

13 most popular medical side gigs for physicians

Patsy Newitt - Friday, January 6th, 2023

Email

Medscape laid out physicians' side gigs in its 2022 "[Physician Side Gigs](#)" report.

Medscape surveyed more than 2,500 physicians on their side jobs.

Here are physicians' medical side gigs and the percentage of physicians participating:

Medical consulting:

Men: 27 percent

Women: 17 percent

Expert witness:

Men: 25 percent

Women: 11 percent

Chart review:

Men: 20 percent

Women: 12 percent

Medical moonlighting:

Men: 18 percent

Women: 17 percent

Speaking: Slide 3

Men: 16 percent

Women: 13 percent

Telemedicine consulting and advising:

Men: 12 percent

Women: 15 percent

Medical device development:

Men: 4 percent

Women: 3 percent

Healthcare startup:

Men: 4 percent

Women: 3 percent

Medical spa work:

Men: 4 percent

Women: 5 percent

Medical podcasting:

Men: 3 percent

Women: 4 percent

EMR training:

Men: 2 percent

Women: 1 percent

Tutoring:

Men: 2 percent

Women: 2 percent

Mental health counseling:

Men: 2 percent

Women: 2 percent

My side gig does not include medical-related activities:

Men: 16 percent

Women: 21 percent

Side Gigs: Physicians Seek Extra Income; More Satisfaction

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The side gig, or "side hustle," has become a popular way for physicians to create an additional income stream or pursue a passion project. To gauge the prevalence of side gigs, Medscape surveyed more than 2500 US physicians and asked about their side jobs, how much they are earning, and what they hope to achieve.

"The combination of burnout, uncertainty, and frustration about the direction of the healthcare landscape, and changing demographics in medicine, continue to push physicians to develop a plan B over a traditional career in medicine," said Nisha Mehta, MD, a radiologist who has founded two online communities, Physician Side Gigs and Physician Community. "The number of physicians expressing interest in nonclinical medical careers or pursuing careers outside of medicine is increasing and poses a real health policy issue."

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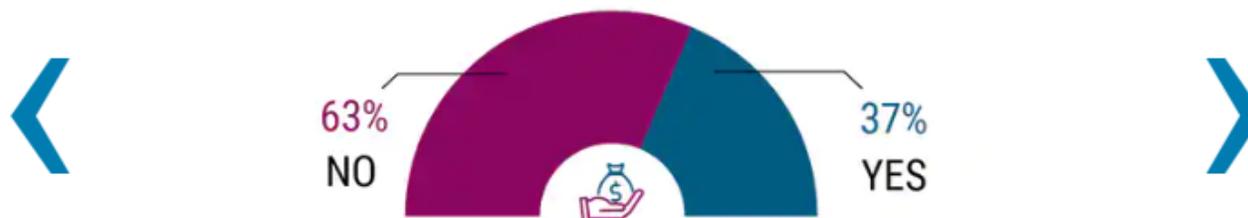


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Do Physicians Have a Side Gig?



Overall, nearly 4 in 10 doctors currently have a side gig. "I have seen physicians pursue side gigs more and more in recent years," says David I. Beran, DO, emergency physician and writer. "Sometimes they are clinical jobs (like moonlighting), sometimes they're not clinical but medical (like file review or expert witnessing), and sometimes they're neither (business, investing, real estate, etc.)."



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Gender of Physicians Who Have a Side Gig



"The data are actually very encouraging when you consider antiquated stereotypes of male and female physicians," says Nisha Mehta, MD, a radiologist who has founded two online communities, Physician Side Gigs and Physician Community. "To me, it states that despite the challenges that female physicians traditionally face in finding the bandwidth to balance work, family, and a side gig, particularly during their first decade and a half of practice, women physicians are finding innovative ways to create fulfilment and flexibility in their careers."

What Medical Activities Does Your Side Gig Involve?

BY GENDER ● Men ● Women



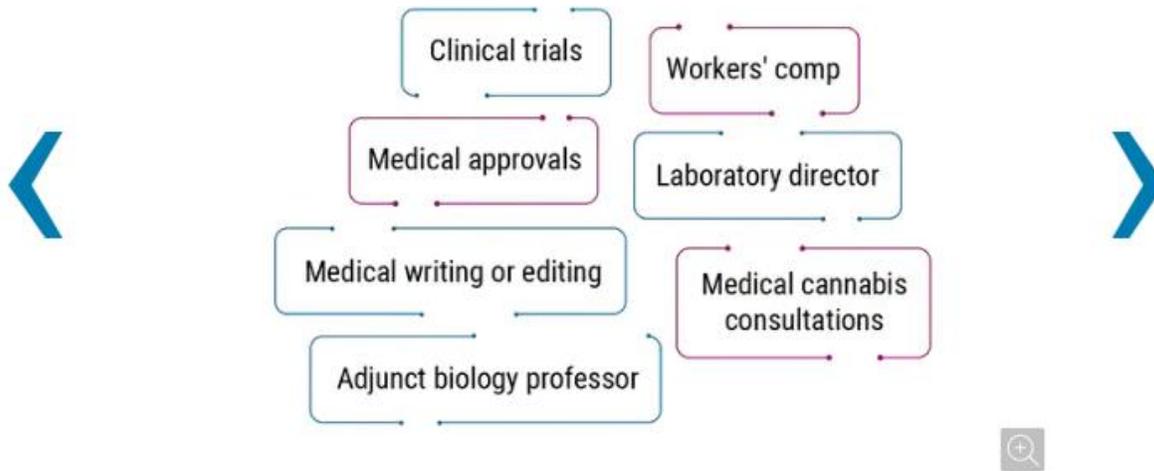
A majority of side gigs involve medical-related activities. More men than women are doing chart review (20% vs 12%), serving as an expert witness (25% vs 11%), and providing medical consulting (27% vs 11%). (Respondents could choose more than one answer.)

