



NEWS RELEASE

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AMDA 2010 Membership Survey Paints Portrait of Long Term Care Medicine

Columbia, MD – AMDA – Dedicated to Long Term Care Medicine has released the results of its 2010 membership survey. The data paints a picture of practitioners who are experienced, involved, and work in a variety of leadership roles on behalf of the patients they serve. The survey had a 20% response rate. While most respondents were physicians, feedback was also provided by AMDA's non-physician members, including advance practice nurses, physician assistants, administrators, and consultant pharmacists.

A majority (79%) of respondents reported working as part-time medical directors (with an average 6-10 hours spent per facility per month in this capacity), and 88% also serve as attending physicians. Physician respondents practice, in general, in 1-2 facilities, with an average of 100 beds with just under one-half (45%) maintaining a private practice outside of the long term care (LTC) setting. The majority (79%) reported that they are Board Certified, primarily in Internal Medicine and Family Practice; and 35% have a Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) in geriatrics.

Over one-half (55%) of AMDA physician respondents are Certified Medical Directors (CMDs). This is significant, as a 2009 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association* associated the presence of a Certified Medical Director with enhanced facility quality. The data analysis found that facilities realized a 15% improvement in quality when under the direction of a CMD.

Most physician respondents are experienced practitioners, with an average of 16.8 years in long term care practice and 14.1 years as a medical director in this setting. The average age of responders is 51-60. AMDA President Paul Katz, MD, CMD, commented, "Increasing difficulty recruiting physicians interested in LTC practice, coupled with an aging workforce, portend a crisis in the effective delivery of medical care to our most frail and vulnerable patients. AMDA remains committed to finding new and innovative ways to attract physicians into LTC practice while at the same time clearly defining the competencies necessary to deliver high quality, evidence based medical care."

As in the past, the most common LTC setting reported is the skilled nursing facility (SNF), followed by assisted living, hospice, subacute/post-acute, home care, LTC hospital, and continuing care retirement community. Serving as attending physicians, most survey respondents (21%) reported seeing 1-20 patients, followed by 21-35 (20%), and 36-45 and 76-100 (13%). These numbers are comparable to what was reported in 2008. However, fewer written prescriptions per month were reported (228 on average) in 2010 for LTC residents than in 2008 (254 on average).

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When asked which clinical leadership tasks they perform (from 11 tasks outlined in “Medical Director: Role and Responsibilities as Leader and Management,” approved by AMDA’s Board and House of Delegates), a significant percentage of respondents indicated that they handle all of them. Specifically, over 90% said they participate in the facility’s quality improvement process, and 92% said they participate in implementing policies and procedures related to patient care.

“Year after year, we continue to receive a substantial response. The survey validates much and provides direction on changes and trends. The typical medical director continues to be a part-time primary care physician. Though the number of full time medical directors grows with each survey, the lion’s share of service is still delivered by the same dedicated population,” said AMDA Executive Director Lorraine Tarnove. She added, “The hours served remains steady, but the involvement and patient care responsibilities increase. Like everyone, medical directors are doing more in the time they dedicate to patients in this setting.”

AMDA – Dedicated to Long Term Care Medicine is the national professional association of medical directors, attending physicians, and other professionals practicing long term care medicine committed to the continuous improvement of patient care. The organization provides education, advocacy, information, and professional development for medical directors and other practitioners from various disciplines working together to deliver quality long term care.

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