Medicus Firm**
Healthcare Recruitment

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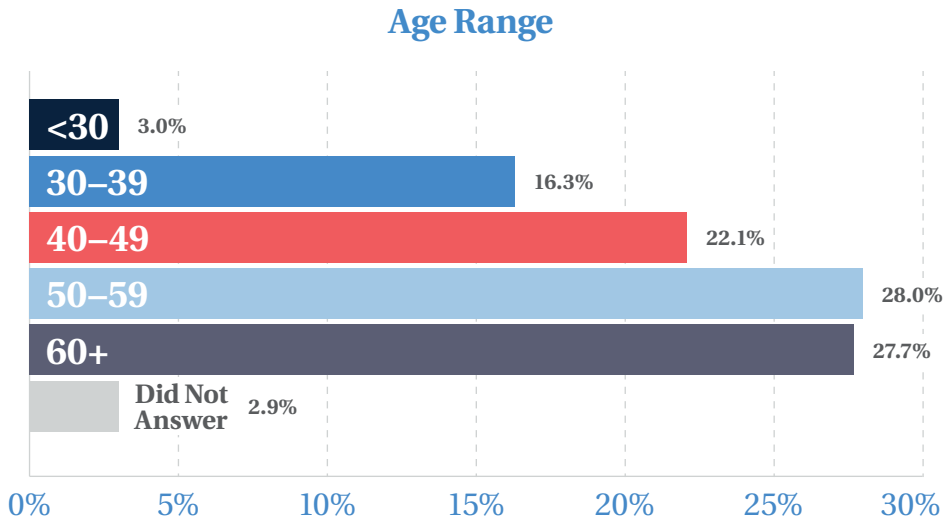
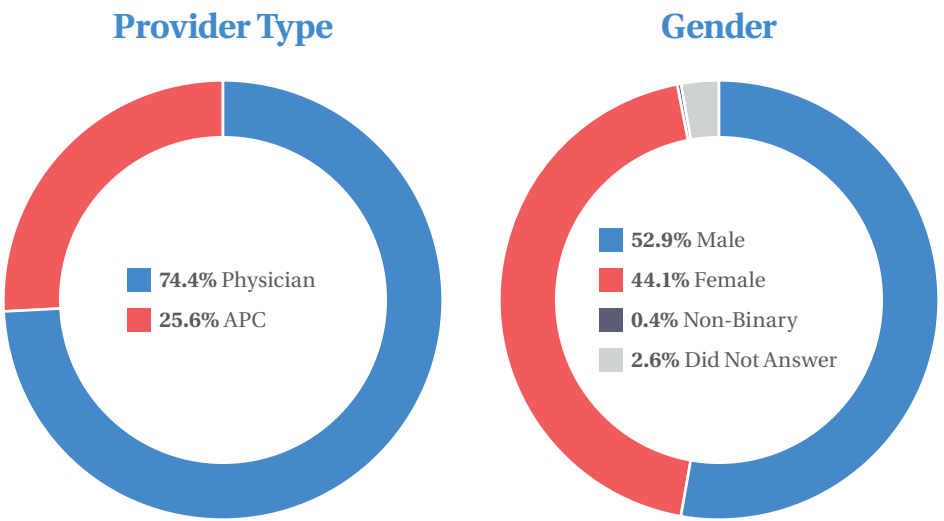
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Survey Demographics



Top Specialties

1 Nurse Practitioner	9 Anesthesiology
2 Family Medicine	10 OB/GYN
3 Physician Assistant	11 Cardiology
4 Internal Medicine	12 Neurology
5 Pediatrics	13 General Surgery
6 Psychiatry	14 Pathology
7 Emergency Medicine	15 Gastroenterology
8 CRNA	

The 2026 survey captures a diverse provider audience, providing context on workforce composition, evolving preferences, and key market dynamics.

Physicians



The physician workforce remained stable in 2025, but burnout, workload strain, and rising expectations continued to increase mobility and recruitment competition.

The physician workforce remains stable but increasingly mobile. Most physicians continue to work in full-time clinical roles, reflecting strong participation in frontline patient care. However, physicians remain highly recruitable as they navigate heavy workloads, administrative burden, and staffing pressures that continue to contribute to burnout. At the same time, evolving expectations around compensation, scheduling flexibility, and quality of life are shaping how physicians evaluate career opportunities.

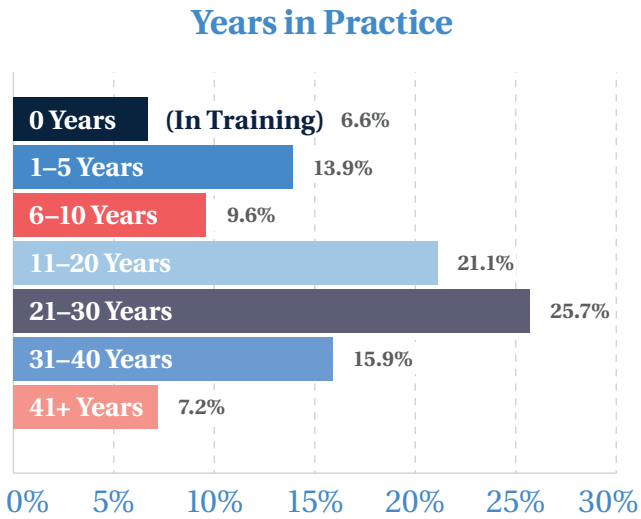
These factors are driving sustained workforce mobility and intensifying competition for physician talent. As a result, healthcare organizations must compete not only on compensation but also on workplace culture, operational support, and long-term career development opportunities to successfully attract and retain physicians.

Key Takeaways:

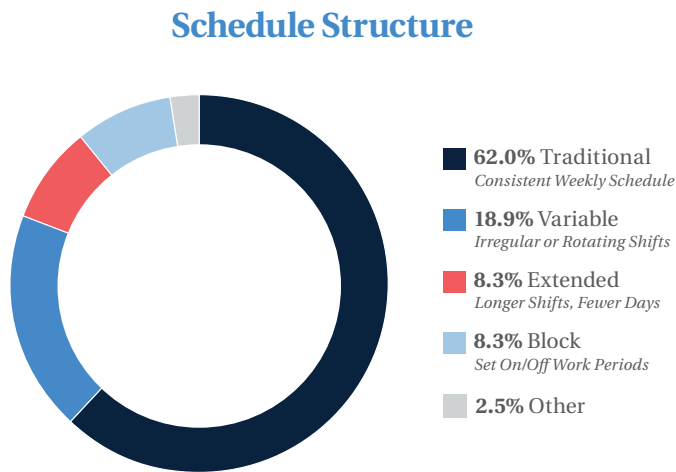
- **78.1%** of physicians work in **full-time clinical roles**, reflecting a workforce that remains deeply engaged in direct patient care.
- **48.2%** of all physicians say they are **likely or open to changing employers within the next 12 months**; among full-time clinical physicians, that rises to 80.9%, signaling continued turnover risk even within the core physician workforce.
- **76.9%** of physicians receive **three or more job solicitations per week**, while only 3.8% receive none, reinforcing the intensity of market competition for physician talent.
- **66.3%** of physicians work **more than 40 hours per week**, including 33.5% working more than 50 hours, and only 38.0% of those working 51+ hours report satisfaction with work-life balance, highlighting the workload strain affecting burnout and retention.
- **37.5%** of physicians experience **burnout weekly or more often**, and 46.1% of those physicians are likely or open to changing roles, confirming that burnout remains a meaningful workforce and retention risk.
- About half of physicians report satisfaction with **work-life balance (54.0%)**, **benefits (53.7%)**, and **workplace environment (53.6%)**, while only 44.7% report satisfaction with compensation, indicating persistent pressure across multiple aspects of the physician experience.
- **33.0%** of physicians cite **compensation and financial rewards as the primary motivator for changing jobs**, and 40.8% of those physicians report dissatisfaction with their compensation, making pay alignment a central recruitment and retention issue.
- **51.8%** of physicians report **willingness to relocate out of their state for the right opportunity**, including 36.6% willing to move anywhere, expanding the potential recruitment pool beyond local markets.
- **Compensation transparency (62.8%)**, **location (58.7%)**, and **benefits packages (40.9%)** rank among the most important information physicians seek in job ads, reinforcing the need for clear, upfront recruitment messaging.
- **Email (74.7%)** and **direct outreach (63.2%)** via text messages and phone calls remain the most common recruitment channels, confirming the continued effectiveness of direct engagement.



