**CHAPTER 1  DISCOVER PODIATRIC MEDICINE**

### JOB OUTLOOK

Now is one of the most exciting times for new podiatric physicians entering study and practice. With robust practice options available to graduates, young professionals can expect to change the lives of the patients they treat.

One of the opportunities for future practitioners is the vast number of current DPMs desiring to retire in the next decade. The American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) reports its average member is 58 years of age and seeks to retire between the ages of 65 and 70. A 2007 study conducted by the Center for Health Workforce Studies at the School of Public Health, University at Albany concluded in order to serve the growing population of patients, the colleges of podiatric medicine will have to increase their production of graduates just to meet the demand (Wing, Forte, Diccon, & Christina, 2008).

Currently, there are approximately 15,000 practicing podiatrists in the United States. After the current U.S. census, that means there are over 20,000 potential patients per practicing podiatrist! According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), podiatric physicians held over 21,000 full-time jobs in 2016.

Despite these statistics, employment of podiatrists is projected to grow 10 percent from 2016 to 2026, faster than the average for all occupations, according to the BLS. Additional patients will seek the services of a DPM for lower extremity care due to the rising number of injuries in an active population, the growing rates of obesity and diabetes, and the increasingly older population. Without major advancements to promote podiatric medicine as a career choice now, many patients will go underserved in the near future.

### BENEFITS AND INCOME POTENTIAL

In 2015, APMA members reported earning, on average, $183,126 in the previous year. Twelve percent of respondents earned $260,000 or more in the previous year, while 16.4% of practicing podiatric physicians reported earning less than $100,000.

Also reporting data from 2016, the BLS further breaks these figures down by working environment, geographic choice, and earning potential for current and future employment opportunities.

#### THE LARGEST EMPLOYERS OF PODIATRISTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- **GROUP PRACTICES WITH OTHER PHYSICIANS OR SPECIALISTS** 64%
- **PRACTICES WITH ONLY PHYSICIANS** 20%
- **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** 8%
- **SELF-EMPLOYED PHYSICIANS** 7%
- **HOSPITALS; STATE, LOCAL, AND PRIVATE** 6%

#### IN MAY 2016, THE MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGES FOR PODIATRISTS IN THE TOP INDUSTRIES IN WHICH THEY WORKED WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- **OFFICES OF PHYSICIANS** $167,820
- **OFFICES OF OTHER HEALTH PRACTITIONERS** $121,700
- **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** $121,300
- **HOSPITALS; STATE, LOCAL, AND PRIVATE** $104,360

**NET INCOME IN 2014**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>35.9%</th>
<th>21.3%</th>
<th>13%</th>
<th>9.8%</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Less than $100,000</td>
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**TOTAL # OF RESPONDENTS: 489**

**SOURCE: 2014 PODIATRIC PRACTICE SURVEY**

**NOTE: NOT ASKED OF ASSOCIATE PODIATRISTS**

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**ETHNIC IDENTITIES OF PRACTICING PODIATRISTS IN 2018**

- **White: 61%**
- **Spanish/Hispanic/Latino/Latina: 2%**
- **Black or African American: 2%**
- **American Indian or Alaska Native: 2%**
- **Did Not Report: 9%**

**SOURCE: APMA: ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION ON MEMBERSHIP RECORDS OF APMA, MARCH 2018**