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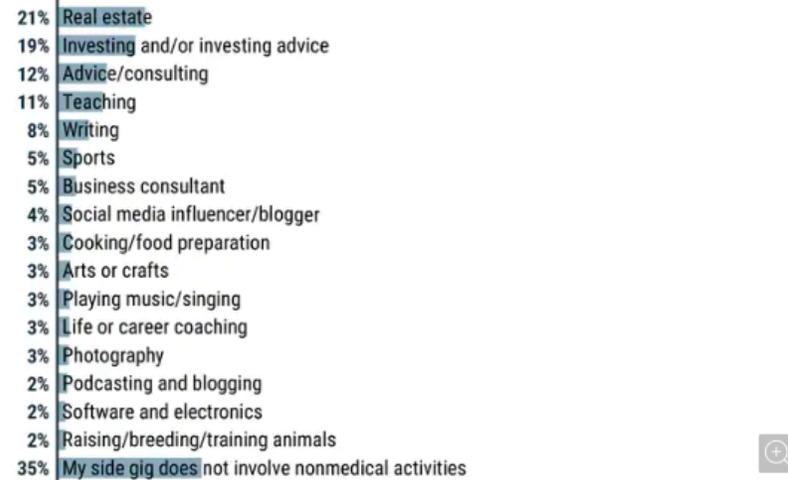
What Other Medical Activities Does Your Side Gig Involve?



Additional medical side gigs include medical director of a biotech company; medical director at a pediatric rehab facility; medical review officer for an insurance board; taking medical surveys; nursing home wound care; peer review; pharma consultant ; and aeromedical examiner.

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What Are Your Nonmedical Side Gigs?



Real estate and investing (or providing investment advice) are the most popular side gigs. Real estate is the leading nonmedical side gig for women (19%). For men, real estate and investing/investing advice are tied for most popular nonmedical side gig (23%).

"I've noticed a lot more physicians pursuing side gigs in which they create something of their own," says Mehta. "Some common examples include course creation, coaching businesses, podcasts, and writing books, but we've also seen more members dive deeper into pursuing product development or creating their own company in the health tech industry." Mehta also notes that interest in telemedicine seems to have decreased quite a bit, "in part secondary to decreasing compensation and increased fears of liability as many telemedicine companies shift their models."

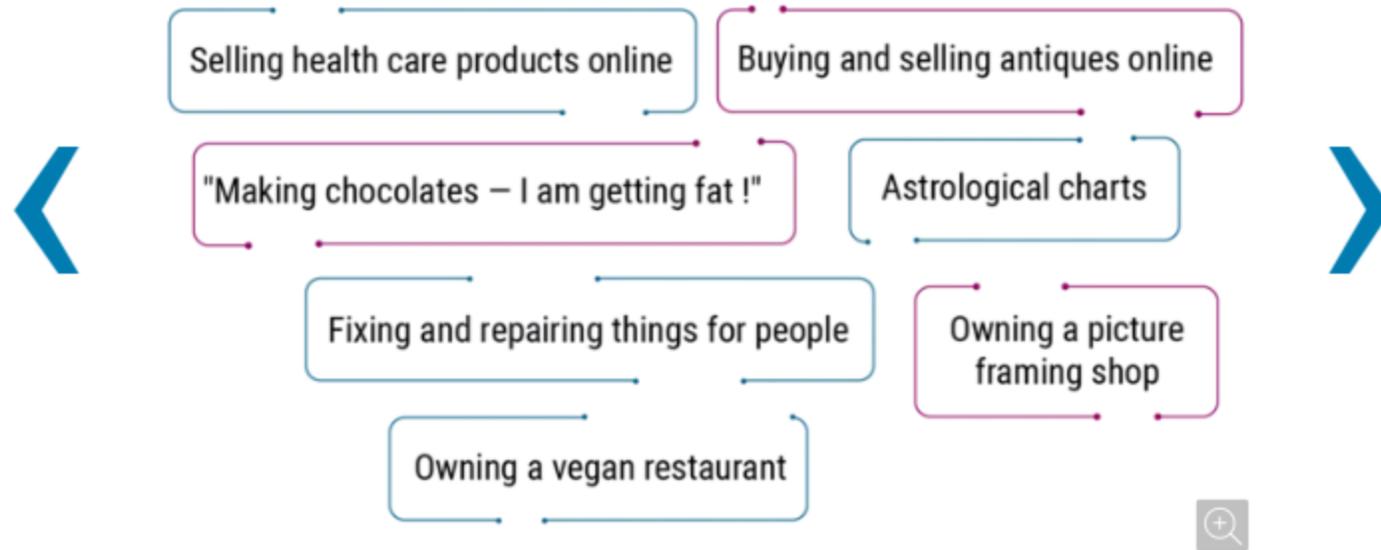
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What Other Nonmedical Activities Does Your Side Gig Involve?