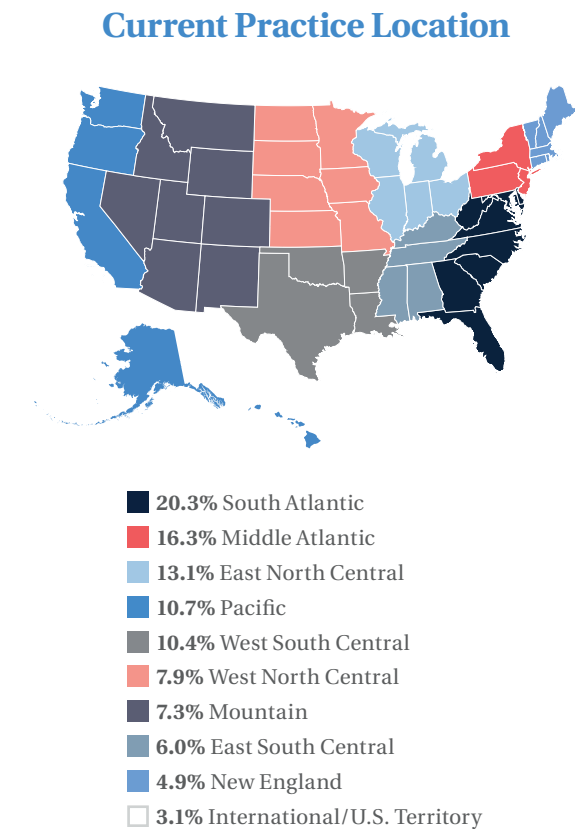
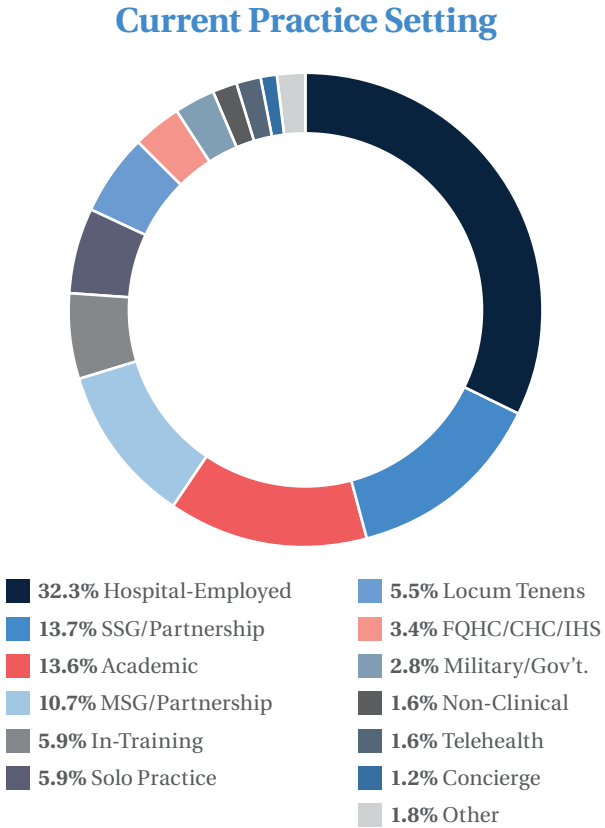
Physician Practice Snapshot



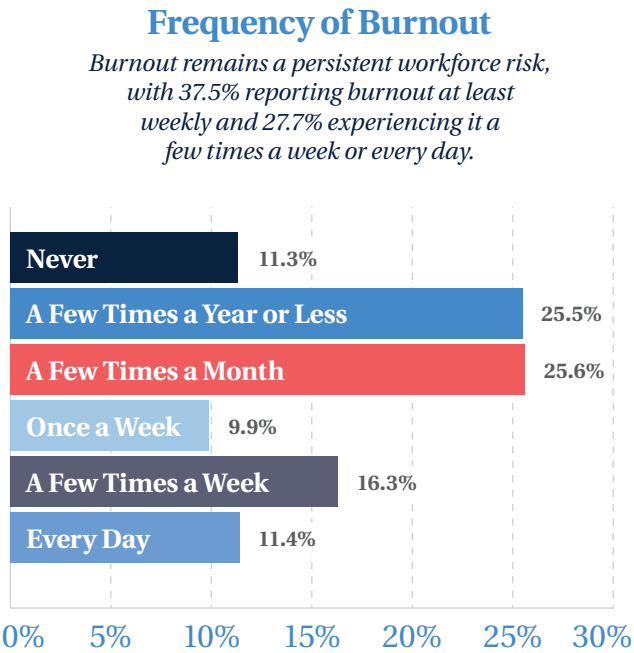
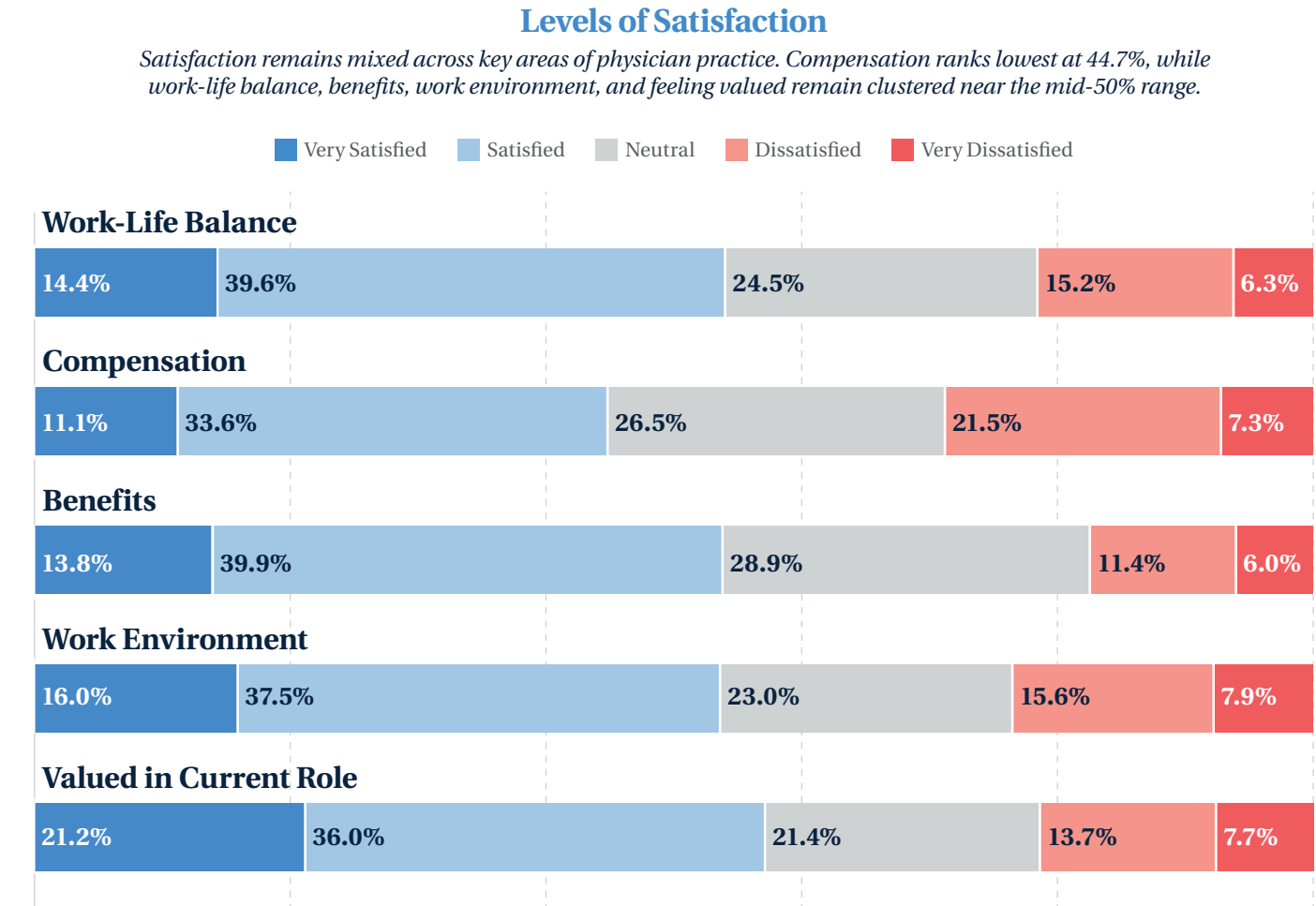
 **71.2%**
of physicians’ primary professional focus is direct patient care.



