

New ASN-GWU report examines key challenges for kidney health workforce

October 26 2015

The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) released the latest in series of analyses of the nephrology workforce, which outlines current and future challenges to the specialty. Authored by researchers from the George Washington University (GWU) Health Workforce Institute, The US Nephrology Workforce 2015: Developments and Trends is available online at <http://www.asn-online.org/workforce>.

"This report enumerates opportunities and challenges for the critical specialty of nephrology," said ASN President Jonathan Himmelfarb, MD, FASN. "The analysis helps inform ASN initiatives that ensure patients with kidney diseases continue to receive the high-quality specialized care only nephrologists can provide."

The report is the third in a series produced in collaboration with the GWU Health Workforce Institute research team led by Edward Salsberg, MPA.

"Our review of recent developments and data, including from our survey of fellows, indicates that nephrology continues to be in transition," said Salsberg. "While indications are that need for nephrologists is rising, it is not clear how changes in delivery and financing will impact on the specialty. Further, while the job market for new nephrologists is limited, the number entering the specialty is decreasing which may lead to more opportunities in the future. It will be important to continue to monitor developments impacting on the specialty."

Among the findings:

- The increasing fragmentation of kidney care and trend for ceding common procedures to other specialties contribute to nephrology's transitional state.
- The current nephrology workforce is not evenly distributed across the United States, compared with the number of Americans needing specialized kidney care (measured using patients with end stage renal disease)
- The [job market](#) for new nephrologists remains limited according to the results of the 2015 Nephrology Fellow Survey
- Increased efficiencies and other health care delivery changes could reduce future demand for nephrologists
- The recent trend of declining interest among residents choosing nephrology fellowships has continued, according to the most recent data (academic year 2014-15)

As part of its commitment to ensure the highest quality care for more than 20 million Americans with kidney diseases, and millions more around the world, ASN has implemented a broad, multifaceted approach to increase interest in nephrology careers that target students, trainees, and nephrologists at all career stages. Learn more at <http://www.asn-online.org/about/bythenumbers/?ID=2>

The next report from the GWU Health Workforce Institute will provide an in-depth analysis of the 2015 nephrology fellow survey. Study coauthors include Leah Masselink, PhD, Leo Quigley, MPH, Xiaoli Wu, MS, and Ashté Collins, MD.

Provided by American Society of Nephrology

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