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How Long Have You Had Your Side Gig?



Side gigs have staying power; physicians who have had a side gig for at least a year have been involved with it for an average of 10 years.

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Hours per Month You Spend on Your Side Gig

< 16 hours >



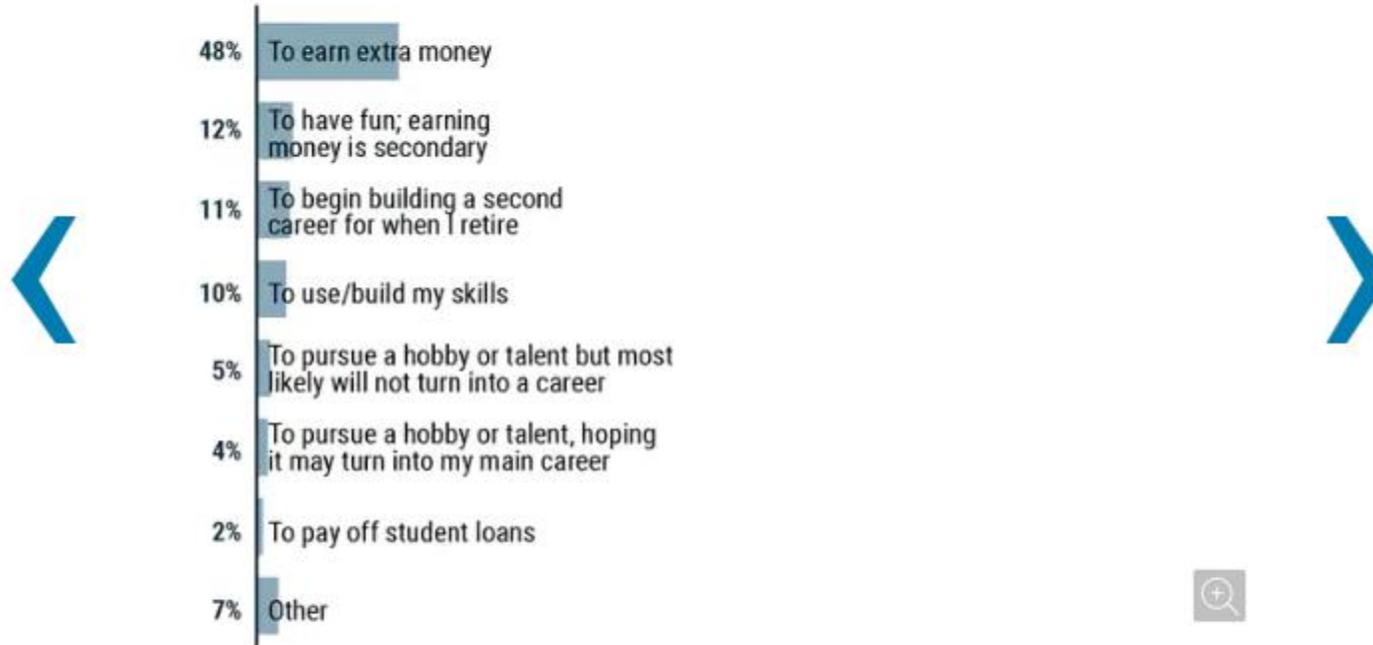
"It's almost impossible for me to get enough time to get this really going," said one respondent. "I end up having to use my vacation time and my family time to work my side gig. Yes, it's bringing in money and I'm glad for that, but I'm afraid it's going to lead to burnout, and my family is annoyed about my lack of free time."

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What's Your Main Goal for Your Side Gig?



Money is the main driver for almost half of physicians who have a side gig. PCPs and specialists equally said that having an additional income stream is their primary goal.

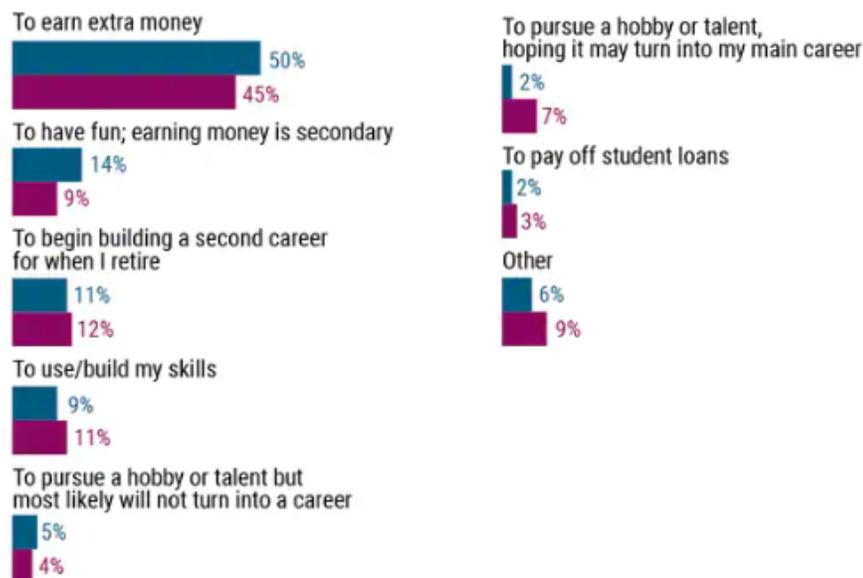
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What's Your Main Goal for Your Side Gig?