 **66.3%**
of physicians work 41+ hours per week.



Satisfaction & Burnout



- ### Top Contributors to Burnout
- Physician burnout is driven primarily by operational pressures, led by administrative burden (58.9%), compensation misalignment with workload (46.3%), and inadequate staffing or support (45.0%).
- 1 Admin. Burden/Documentation
 - 2 Comp. Not Aligned w/ Workload
 - 3 Inadequate Staffing/Support
 - 4 Workplace Culture/Leadership
 - 5 RVU/Volume Expectations

Ideal Role & Location



51.8%

of physicians are willing to relocate out of their current state.

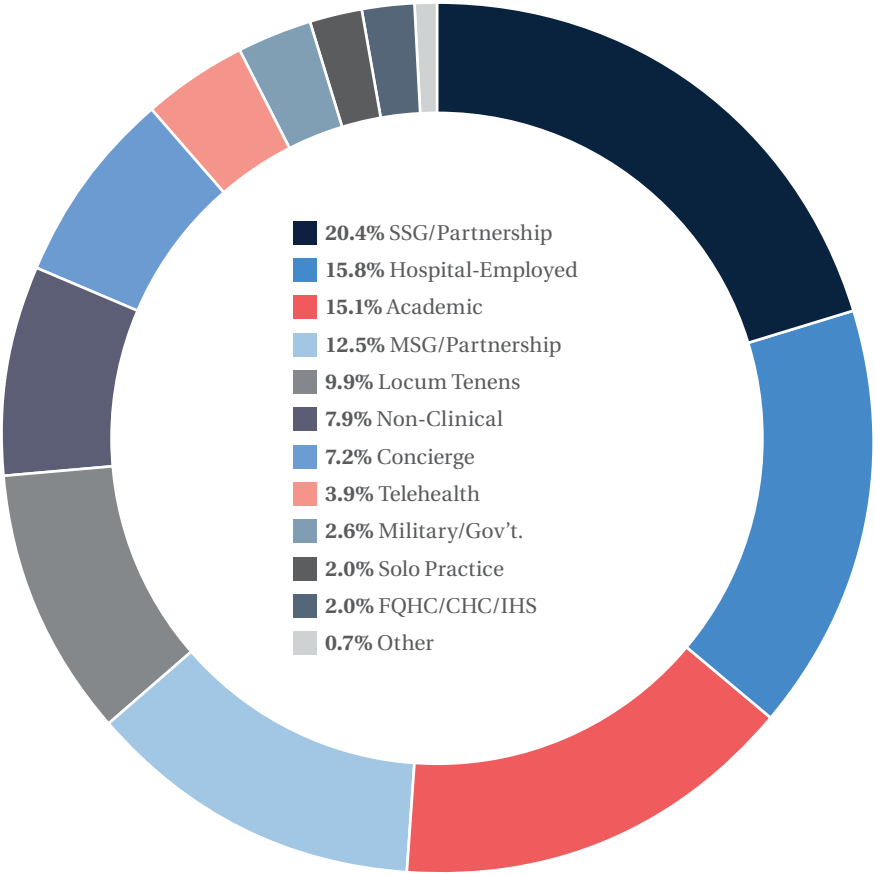


73.9%

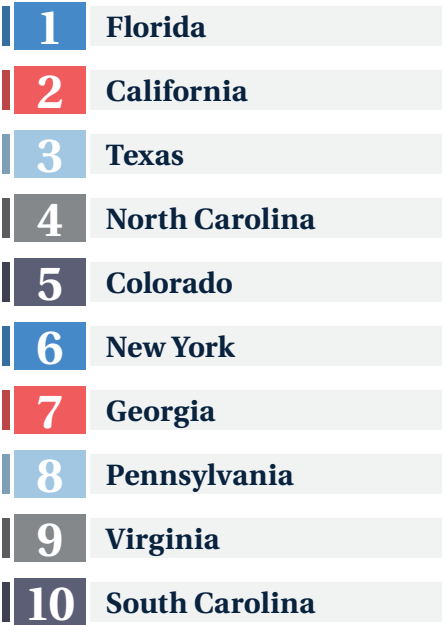
of physicians are satisfied with their practice setting & location.

Preferred Practice Setting

Among physicians considering a change, single-specialty group or partnership settings (20.4%) rank highest, followed by hospital-employed roles (15.8%) and academic practice (15.1%), highlighting interest in both autonomy and structured employment models.



Top 10 Most Considered States



Top 10 Least Considered States

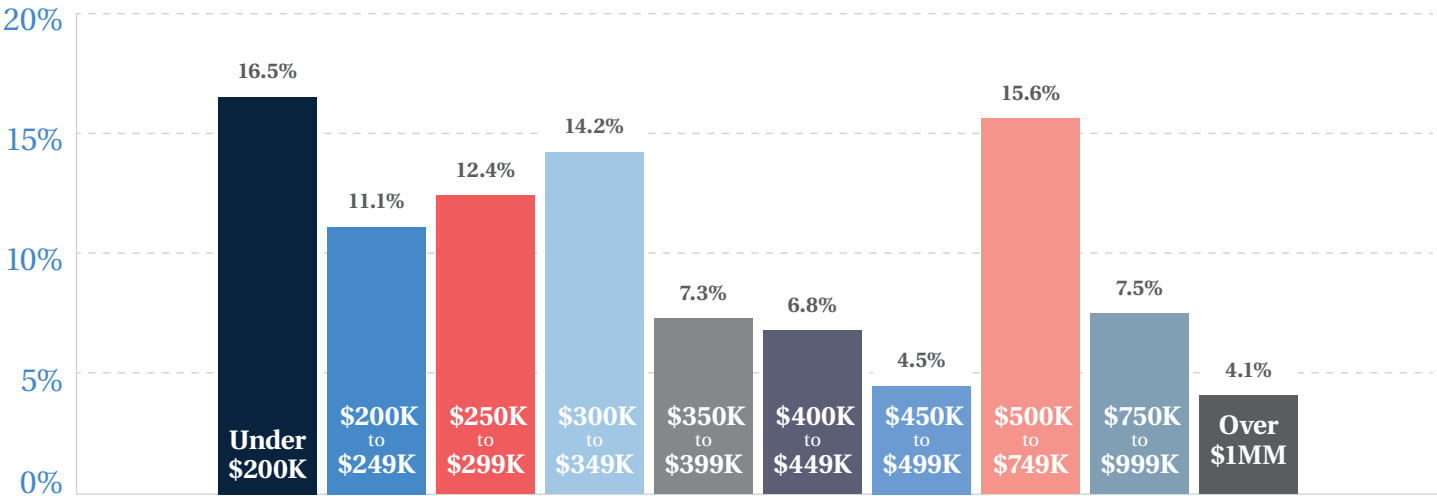


Physician relocation interest remains selective. Florida (26.1%), California (16.8%), and Texas (15.8%) rank among the most considered states, while Alabama (41.6%), Alaska (40.1%), and Mississippi (36.5%) face the strongest resistance.

