

Board News

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Once each year, this report is devoted to the examination of data derived from the certifying process. This information is collected in order to assess changes in the Diplomate population and thus may identify trends in the parameters of the specialty. Most of the figures reported are related to recertified Diplomates; all of the data are accurate as of 1 January 1993.

There are 25,038 recertified Diplomates compared with 23,626 on 1 January 1992. In 1992, 31.2 percent of these Diplomates were in solo practice; 29.5 percent were in group practice, and 18 percent were in partnerships. In 1993, the respective numbers are 29.9 percent, 30.7 percent, and 17.5 percent. The rate of Diplomates in HMOs changed very little — from 4.5 percent to 4.8 percent. Thus there was a reversal of the leading two types of practice, but the change is almost too small to call it a trend.

The distribution of recertified Diplomates according to community size has changed very little. Approximately 35 percent of recertified Diplomates practice in communities with fewer than 25,000 persons. Fifty percent practice in communities under 50,000 population. The mode is 14.5 percent who practice in communities from 10,000 to 25,000 population.

It is interesting that when we look at obstetrics, the percentage of Diplomates who do *no* deliveries has decreased from 71.5 percent to 66.8 percent during the past year. The number of recertified Diplomates who deliver from 1 to 25 babies annually has increased from 11.9 percent to 16.7 percent; 10.2 percent deliver 26 to 50 babies annually, and 5.8 percent deliver more than 50 per year. The latter figures are essentially unchanged from the previous year.

The numbers and percentage of recertified women continues to increase. In 1993, 13.5 percent of recertified Diplomates are women compared with 12.4 percent in 1992.

Both the median and mode for age of recertified Diplomates are unchanged. The medians are 44 years and the modes are 40 years for both calendar years.

If we include the Diplomates who have not yet recertified, the total number of Diplomates is 40,260 compared with 38,880 in 1992 for a net gain of 1380 Diplomates. Of the total Diplomates, 79.7 percent are residency-trained compared with 77.3 percent last year. In 1992, the mean age of all Diplomates was 43.01 years; the median age was 40.0 years, and the mode 38.02 years. In comparison, in 1993, the mean age is 43.13 years, the median age is 41.01 years, and the mode is 39.02 years.

These figures provide evidence of a stable situation for the American Board of Family Practice. There are 1380 more total Diplomates and 1412 more recertified Diplomates in 1993 than 1992. This is an increase of only 32 Diplomates who are certified but not recertified for these years. Clearly this reflects a stability that might not augur well for the specialty or for the public, especially during a time when there is increasing demand for primary care services.

Correction

Cover illustrator credit (January–February 1993): Richard Pennell served as a materials consultant for the room-sized heart exhibit for Lexington, KY, Children's Museum. Rick Gersony is the creator of the exhibit.