Men Women



Women (7%) more often than men (2%) said that their main goal is to pursue a hobby or talent, hoping it will turn into their primary career. Both men (50%) and women (45%) said that earning extra money is their primary goal for having a side gig.

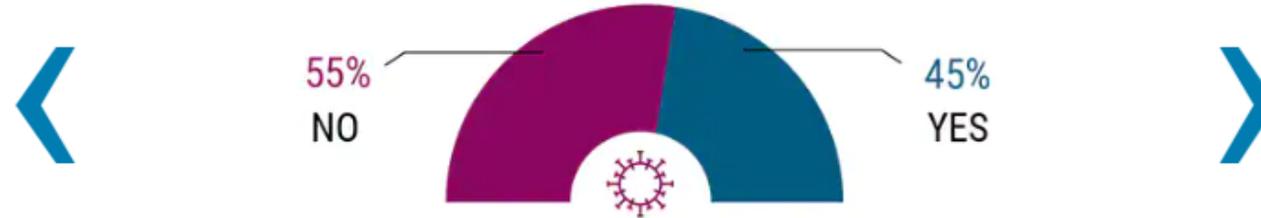
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Did COVID Hardships Lead You to Pursue a Side Gig?



Among physicians who started their side gig within the past 12 months, almost half said that COVID challenges influenced their decision. According to [Medscape's Physician Compensation Report 2021](#), many physicians saw their income drop because of job loss, reduced hours, or reduced patient volume during the pandemic.

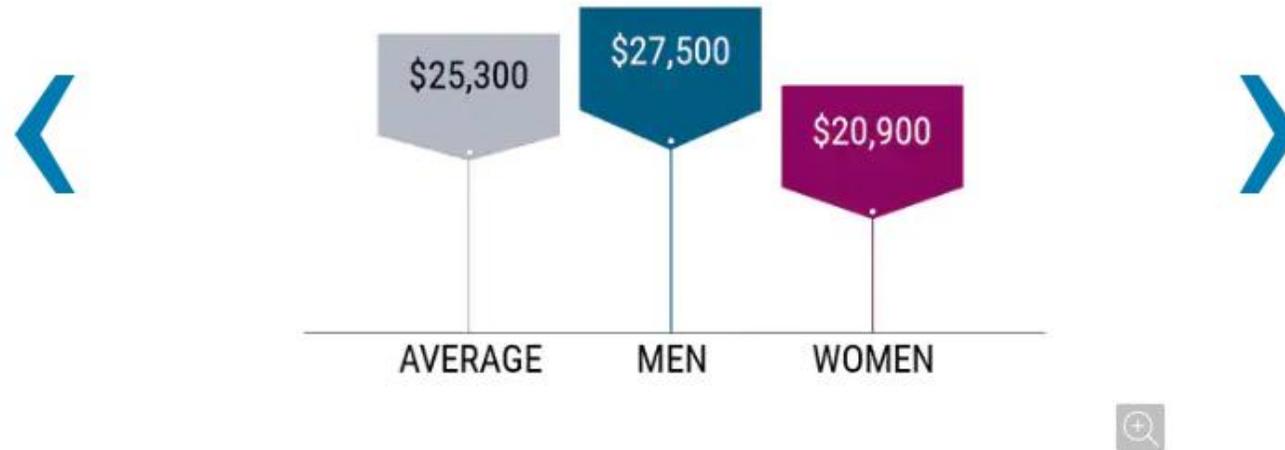
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How Much Did You Earn From Your Side Gig in the Past Year?



