

Physicians' opinions about the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and its impact on their work.

Nearly 17 million Americans have gained health insurance since 2010 when the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was implemented. The healthcare system was flooded with new patients, putting major stress on doctors throughout the country.

According to a study by CompHealth, physicians have seen challenges to their professions arise, including reduced time with patients, increased time on required data entry and paperwork, and reduced income since the rollout of the ACA.

In addition, one-third of physicians surveyed said they were more inclined to leave the medical profession, and many are seeking additional employment to supplement their income because of the passage of the ACA.

The number of physicians considering quitting medicine because of the ACA is even higher among those in private practice (45 percent).

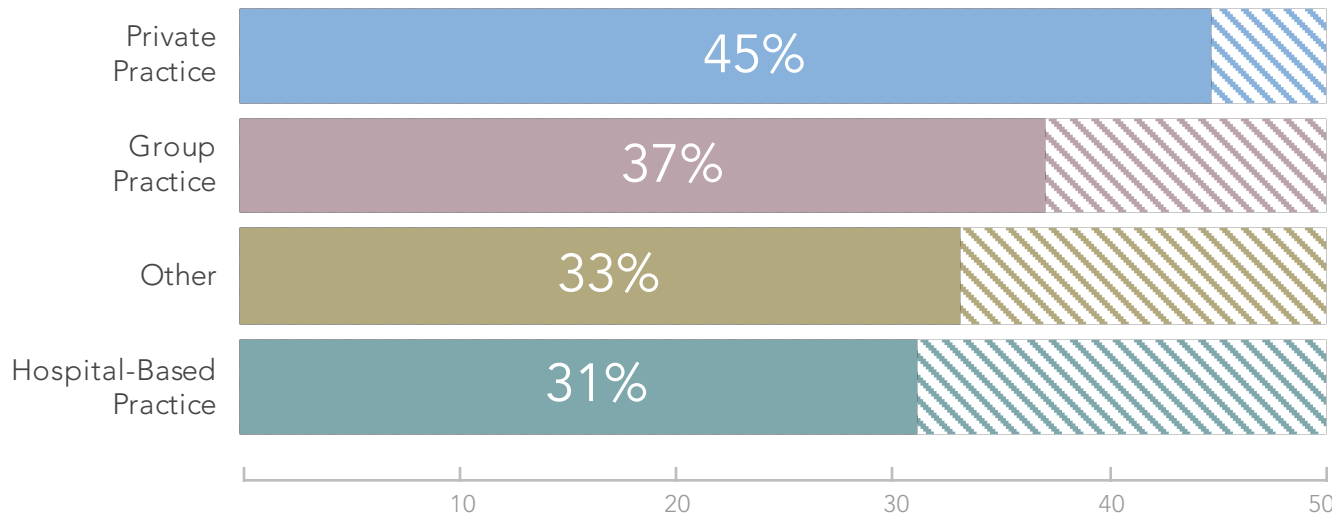
As physicians face these issues connected to the ACA, 41 percent are taking a secondary job like locum tenens, moonlighting, or consulting to help them combat declining incomes, maintain their preferred lifestyles, and pay off debt.

To discover how physicians feel about the federal statute and its impact on their work, CompHealth surveyed approximately 1,000 physicians across practice types and medical specialties.

Key findings.

Many doctors inclined to leave profession.

More than one-third (36 percent) of physicians are more inclined to quit the medical profession because of the ACA. This desire to leave is stronger for private practice physicians, 45 percent of whom said they were inclined to quit.



