How Private Practice Physician Attitudes are Changing


**Source:** Physicians Practice

Despite ongoing stressors, including declining reimbursement, increasing overhead, and pressure to align with larger healthcare systems, career satisfaction among private practice physicians has remained relatively stable since 2009.

That's according to findings from Physicians Practice's 2013 Great American Physician Survey, Sponsored by Kareo. More than 1,100 physicians (about 400 of them partners/co-owners in private practices) weighed in to share their thoughts on their personal and professional lives.

In fact, the 2013 survey responses from partners/co-owners of private practices indicate that their level of career satisfaction may actually be increasing. In 2013, more of these respondents than in previous years said they strongly agreed with the statement, "I like being a physician." More specifically, on a scale of one to five (with five being "strongly agree" and one being "strongly disagree") 62 percent of partners/co-owners said they strongly agreed with that statement. That's about 10 percent more than said they strongly agreed in 2009.

Our 2013 survey findings also indicate that the number of private practices physicians that are happy with their career path has remained relatively stable over the past few years. When asked, "If given the chance to go back in time and pick another career path, what would you do?" 60 percent of private practice respondents said they would do everything roughly the same way they did it the first time. That's about the same percentage as in previous years.

While most private practice physicians said they wouldn't change the past when it came to their career choices, more private practice physicians in 2013 said they would discourage their child from pursuing a career in medicine in the future. This year, about 18 percent of respondents said they would discourage a career in medicine. In previous years, only about 13 percent of private practice physicians said they would discourage it.

When other private practice physician responses to our 2013 survey findings are considered, it's not surprising that more physicians said they would discourage their children from seeking a career in medicine.

Over the past few years, private practice physicians have indicated that they are working longer hours, and more have also indicated that they feel they don't have as much time for their personal life as they think they should.

In 2013, for instance, 88 percent of private practice physician respondents told us that they worked more than 40 hours per week. In 2010, about 85 percent said they did. In addition, in 2013, 73 percent of private practice physician respondents said they don't have as much personal time as they think they should. That's up from 67 percent just last year.

In addition, more private practice physician respondents this year said they often wish they could change workplaces. In 2013, 31 percent of respondents said they wished they could change workplaces. That's up from just 23 percent in 2010. In addition, the percentage of private practice physician respondents who said they plan to become hospital employed in the next five years doubled between 2013 and 2012 (from 3 percent to 6 percent).
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Full data for this year’s survey will be available online in mid-August 2013 and in the September 2013 issue of Physicians Practice.

What do you find most surprising about the survey findings and why?

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