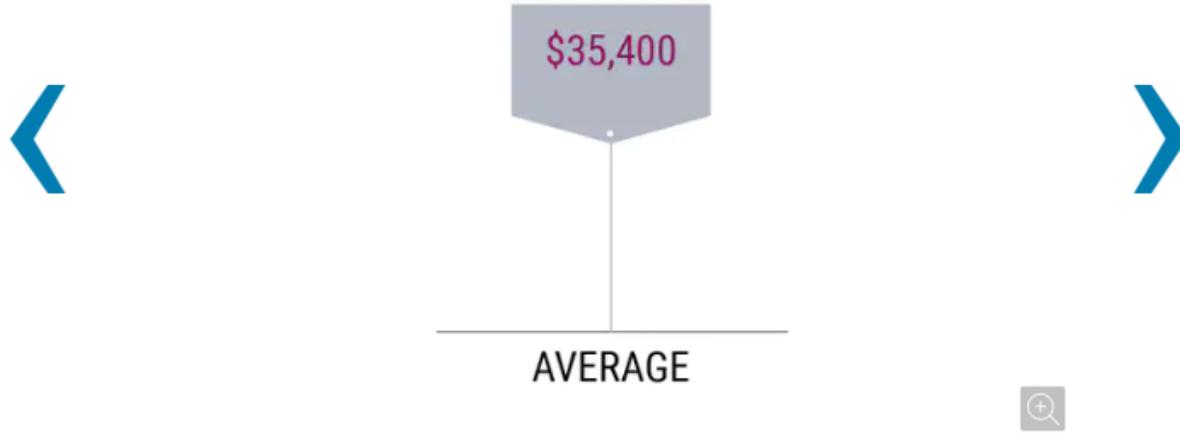
Physicians earned an average of \$25,300 from their side gig in the past 12 months. Still, even side gig income suffered last year due to COVID. Before COVID, physicians typically earned an average of \$28,600 annually from their side gig. Men (\$31,000) earned more than women (\$23,300).

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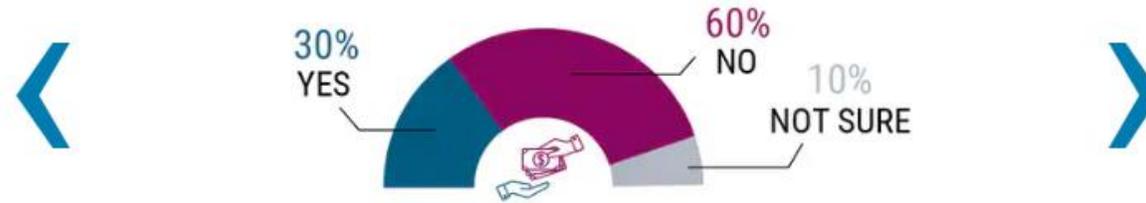
What's the Most You Expect to Earn Annually From Your Side Gig?



Most physicians with side gigs expect their earnings to grow, although not to the point of replacing their primary income. Doctors hope to earn an average of \$35,400 annually from their side gig in the near term. Men (\$37,300) expect to earn more than women (\$32,000).

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Do You Get Tax Benefits Related to Your Side Gig?



The most important question from a tax perspective is whether the activity is a "trade or business" or merely a "hobby." In both cases, any income generated would be taxable, although a trade or business generally allows for more tax deductions.

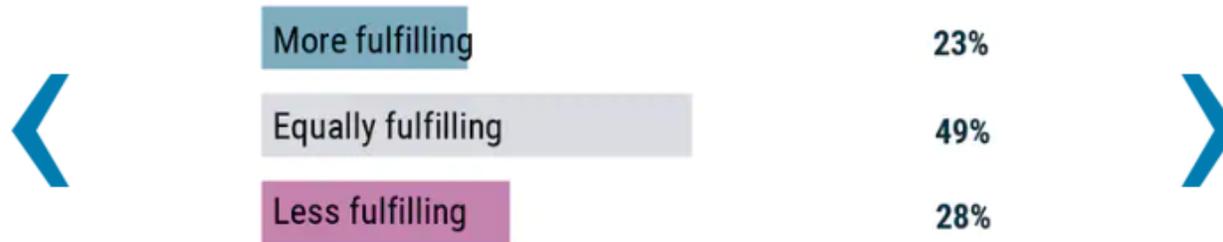
A trade or business is an activity in which you enter into and carry on with a good-faith intention to earn a profit. You must also engage in the activity on a regular and continuous basis. If the activity doesn't rise to the level of a trade or business, then it may be considered a hobby.

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Is Your Side Gig as Fulfilling as Your Primary Job?