Compensation & Benefits

2025 Annual Compensation

Physician compensation is concentrated in higher earning ranges, with 32.7% earning \$300K–\$499K and 27.2% earning \$500K or more, particularly among physicians age 40 and older. Among those earning under \$200K, 40.2% are currently in training, reinforcing the influence of career stage on earnings.



25.4%

of respondents' income increased due to a cost of living adjustment.



35.8%

of respondents received quality- or value-based compensation.

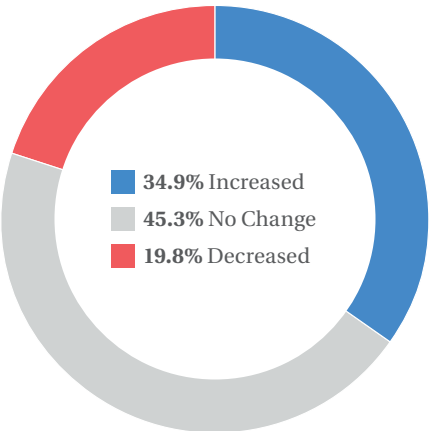


33.8%

of respondents received income from providing telehealth services.

2025 Income Changes

Physician income was mixed in 2025, with the largest share reporting no change (45.3%). Most increases were modest, with 73.7% reporting raises of 10% or less, while 61.5% of those with decreases reported cuts of 11% or more, including 28.1% with cuts of 20% or more.



Most Important Benefits

Physicians continue to prioritize core benefits, led by health insurance (63.7%), employer-paid malpractice insurance (62.5%), and paid time off (58.6%), reinforcing the importance of total rewards in recruitment and retention.

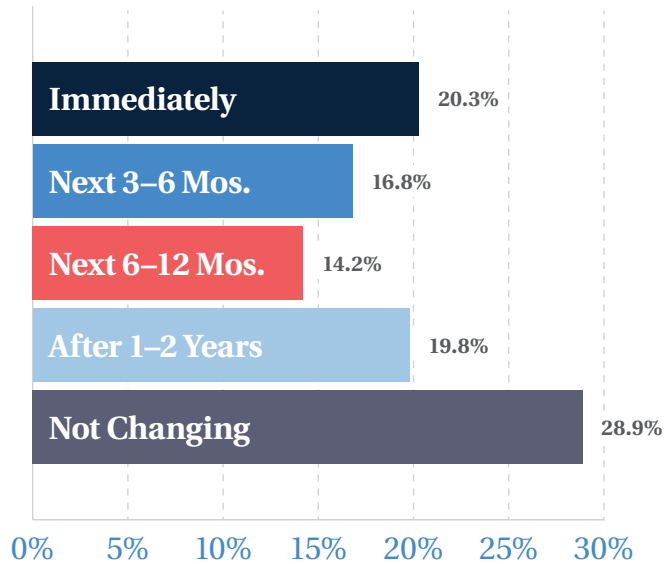




Job Change Motivations

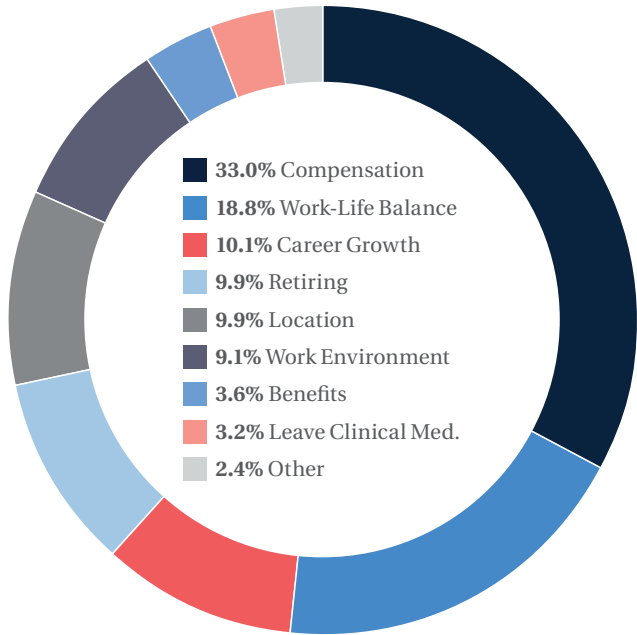
Timeline to Consider a Job Change

Physician job-change timing remains active, with 71.1% willing to consider a move within two years and 20.3% willing to change immediately for the right opportunity.



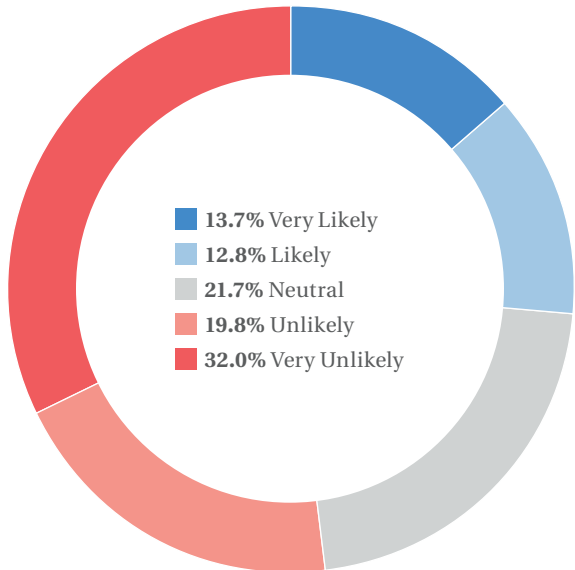
Top Motivation to Make a Change

Compensation remains the leading physician job-change motivator at 33.0%, followed by work-life balance (18.8%), indicating that financial alignment and lifestyle considerations continue to shape career decisions.



Likelihood of Changing Jobs

Physician mobility remains meaningful, with 48.2% likely or open to changing employers within the next 12 months, while 32.0% say they are very unlikely to move.