36%

of physicians are more inclined to leave profession



45%

of physicians in private practice are more inclined to leave profession

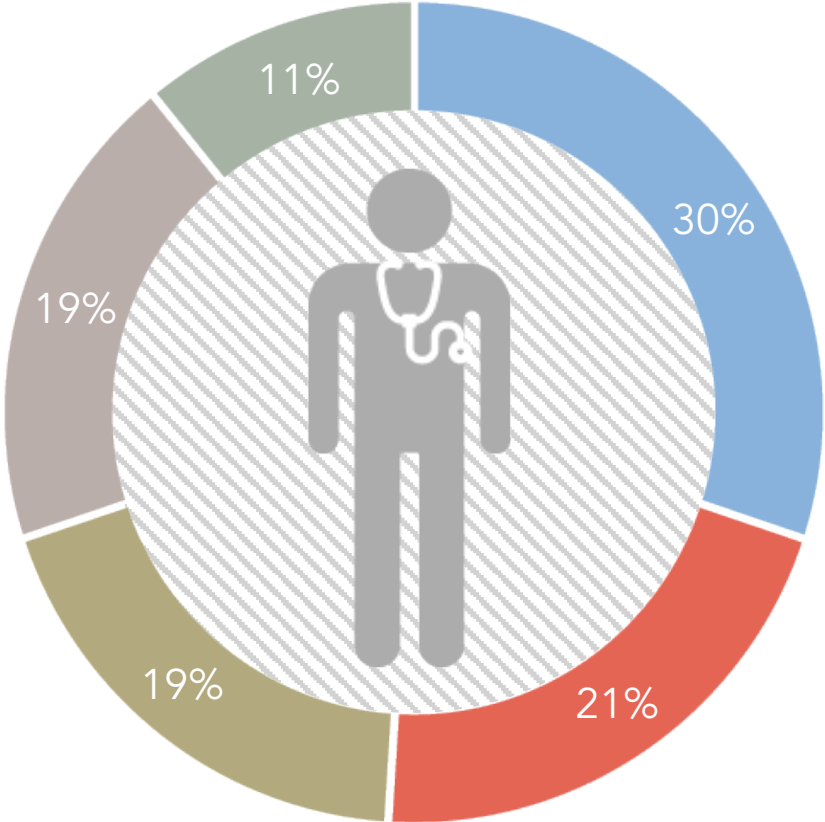


Key findings.

The majority of physicians view the ACA unfavorably.

According to the survey, the majority of respondents view the ACA unfavorably, with 51 percent deeming it "very unfavorable" or "somewhat unfavorable" compared to 30 percent who found it favorable.

- Very Unfavorable
- Somewhat Unfavorable
- Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable
- Somewhat Favorable
- Very Favorable