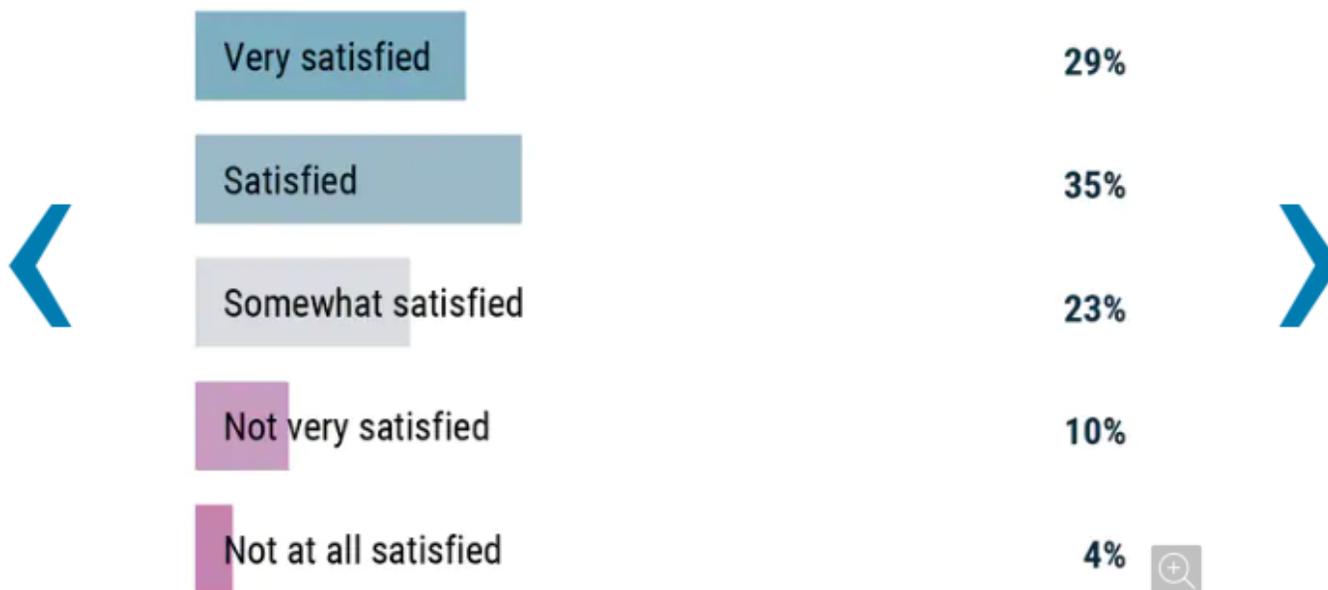
For the large majority, their side gig is as, if not more, fulfilling than their primary job. "In a healthcare landscape that's increasingly challenging, the side gig offers physicians an opportunity to do something on their own terms as well as use a different part of their brains," says Mehta. "This leads to new skillsets, networks, and mental breaks from the stress of their day jobs, all of which can be tremendously fulfilling and ultimately counter burnout."

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How Satisfied Are You With Your Primary Job?



Physicians rarely seek side gigs because they dislike their primary jobs; rather, they are typically involved with a side gig to earn money. Almost two thirds of respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with their primary job.

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Disadvantages of Your Side Gig

"Having to deal with property problems such as broken furnaces, plumbing problems, etc., is incredibly aggravating."

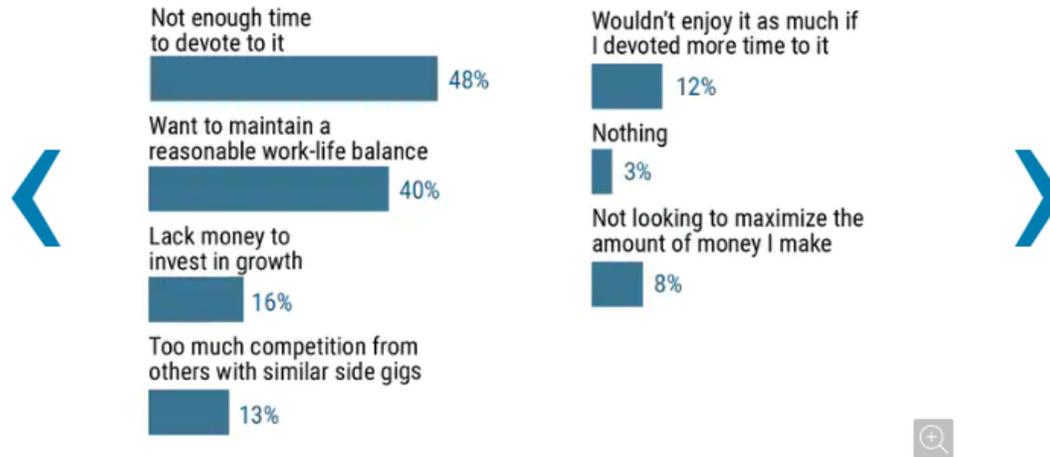
"There's a lot of paperwork involved with my side job – even more than with my primary job – and that's a negative."

"Work is intermittent. When it becomes available, I have to make it work within my schedule."



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What Keeps You From Being More Successful at Your Side Gig?



"If your goal is to develop a successful healthcare consulting firm, for example, you'd need a significant amount of time and investment," says Beran. "If you simply want to dabble for extra income, you could devote a few hours per week. It may take years of dabbling to find a good blend of side gigs that meet several ends. Physicians have a successful position and a high income; the barriers, risks, and goals are very different from someone who is just starting out or forming a new start up."

Results are from the 61% of respondents who said they were less successful with their side gig than they could be. Respondents could choose more than one answer.

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Did You Have to Learn New Skills to Pursue Your Side Gig?



Some physicians say they learned their skills "on the job." One said, "You can learn almost anything online these days." Some physicians networked to find a mentor working in the area they've chosen as their side gig.

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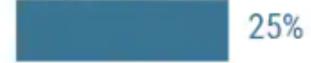
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Did You Consult With Business Coaches or Experts?

Yes, consulted in person or online



Yes, read books



No



Over half of physicians have read or consulted with business/financial coaches or experts to learn some of the business strategy, tactics, or skills they need to make their side gig successful.

