

## American Board of Emergency Medicine

### **Final Results of the 2010 LSEP Retired Physician Survey**

#### **Background**

In 2010, ABEM continued the practice of creating three distinct versions of the LSEP interim survey. The EM physician survey was sent to 1,165 physicians believed to be currently practicing in EM or an EM subspecialty. A second survey was developed for retirees and was sent to 115 LSEP participants who had previously indicated that they were retired. A third survey was mailed to 86 participants who previously reported that they were no longer working in EM or an EM subspecialty.

This report presents final results from the survey sent to retired physicians. Results of the EM physician survey and the alternate occupation survey are described in separate reports.

Frequency distributions for all but the open-ended questions are presented in the annotated survey, attached. The N's reflect the number of people responding to each question. The first two questions are used to determine whether each person received the correct survey. N's are shown only for those whose responses are retained for this survey. Apparent inconsistencies may occur when respondents answer questions they are instructed to skip or skip questions they should answer. Percents may not always sum to exactly 100% due to rounding. The sum of percents may exceed 100% when participants are asked to "circle all that apply."

#### Results of the Retired Physician Survey

Three participants were removed from the list due to death, outdated address, or a request to be removed, leaving an effective sample size of 112 and a response rate of 68%. Seven reported they are not retired but still working. Those responding online were automatically directed to the survey questions appropriate to their situation, while those who responded on paper were counted in the response rate but are excluded from the count for the questions they were directed to skip on the retired physician survey. These physicians will receive either the EM physician survey or the alternate occupation survey in 2011, depending on their circumstances. The number of valid responses available for the final analysis on the retired physician survey was 72. Of these, 17 (24%) chose to complete the survey online. The results reported below are based on the responses of the 72 respondents.

At the time they retired, 80% of respondents were in clinical EM, 7% in academic EM, and 4% in administration. Nine percent had left EM before retiring. Asked what they enjoyed most about EM, retired physicians overwhelmingly responded with "clinical practice" (94%). Clinical teaching was also a popular answer (58%). In addition to the other options listed, physicians mentioned the social and professional interaction with other health care workers.

Most (77%) indicated they would not return to EM in the future. Common reasons cited were age and health, the physical difficulty of the work (night shifts, for example), and the need to update knowledge and skills. A few also expressed dissatisfaction with the current state of EM

or of medicine in general. Among those who would consider returning to EM, most indicated that financial considerations might be a factor that would prompt their return.

Asked what advice they would give to new EM residency graduates, 37% made suggestions regarding lifestyle: take vacations, spend time with your family, choose a good place to live, make sure you have a life outside of work. About 37% gave counsel regarding work-related choices, such as the type of work group to join, activism, certification and subspecialization, and control over scheduling and shift work. Approximately 23% offered advice about human relations on the job—staying patient-focused, maintaining positive relationships with colleagues and nursing staff, keeping a sense of humor. Others mentioned the need to stay up to date with knowledge, skills, and new developments. Four respondents gave financial advice: save, live within your means, plan for retirement. Three suggested choosing another career entirely.

Fifty-two respondents offered advice for medical students considering EM. About 27% extolled the benefits of a career in EM: making a difference; challenging, interesting, exciting, and satisfying work; “where the action is.” About one-fourth advised knowing what you are getting into and being prepared for demanding work, especially shift work and its effect on your family. Others offered counsel regarding residency training, ongoing education, and the acquisition of specific work skills (listening, pain management, diagnostic ultrasound, airway management, patient advocacy). Others had advice regarding work-related choices such as those described in advice to new residency graduates. Again, a few suggested choosing another career.

Only a few (N=17) respondents offered comments at the end of the survey. About half were comments about the survey itself. One added to the career advice given earlier. The remainder commented on current work, the field of EM in general, or maintenance of certification.



# American Board of Emergency Medicine Longitudinal Study of Emergency Physicians

## 2010 Retired Physician Survey

1. You indicated on a prior survey that you are retired—that is, no longer regularly working for pay, either part-time or full-time, in any medical or non-medical occupation. Is this still true? **N=71**  
(N missing = 1)

(Circle Only One)

Yes .....1      Skip 1b and go to Question 2, below **100%**  
No, I still work for pay .....5      Go to Question 1b

**1b. In what area(s) do you currently work?** Not applicable for respondents retained for this survey

AREA	(Circle All That Apply)
a. Emergency Medicine (EM) .....1 (includes EM clinical, administrative, academic, & consulting)	1
b. EM subspecialty .....1	1
c. Urgent care.....1	1
d. Critical care EM .....1	1
e. Internal medicine .....1	1
f. Occupational medicine .....1	1
g. Physical & rehabilitative medicine.....1	1
Other medical (non-EM) (Please specify)_____	1
Other (non-medical) (Please specify)_____	1

**If you answered No to Question 1, after completing Question 1b, please go to Question 7.**

2. What parts of the practice did you most enjoy while practicing Emergency Medicine? **N=71**

(Circle All That Apply)

a. Academic writing.....1      **7%**  
b. Administration .....1      **24%**  
c. Clinical practice.....1      **94%**  
d. Clinical teaching.....1      **58%**  
e. Consulting.....1      **10%**  
f. Didactic teaching.....1      **8%**  
g. Political activities.....1      **7%**  
h. Research .....1      **6%**  
Other .....1      **15%**  
(Please specify)

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3. At your retirement, did you consider yourself in clinical EM, academic EM, or administration? **N=69**

*(Circle Only One)*

Clinical EM.....	1	80%
Academic EM.....	2	7%
Administration .....	3	4%
Not in EM at retirement .....	4	9%

4. Would you return to EM clinical practice in the future? **N=71**

*(Circle Only One)*

Yes.....	1	4%
No .....	5	77%
Maybe .....	3	18%

4a. Why or why not? **N=60** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What advice would you give to a new EM residency graduate that would enhance their career satisfaction? **N=60**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What advice would you give to a medical student considering EM as a career that would enhance their career satisfaction? **N=52**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. PLEASE MAKE ANY  
NEEDED CORRECTIONS  
TO THIS INFORMATION

COMMENTS: Please include any comments you have about this survey or issues related to Emergency Medicine and ABEM. Please print clearly so your comments can be noted.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please return your survey to ABEM by May 28, 2010. Thank you for your generous support. If ABEM can be of assistance, please call (517) 332-4800 or email us at [research@abem.org](mailto:research@abem.org).**