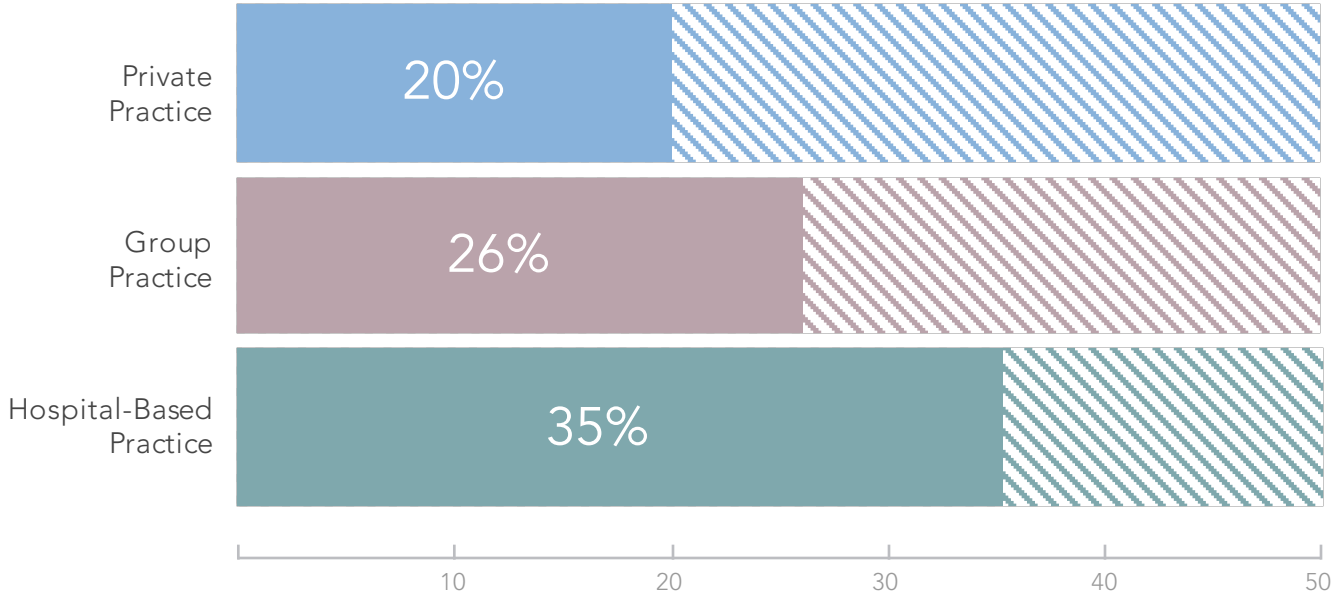


Key findings.

Opinion of the ACA varies by practice type.

The ACA is least favorable among physicians in private practice—only 20 percent view the law favorably—followed by group practice physicians (26 percent), and hospital-based physicians (35 percent).

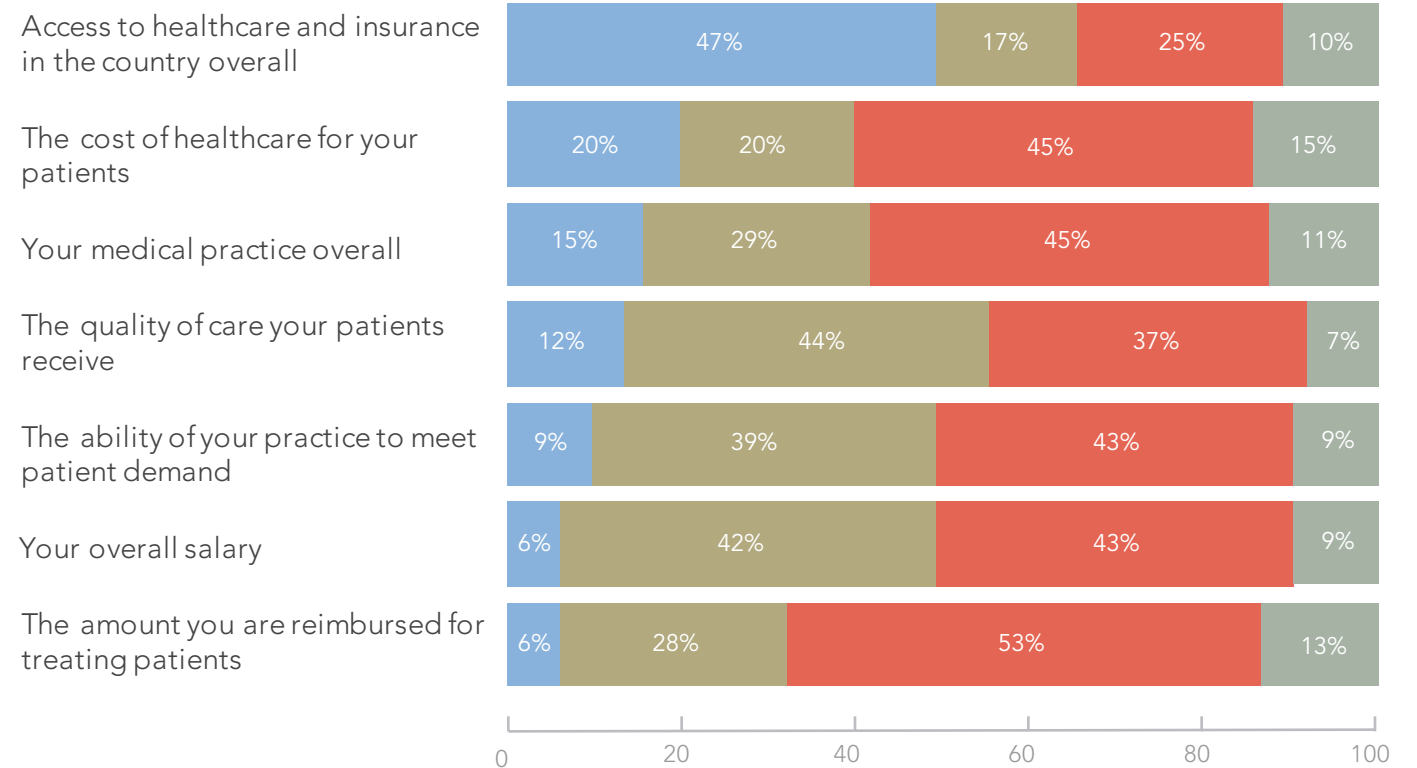
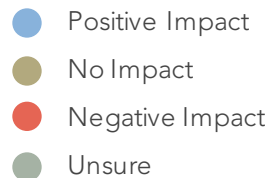
Favorability toward the ACA by practice type.