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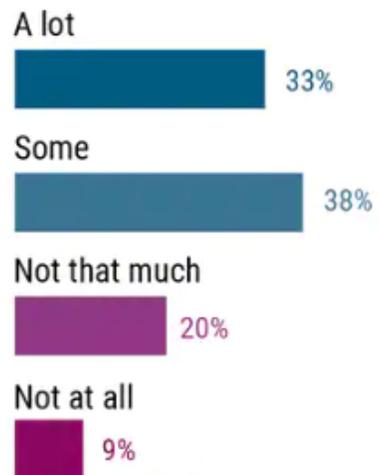
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Would You Benefit From Learning Business Skills?



About 7 in 10 respondents who are engaged in a side gig believe that they would/did benefit some or a lot by gaining business skills and financial knowledge for running a business.

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Demographics

Family Medicine	20%	Cardiology	1%
Internal Medicine	12%	Gastroenterology	1%
Emergency Medicine	8%	Dermatology	1%
Pediatrics	6%	Oncology	1%
Anesthesiology	5%	Critical Care	1%
Psychiatry	5%	Plastic Surgery	1%
Ob/Gyn	4%	Nephrology	1%
Radiology	3%	Public Health & Preventive Medicine	1%
Orthopedic Surgery	3%	Infectious Diseases	1%
Surgery, General	3%	Endocrinology	1%
Ophthalmology	2%	Orthopedics	1%
Neurology	2%	Allergy & Immunology	1%
Pathology	2%	Pulmonary Medicine	1%
Surgery, Specialized	2%	Neurologic Surgery	1%
Otolaryngology	2%	Urology	<1%
Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation	2%	Rheumatology	<1%
		Other	3%



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Methodology

Survey Method

Medscape members were invited to participate in an online survey.

Screening Requirements

Respondents were required to be US physicians practicing full-time, part-time, or not currently practicing but not retired; and/or considering leaving their primary role as a physician to pursue a nonclinical career.

Sample Size

2533 US physicians completed the survey.
1804 physicians engage in a side gig.
Data were weighted to AMA membership by age, gender, geography, and specialty.

Data Collection Period

March 5 to May 14, 2021

Sampling Error

The margin of error for the survey was +/- 1.95% at a 95% confidence level using a point estimate of 50%.
For those engaging in a side gig, the margin of error was +/- 2.31%.

Honoraria

Respondents who completed the survey were entered into a sweepstakes for a chance to win a \$100 Amazon gift card.



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Dr. Dr. G · JULY 20, 2021

Side job? In one day I make more trading options for two hours than I made in a week as a 60 hr a-week general surgeon treating Medicare and Medi-Cal patients. At least in my current life I feel that I'm working for patients, my family, and myself and not the government or any of the myriad pseudo-not for profit HMOs. I still treat patients who appreciate that I devote more than six minutes to listen to them and even make appropriate diagnoses. The number of patients in my practice is less than it was previously, and I no longer depend on the meager payments from third parties to make a living.

REPLY 1 REPLY 4



Dr. James Rasmussen · AUGUST 28, 2021

Reply to **Dr. Dr. G**

I'm doing the same. May leave all together. Corporate medicine is awful.

REPLY 0



Add your reply



Dr. MUHAMMAD CHOUDRY · JULY 19, 2021

I'm surprised the numbers aren't even higher. As compensations go down and mid levels take over jobs I expect the trend to multiply.

REPLY 1



Dr. ariel warden-jarrett · JULY 15, 2021

I find it most interesting that the demographics demonstrate that primary care physicians are more likely to have side gigs. I was already a classically trained musician (piano, organ, voice) prior to medical school. It keeps me "sane." However, if primary care physicians were compensated fairly, I wonder if the demographic curve would shift.

REPLY 3 REPLIES 1



Dr. Edward Adickes · JULY 28, 2021

Reply to **Dr. ariel warden-jarrett**

Dr. ariel warden-jarrett Thank you! Each of the comments of others are their own, and personal opinion and "gig" or not. I find your comments appealing. I was retired and now back to work full time for the "passion" of medicine, not the money. I always had and still have side activities. NOT for money, but for the emotional, intellectual and physical parts of me. I believe they have and will keep me sane. In this time of so many discussing burnout, I choose non stressful activities of music and car restoration. Age and supplemental income may drive some; my activities keep me sane as you describe. I have not felt burnout, in fact, coming out of a short retirement (see related articles) has given me very positive feelings.

REPLY  0



Dr. david bessman · JULY 5, 2022

Reply to **Dr. ariel warden-jarrett**

Superficially yes, primary care physicians are more likely to have side gigs. But, the raw numbers as shown need adjustment to their % of practicing MDs. Primary internists, FPs and pediatricians are far more numerous than subspecialty MDs. The question then is, are subspecialists more likely PER CAPITA to have a side gig. If not, the argument re compensation loses force.

REPLY  0



Add your reply



Dr. Jack Diamond · JULY 14, 2021

Having a side gig and hobby is very important and probably more common than people think. My wife and I own and run a high-end short-term rental and I still take gigs as a keyboardist and vocalist, something I started way before I entered the medical field.

REPLY 2 REPLIES  0



Dr. Gabriel Komjathy · JULY 2, 2022

Reply to Dr. Jack Diamond

Yes,music is a great hobby.

I am retired but am able to generate up to \$1500 a year performing music as well as yourself.