Top Barriers to Making a Change

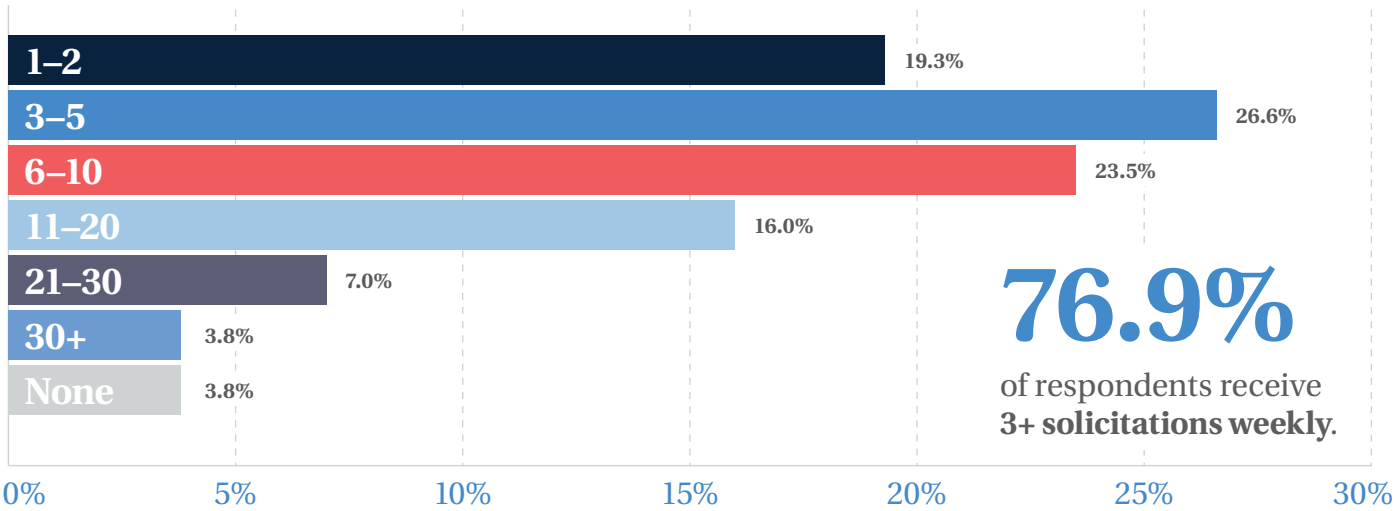
The biggest barriers to physician job change are personal and geographic, led by family or personal reasons (46.0%), geographic location (28.2%), and relocation burden (27.1%).



Job Search

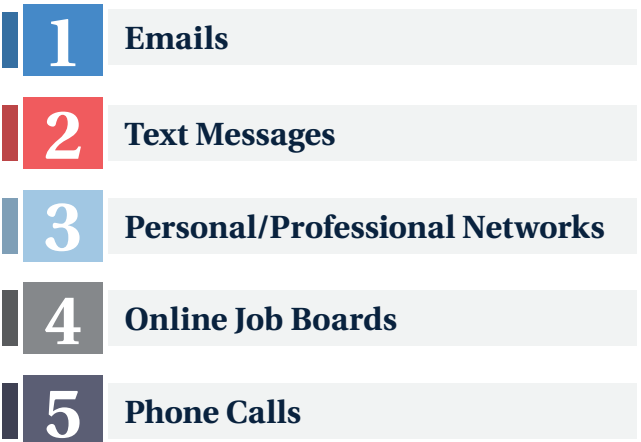
Weekly Opportunity Solicitations

Physicians remain heavily recruited, with 76.9% receiving three or more job solicitations per week and just 3.8% receiving none, highlighting the intensity of demand across the market.



Top Ways to Learn About Opportunities

Email remains the dominant physician recruitment channel at 74.7%, followed by text messages (39.3%), personal/professional networks (35.4%), and online job boards (34.7%).



Top Information Sought in Job Ads

Physicians prioritize job ads that clearly outline compensation (62.8%), location (58.7%), and benefits (40.9%). Scheduled details and workload expectations also rank highly, reinforcing the need for transparency in recruitment messaging.



28.1%

of physicians use **social media** to look for new practice opportunities.



49.3%

of physicians worked with a **recruitment staffing agency** before.

Advanced Practice Clinicians



The APC workforce remained highly engaged in direct patient care in 2025 but increasingly mobile due to strong demand, compensation pressure, and evolving expectations.

The advanced practice clinician (APC) workforce remains highly engaged in direct patient care but increasingly mobile. Most advanced practice clinicians work in full-time clinical roles, underscoring their central role in frontline healthcare delivery and expanding access to care across healthcare settings. At the same time, strong recruiter demand and evolving career expectations are contributing to increased mobility within the APC workforce.

Workload pressures, workplace environment, and recognition continue to influence clinician satisfaction and burnout. While many advanced practice clinicians report positive work-life balance overall, burnout remains common, particularly among those working extended hours or experiencing limited workplace support. Compensation alignment, scheduling flexibility, and organizational culture are increasingly shaping APC career decisions and long-term retention. As a result, competition for advanced practice talent remains intense, requiring healthcare organizations to offer competitive compensation, flexible scheduling models, and supportive practice environments to successfully recruit and retain APCs.

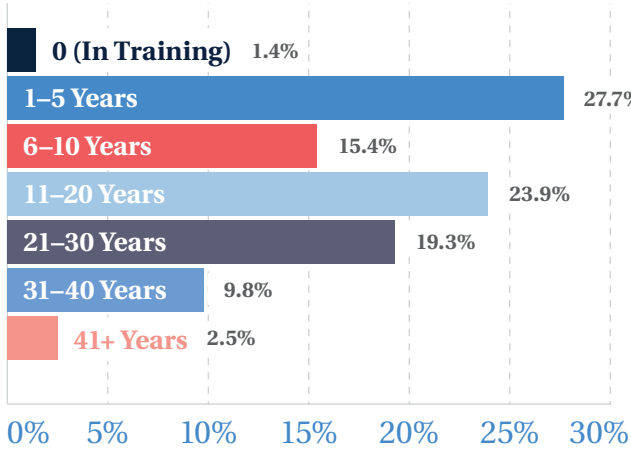
Key Takeaways:

- **78.3%** of advanced practice clinicians work in **full-time clinical roles**, underscoring their central role in frontline patient care.
- **43.1%** of APCs have practiced for **10 years or less**, including 27.7% in their first 1–5 years, reflecting a younger workforce profile.
- **62.4%** of APCs are **likely or open to changing roles or employers within the next 12 months**, reinforcing the high level of career movement across the APC workforce.
- **24.7%** of APCs **changed employers within the past 12 months**, and 24.2% of that group would be open to changing again for the right role, indicating continued movement across organizations.
- **88.3%** of APCs receive **three or more job solicitations per week**, including 43.3% who receive 6–20 per week, reflecting strong recruiter demand across the APC market.
- **53.6%** of APCs report **satisfaction with their work-life balance**, but only 41.1% of those working 41+ hours per week report satisfaction, showing how schedule intensity affects retention risk.
- **39.6%** of APCs experience **burnout weekly or more often**, reflecting the continued impact of compensation misalignment (63.6%) and workplace culture or leadership (57.3%).
- **26.1%** of APCs report **feeling undervalued in their current role**, and only 37.0% of clinicians under 40 say they feel valued, highlighting an engagement gap among earlier-career clinicians.
- **42.7%** of APCs cite **compensation and financial rewards as the primary motivator for changing jobs**, and 47.8% of those APCs report dissatisfaction with their compensation, making pay alignment a central driver of APC career movement.
- **45.8%** of APCs report **willingness to relocate for the right opportunity**, widening the potential talent pool for organizations able to compete across markets.

