



THE AMERICAN GERIATRICS SOCIETY

THE DEMAND FOR GERIATRIC CARE AND THE EVIDENT SHORTAGE OF GERIATRICS HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

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FACTORS ARE DRIVING THE FUTURE DEMAND FOR GERIATRIC CARE

- Americans are living longer and therefore are accumulating more diseases and disabilities as they age.
- One in five Americans will be eligible for Medicare by 2030.
- Those 65 years of age and older are expected to account for almost 20% of the U.S. population by 2030.
- Older adults account for a disproportionate share of healthcare services:
 - 26% of all physician office visits;
 - 35% of all hospital stays;
 - 34% of all prescriptions;
 - 38% of all emergency medical responses; and
 - 90% of all nursing home use.
- About 80% of older adults require care for chronic conditions such as hypertension, arthritis, and heart disease.

THE SHORTAGE OF HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS CERTIFIED OR SPECIALIZING IN GERIATRICS

- As of March 2011, there were 7,162 allopathic and osteopathic certified geriatricians in the US — one geriatrician for every 2,620 Americans 75 or older. Due to the projected increase in the number of older Americans, this ratio is expected to drop to one geriatrician for every 3,798 older Americans in 2030.
- There are far fewer geriatric psychiatrists. Currently there are 1,751 - one for every 10,865 older Americans. That ratio is projected to decrease by 2030 to one geropsychiatrist for every 12,557 Americans 75 and older.
- Furthermore, less than 1% of RNs, Pharmacists, and Physician Assistants; and about 2.6% of APRNs are certified in geriatrics.
- Additionally, approximately 3% of psychologists devote the majority of practice to older adults; and about 4% of social workers specialize in geriatrics.

FEW MEDICAL STUDENTS ARE CHOOSING GERIATRICS, PUTTING THE FUTURE SUPPLY OF GERIATRICIANS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS IN JEOPARDY

- Few graduates of medical schools in the United States (USMDs) are pursuing advanced training in geriatrics. In 2009, a mere 86 residents (0.9%) in internal medicine or family medicine who were USMDs entered geriatric medicine fellowship programs. This is down from 112 in 2005.
- A career focused on caring for older adults can be particularly financially unattractive for physicians who carry increasingly large medical school loan debts.
- Physicians in internal medicine, family medicine – and geriatrics – earn significantly less and have less predictable work schedules than those in other medical and surgical specialties.
- With the supply of geriatricians in jeopardy; older adults will not receive the care they need.