



The Maryland State Medical Society

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SURVEY: THREE QUARTERS OF FEMALE PHYSICIANS HAVE EXPERIENCED INCOME INEQUALITY OR OTHER FORMS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Unconscious Bias is the Main Cause of Pay Discrepancies, Doctors Say

BALTIMORE, December 16, 2019 – One in three female physicians have considered early retirement due to gender discrimination and nearly two thirds of female physicians have been subjected to harassment and diminished morale by their colleagues, employers and patients alike. All of these staggering statistics were found by the recently completed Women in Medicine: Gender Pay Disparities and Workplace Discrimination survey conducted by Merritt Hawkins, the nation’s leading physician search firm and a company of AMN Healthcare (NYSE: AMN). MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, worked closely with Merritt Hawkins to provide data for the survey. MedChi is pleased to have had great representation, as Maryland physicians had a high rate of return on data for the survey.

“Women are entering medicine in record numbers and are having a profound impact on the medical profession,” said Kurt Mosley, Vice President of Strategic Liaisons. “However, despite these achievements, female physicians continue to be paid less than their male counterparts and face other forms of workplace discrimination.”

Of those female physicians who have experienced gender-based discrimination, 75% have experienced inappropriate words or actions directed toward them by fellow physicians, 57% have experienced inappropriate words or actions from managers or employers, and 56% have experienced lower compensation than male colleagues, according to the survey.

Dr. Michele Manahan, President of MedChi, states “MedChi looks to a future in which all physicians are fairly compensated for the work they do as they answer their callings to heal the sick and minimize the suffering of our patients in Maryland.

Income Inequality Begins Early

About 40% of female physicians said they currently earn less than male physicians in their specialty. When asked why, 73% said they received a smaller base salary and/or production bonus than their male colleagues. This suggests that gender-based income disparities in medicine begin at the initial stages of a physician’s career, when she is offered a first contract that may pay less than contracts offered to male counterparts. “If this is the case, female physicians could chase that lost income for their entire careers, losing hundreds of thousands of dollars in the process,” Mosley said.

Female Physicians “Less Assertive”

The majority of female physicians (74%) believe that male physicians earn more than females even when choice of a specialty or hours worked are accounted for, the survey indicates. When

asked why this is the case, 76% of female physicians identified unconscious employer discrimination as the cause.

“While employers may judge two candidates for the same job to be equally qualified, they may unconsciously imbue the male candidate with more financial value than the female candidate,” Mosley said. “Even though female physicians are just as highly sought after as males, many female physicians believe their equal value is not reflected in their employment contracts.” Over two-thirds of those surveyed (68%) said female physicians are less aggressive or adept at salary negotiation than males, and identified this as the second most important reason they are paid less. Conscious employer discrimination, the fact that female doctors spend more time with patients than do males, and that female physicians are less likely to be practice owners were other reasons female physicians cited for why they are paid less.

Increased Burnout, Early Retirement

The survey asked female physicians if gender discrimination has affected them in any way. About three quarters (73%) said gender discrimination has diminished their morale and career satisfaction. Various surveys, including other surveys conducted by Merritt Hawkins, indicate that female physicians experience higher rates of burnout than do males, and gender discrimination may be one reason for this, according to Mosley.

Forty-four percent of female physicians surveyed said that gender discrimination has caused them to seek another practice setting, while 32% said it has caused them to consider early retirement. Given a growing shortage of physicians, patients can ill afford the early retirement of female doctors, according to Mosley.

“Gender discrimination is more than just a challenge for individual doctors,” Mosley said. “When it diminishes the overall supply of physicians, it becomes a matter of public health.”

Gene Ransom, MedChi CEO, states “MedChi worked closely with Merritt Hawkins on this survey because we believe that this data is a critical step toward addressing gender pay disparities, gender-based workplace harassment, and other barriers that impact female physicians and their patients.”

Merritt Hawkins *2019 Survey of Women in Medicine* was sent to female physicians nationwide and includes responses from 429 female physicians with a margin of error on subjective factors accounting for gender pay disparities of +/- 4.7% (95% confidence.) A copy of the survey report may be accessed at www.merrithawkins.com.

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.

About Merritt Hawkins

Merritt Hawkins is the largest physician search and consulting firm in the United States and is a company of AMN Healthcare (NYSE: AMN). More information about Merritt Hawkins can be accessed at www.merrithawkins.com.

About AMN Healthcare

AMN Healthcare is the leader and innovator in healthcare workforce solutions and staffing services to healthcare facilities across the nation. The Company provides unparalleled access to the most comprehensive network of quality healthcare professionals through its innovative recruitment strategies and breadth of career opportunities. With insights and expertise, AMN Healthcare helps providers optimize their workforce to successfully reduce complexity, increase efficiency and improve patient outcomes. AMN delivers managed services programs, healthcare executive search solutions, vendor management systems, recruitment process outsourcing, predictive labor analytics, revenue cycle management, credentialing solutions, and other services. AMN Healthcare is committed to fostering and maintaining a diverse team that reflects the communities we serve. Our commitment to the inclusion of many different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives enables our innovation and leadership in the healthcare services industry. For more information about AMN Healthcare, visit www.amnhealthcare.com.