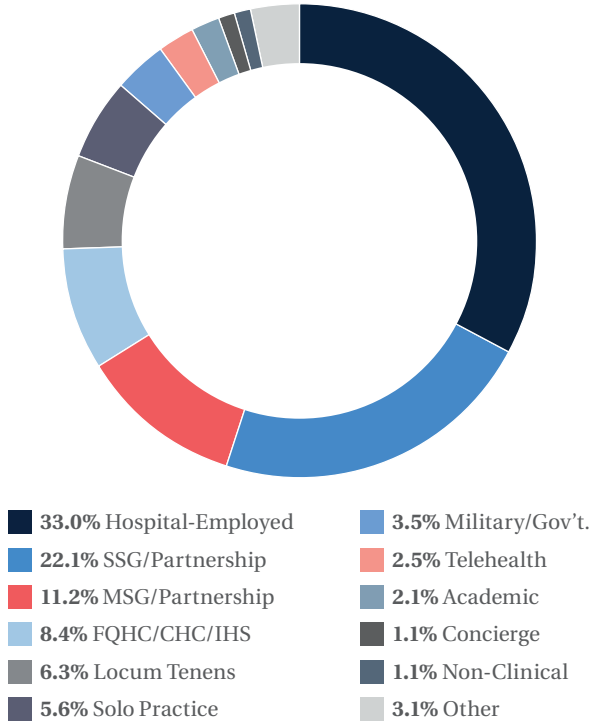


APC Practice Snapshot

Years in Practice

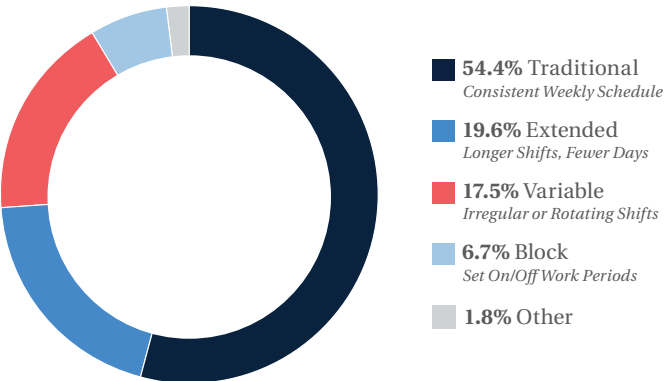


Current Practice Setting



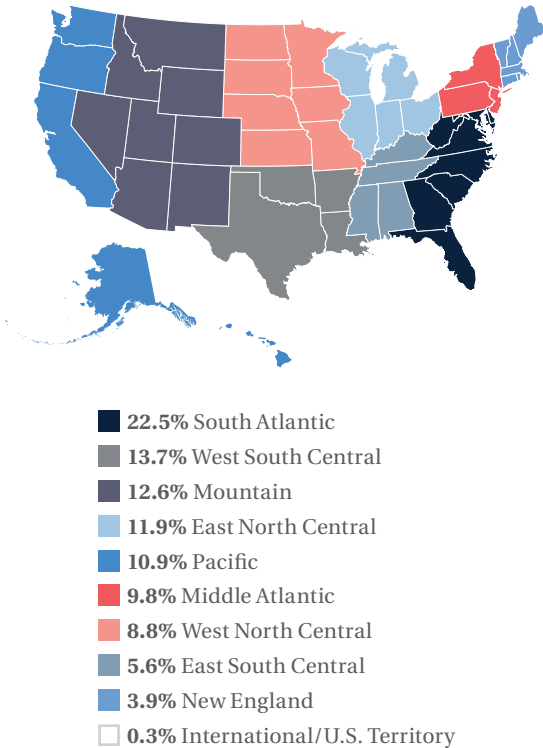
88.4%
of APCs' primary professional focus is direct patient care.

Schedule Structure



45.6%
of APCs work 41+ hours per week.

Current Practice Location



Satisfaction & Burnout

Levels of Satisfaction

APC satisfaction remains mixed across key areas of practice. Work-life balance ranks highest at 53.6%, while compensation (44.6%), work environment (42.1%), and benefits (41.4%) remain lower.

Very Satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

Work-Life Balance



Compensation



Benefits



Work Environment

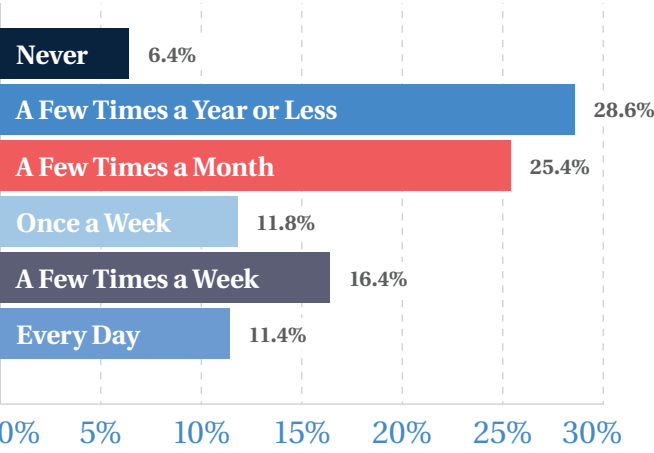


Valued in Current Role



Frequency of Burnout

Burnout remains a significant APC workforce risk, with 39.6% reporting burnout at least weekly and 27.8% experiencing it a few times a week or every day.



Top Contributors to Burnout

APC burnout is driven primarily by workplace and compensation pressures, led by compensation not aligning with workload (52.1%), administrative burden (45.5%), and workplace culture or leadership (43.2%).

- 1 Comp. Not Aligned w/ Workload
- 2 Admin. Burden/Documentation
- 3 Workplace Culture/Leadership
- 4 Inadequate Staffing/Support
- 5 Lack of Schedule Flexibility & RVU/Volume Expectations

Ideal Role & Location



45.8%

of APCs are **willing to relocate** out of their current state.

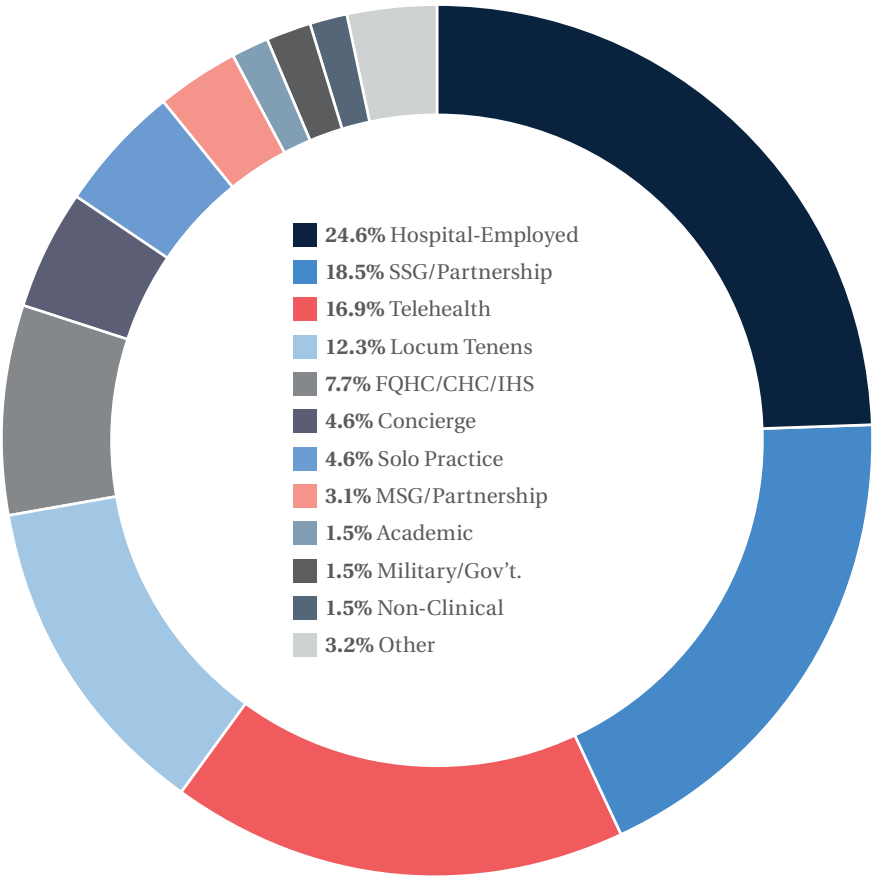


73.1%

of APCs are **satisfied with their practice setting & location.**

Preferred Practice Setting

APCs show the strongest interest in hospital-employed roles (24.6%), followed by single-specialty group practices (18.5%) and telehealth (16.9%), reflecting demand for both structured employment and flexible care delivery models.