Key findings.

ACA provides greater access to healthcare but at higher costs.

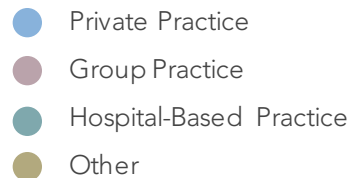
Almost half of doctors surveyed think the ACA helps with the accessibility of healthcare for patients. However, they say it also costs patients more and hinders the doctor's ability to help patients. More than 40 percent of surveyed doctors stated that the ACA negatively impacted the cost of healthcare, overall medical practice, the ability to meet patient demand, and their overall salary.



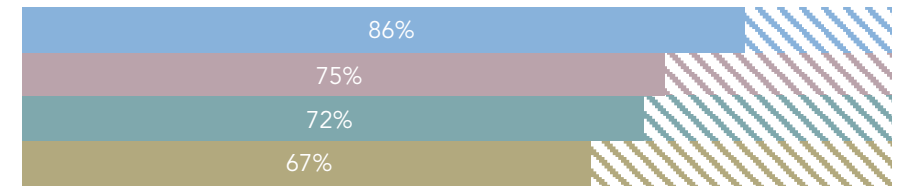
Key findings.

Private practice doctors have most negative views on ACA.

Physicians in private practice tend to have the most negative perspectives on the ACA and its impact on their work. Eighty-six percent of private practice physicians say they're improperly compensated. Fifty-five percent say their salary has been negatively impacted, and 28 percent say it has "decreased greatly" since passage of the law. In addition, 58 percent of private practice doctors think their overall medical practice has been negatively affected by the ACA.



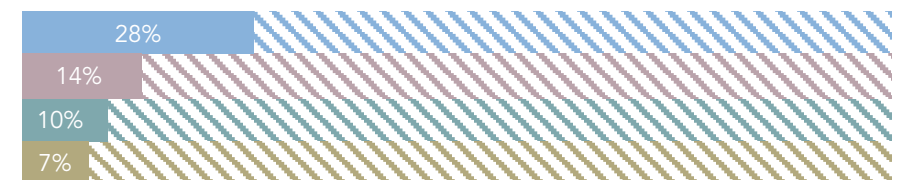
Believe they are not being properly compensated for their time