Top 10 Most Considered States



Top 10 Least Considered States

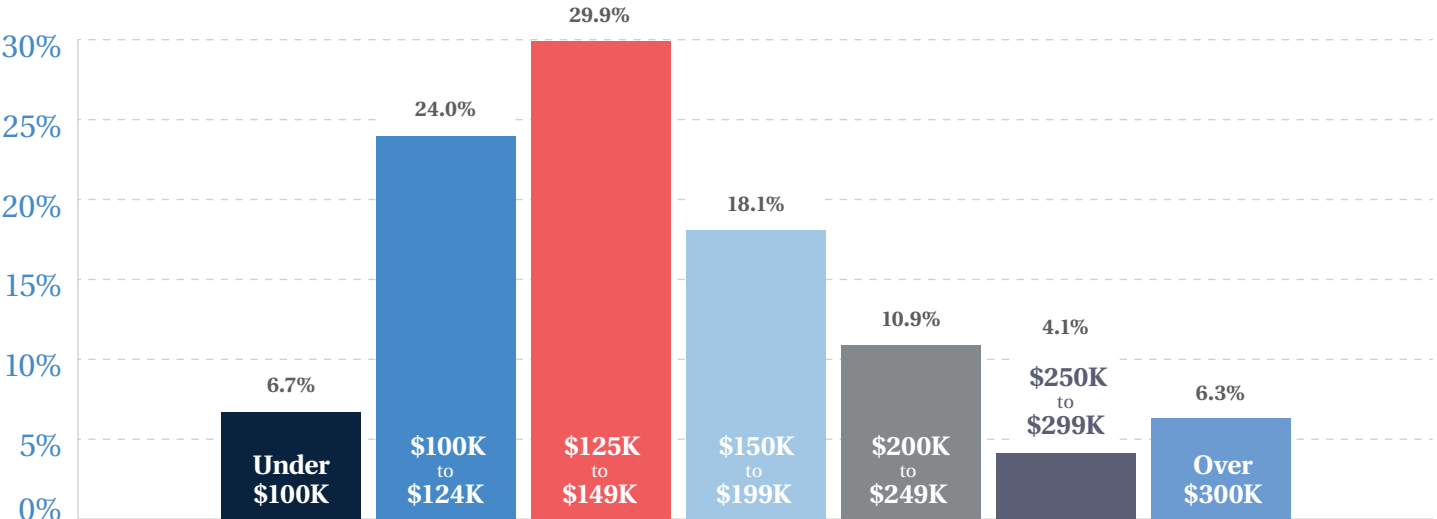


APC relocation interest centers on Texas (20.2%), Florida (18.6%), and Colorado (15.0%), while Alaska (41.2%), California (37.6%), and Alabama (37.0%) face the strongest resistance.

Compensation & Benefits

2025 Annual Compensation

APC compensation is concentrated in mid-range earnings, with 29.9% earning \$125K–\$149K and 24.0% earning \$100K–\$124K. Higher earnings remain less common, reinforcing that compensation alignment is a key driver of APC mobility.



43.1%

of respondents' income increased due to a **cost of living adjustment.**



27.2%

of respondents received **quality- or value-based** compensation.

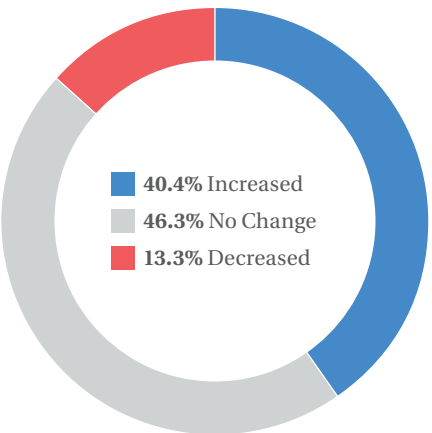


39.1%

of respondents received **income** from providing telehealth services.

2025 Income Changes

APC income was mixed in 2025, with the largest share reporting no change (46.3%). Most increases were modest, with 83.5% reporting raises of 10% or less, while 62.8% of those with decreases reported cuts of 11% or more, including 31.4% with cuts of 20% or more.



Most Important Benefits

APCs place the greatest value on lifestyle and foundational benefits, led by paid time off (77.0%), health insurance (68.6%), and retirement savings (60.5%), reinforcing how total rewards shape recruitment and retention.

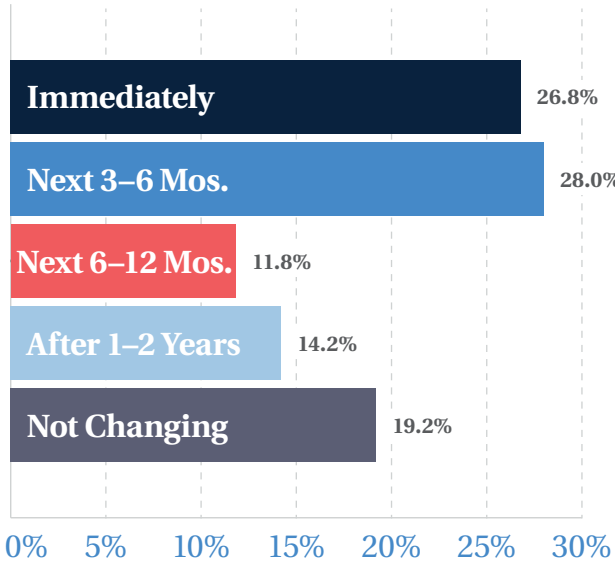




Job Change Motivations

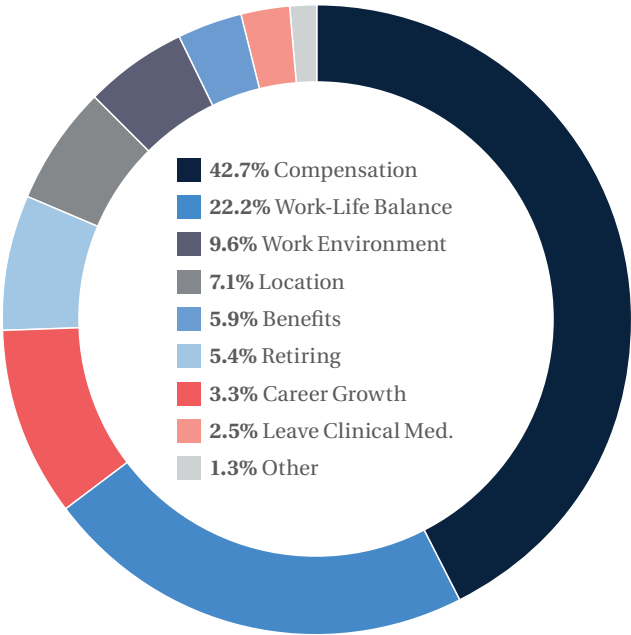
Timeline to Consider a Job Change

APC job-change timing remains highly active, with 54.8% willing to consider a move within six months and 26.8% willing to change immediately for the right opportunity.



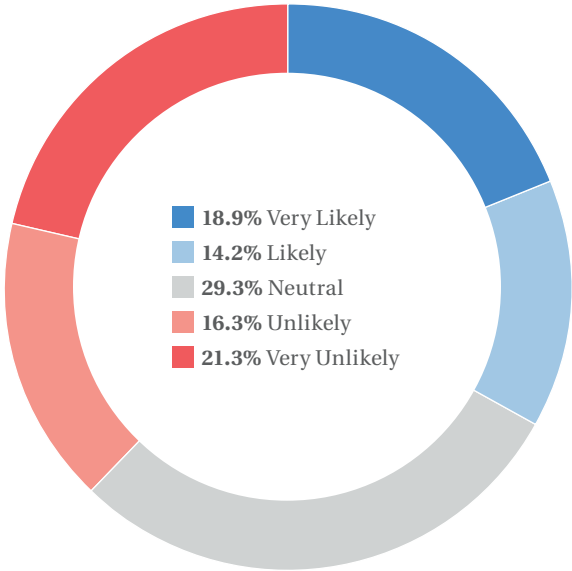
Top Motivation to Make a Change

Compensation is the leading APC job-change motivator at 42.7%, followed by work-life balance at 22.2%, indicating that pay, flexibility, and day-to-day sustainability remain central to APC career decisions.



Likelihood of Changing Jobs

APC mobility remains elevated, with 62.4% either likely to change jobs or open to the possibility within 12 months, while only 21.3% say they are very unlikely to move.



Top Barriers to Making a Change

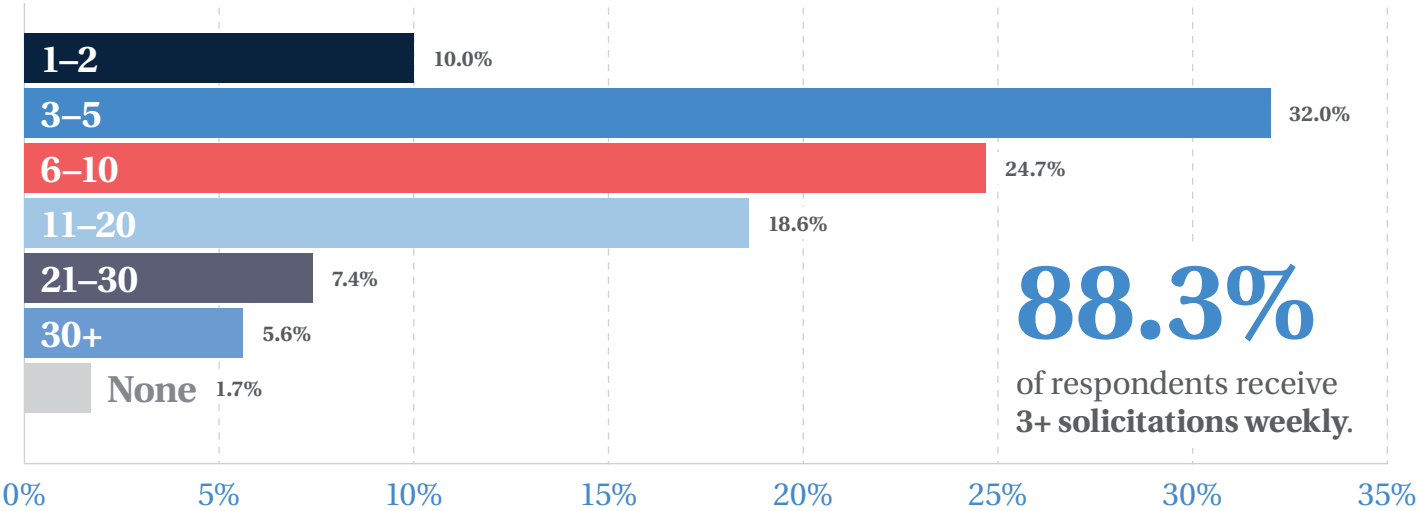
The biggest barriers to APC job change are personal and practical, led by family or personal reasons (46.8%), relocation burden (28.3%), and geographic location (27.9%).



Job Search

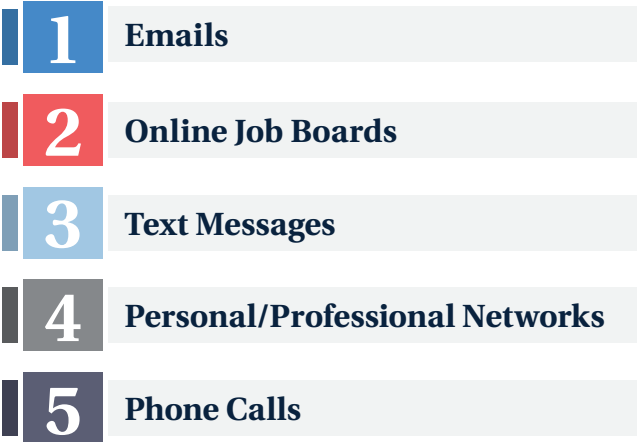
Weekly Opportunity Solicitations

APCs remain heavily recruited, with 88.3% receiving three or more job solicitations per week and just 1.7% receiving none, highlighting the intensity of APC demand across the market.



Top Ways to Learn About Opportunities

Email remains the leading APC recruitment channel at 67.5%, followed by online job boards (56.7%), text messages (40.7%), and personal/professional networks (39.9%).



Top Information Sought in Job Ads

APCs prioritize job ads that clearly outline compensation (65.4%), location (56.3%), and benefits (55.4%). Employment status, schedule, and workload details also rank highly, reinforcing the importance of role clarity in APC recruitment messaging.



45.9%

of APCs use **social media** to look for new practice opportunities.



53.3%

of APCs worked with a **recruitment staffing agency** before.

Action Plan



Recruitment and retention strategies in 2026 must adapt to a provider market shaped by high mobility, intensifying competition, and evolving workforce expectations.

Today’s provider labor market requires more than reactive recruiting. Physicians and advanced practice clinicians are evaluating opportunities through the lens of compensation, workload, flexibility, culture, and long-term fit. Organizations that convert these insights into clear recruitment and retention actions are better positioned to compete for high-demand talent.

Recruitment Actions:

- **Put the most important details in the first message.**
Lead job ads, emails, and recruiter outreach with compensation range, location, benefits, schedule, call expectations, and patient volume so candidates can quickly assess fit.
- **Build provider-specific campaigns instead of one-size-fits-all outreach.**
For physicians, emphasize compensation, schedule autonomy, and practice setting; for APCs, highlight pay, employment structure, flexibility, and workload clarity.
- **Shorten time to decision.** Tighten interview scheduling, reduce approval delays, and keep candidates engaged with fast follow-up, since many providers are receiving multiple job solicitations each week and may move quickly on competitive offers.
- **Expand the qualified candidate pool.** Build strategies that include relocation-ready providers, telehealth-interested clinicians, and candidates open to alternative practice models such as group practice, hospital employment, or locum-based work.
- **Align sourcing channels with candidate behavior.** Use email and text for direct outreach, maintain visibility on job boards for APC roles, and make professional networks a consistent part of physician and advanced practice recruiting strategy.

Retention Actions:

- **Target the operational issues driving burnout.**
Reduce after-hours charting, improve documentation support, strengthen staffing ratios, and reassess call coverage and patient volume expectations where workload strain is highest.
- **Expand flexibility in the role itself.** Offer options such as modified schedules, reduced call, four-day workweeks, telehealth time, or alternative practice models to retain providers who may not need to leave if the role changes.
- **Make recognition and leadership support more visible.**
Equip leaders to give regular feedback, communicate career pathways, involve providers in practice decisions, and address team culture issues before dissatisfaction leads to turnover.
- **Benchmark provider sentiment—not just compensation.**
Regularly measure satisfaction with work-life balance, compensation, benefits, work environment, and feeling valued to uncover risk and address concerns proactively.
- **Target retention efforts where mobility risk is highest.**
Focus interventions on early-career providers, lower-compensated groups, and clinicians reporting burnout, dissatisfaction, or high recruiter contact, where turnover risk is greatest.



About The Medicus Firm

Established in 2001, **The Medicus Firm** is a national healthcare recruitment company with a mission to save lives through teamwork and the relentless pursuit of excellence. We focus on delivering the most efficient and effective services to hospitals and healthcare employers throughout the United States. Through our four divisions, Physician Search, Academic Search, Allied & Dental Search and Community & Tribal Search, we are dedicated to finding the right provider or leader for all our clients. As part of the **M3 USA family**, The Medicus Firm has access to millions of active providers and leaders committed to market research, continuing education, clinical research, and professional enrichment. Our commitment to excellence has been recognized with **ClearlyRated's Best of Staffing® Client Award** 14 times. To learn more, visit **TheMedicusFirm.com**.

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