Believe their overall salary has been negatively impacted



Believe their salary has decreased greatly



Believe their overall medical practice has been negatively impacted

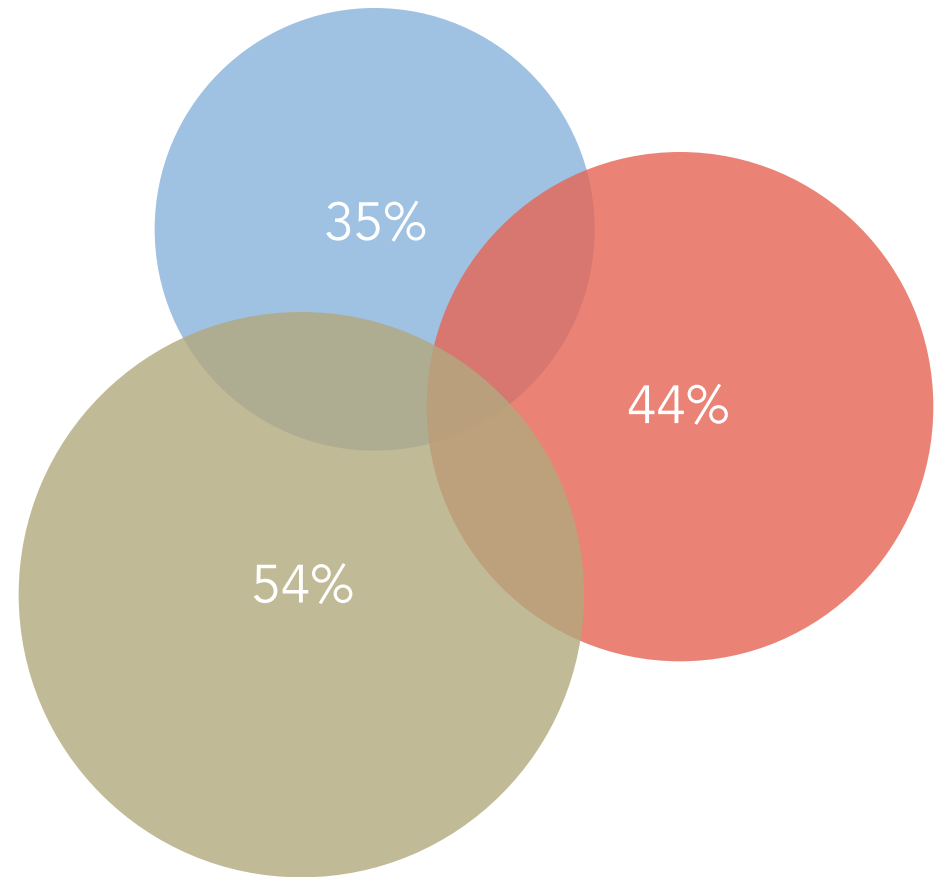


Key findings.

The ACA diminishes time with patients.

With more accessibility to insurance under the ACA, 35 percent of physicians think the number of patients they see increased after the statute went into effect. As a result, some physicians have had to cut the time they spend with each patient. According to the survey, 44 percent of physicians think they spend less time with their patients, while 54 percent of physicians say they spend the same amount of time with patients.

- Think the number of patients they see has increased
- Think they spend less time with their patients
- Say they spend the same amount of time with their patients



Key findings.

The ACA creates more busywork for physicians.

Many doctors feel the ACA has created more billing and insurance paperwork. In fact, 68 percent claim they spend too much of their time at work entering data into electronic health records (EHRs), and 59 percent state they spend too much time doing paperwork. Those in private practice (67 percent) are more burdened by paperwork compared to those in hospital-based practice (52 percent).

68%

spend too much time
entering data into EHRs



59%

spend too much time
doing paperwork



Key findings.

More doctors taking second jobs.

Doctors are seeking additional employment, mainly to supplement their income. These employment opportunities include moonlighting, consulting, and locum tenens, with locum tenens being the most popular second job. Among the 41 percent of physicians who took an additional job, half of them took it because their income had decreased. Private practice physicians were most likely to have a second job, with 64 percent of them taking secondary jobs because of reduced income.

41%

of physicians took an additional job



64%

of private practice physicians took a secondary job because of reduced income



Conclusion.

Overall, many of the surveyed physicians indicated disapproval of the ACA and its impact on their work and compensation. The act is also pushing a large number of physicians to consider leaving the profession. Many physicians are choosing nontraditional ways to practice medicine, including locum tenens and moonlighting, to supplement income decreased by the ACA.

Methodology.

An email survey polled 993 physicians from multiple specialties across the United States to determine their attitudes about the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and how it has affected their work. The survey was conducted in December 2015 by Hanover Research on behalf of CompHealth. This report presents overall findings and findings segmented by practice type, including private practice, hospital-based practice, group practice, and other (health maintenance organization [HMO], locum tenens, or other). This report presents selected segmented results with statistical significance at the 95% confidence level.