During my early years of retirement I pondered the idea of getting into the mode insurance evaluation business.

It could have been quite lucrative but I could not fathom the idea of being a slave to the insurance company's wishes.

REPLY  0



Dr. Jake Jacoby · JULY 3, 2022

Reply to Dr. Jack Diamond

I am truly disappointed that I did not see taking a physician position with the National Disaster Medical System, on a DMAT for clinicians, or a DMORT for forensic or other pathologists, or an NVRT for veterinarians, more commonly reported. As the team CDR of one of the approximately 50 DMATs in the system, we struggle to come up with a roster whenever we are on call. and many teams are not able to roster even one physician. On a deployment, up to 14 days for domestic disasters, and up to 21 days for the rare foreign disaster deployments, or taking mandatory training as a Federal employee, you are paid a salary, travel and lodging are covered, and you receive a per diem for meals and expenses. The medical care you provide for disasters and mass gatherings is rewarding and supports the medical needs of a population of patients that are so much more grateful than the day to day patients usually seen.I am happy to entertain emails of inquiry if anyone is interested in becoming a DMAT member /employee of the US Dept of Health and Human Services. Check out their website at

<https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/responders/ndms/Pages/join-ndms.aspx> .

REPLY  1



Our Code of Ethical Business Conduct and Our Culture of Ethics and Compliance

A Message from Tim Pehrson

INTEGRIS Health’s Mission is “Partnering with people to live healthier lives,” and our Vision is to be “The Most Trusted Partner for Health.” To be trusted requires us to continuously improve outcomes for our patients in all aspects of our Pillars of Trust—Safety, Quality, Experience, Access, Affordability and Engaged Caregivers. Living our iCare Values also builds trust and is the foundation for the way we do our work. To be trusted we must be ethical and honest in all our business dealings, and compliant with all applicable laws of the land. Collectively, these create a strong culture of trust.

We have created a Code of Ethical Business Conduct to help each of us do the right thing, in the right way, and to strengthen our culture of trust. This guide applies to all of us and is intended to outline the standards of behavior and working relationships we are expected to uphold on a daily basis. It is not a substitute for good judgment, nor does it cover every situation.

It is our commitment to our patients, communities, each other and the organization to conduct our business with integrity and excellence. Please spend time to understand our Code of Ethical Business Conduct (“Code”). Practicing its principles is the right thing to do for our patients and creates the trust we aspire to in our Mission and Vision.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our patients and for your commitment to upholding INTEGRIS Health standards in our Code.

Warmly,

Timothy Pehrson
President and CEO

Our Mission, Vision and Values

MISSION

Partnering with people to live healthier lives.

VISION

The Most Trusted Partner for Health

VALUES

iCare

Integrity. We are honest and consistently adhere to the highest standards of ethical and professional behavior.

Compassion. We are kind and suspend judgment to appreciate others’ perspectives and situations.

Accountability. We take ownership for our actions and outcomes.

Respect. We embrace diversity and inclusion, and value others.

Excellence. We seek to continuously improve, leading to exceptional outcomes.



Who Must Follow the Code?

All caregivers who work at INTEGRIS Health must follow our Code as well as related policies and procedures; this includes the Governing Board of INTEGRIS Health and all affiliate Boards, all caregivers, medical staff members, contractors, consultants, agents, students, volunteers and vendors.

Our Code of Ethical Business Conduct

We are true to our mission in pursuit of our vision. We skillfully care for our patients and provide high-quality care in every interaction in accordance with our iCare values.

We sustain a safe and inclusive working environment where everyone's contribution is valued and respected. All our caregivers and visitors come to a healthy and safe workplace where everyone can contribute and fully utilize their talents.

We ensure patients understand their rights. When we listen to our patients, protect their rights and preserve their dignity, we honor the trust they have placed in us. We promote patient safety and autonomy in care decisions and treatment choices.

We only access, use or disclose patient information for appropriate business or treatment reasons. We ensure our patients right to access and use their health information, and we do not interfere with the appropriate use or sharing of health information with providers, family or other appropriate recipients. We access, use and/or disclose a patient's medical information only when we have a legitimate business reason for doing so, receive proper authorizations, or as required by law and we follow our record retention policies and procedures.

We document, code and bill appropriately, and do our part to prevent and detect fraud, waste and abuse. Our documentation of business and patient records is clear, complete and accurate. We do not falsify or alter any document, such as business, employment or medical records. We also code and submit claims information that is accurate and in compliance with applicable federal health care program and contractual requirements. We report and return any identified overpayments.

We are fair and honest in our dealings with each other, our business partners and vendors. In these business relationships, everyone has a right to be treated lawfully and in an ethical manner.

We follow our policies to ensure INTEGRIS Health's assets are used for appropriate business purposes. We protect strategic and business operations information from disclosure to others who do not need to know our confidential information, as it may cause harm to the organization.

We are committed to the highest standards of ethics and compliance in everything we do. We know the rules that apply to our individual jobs and comply with all regulatory standards that apply to our business. Patients place their trust in us and we honor that trust with living our iCare values.

We identify and report conflicts of interest, avoid them when we can and manage the unavoidable ones. We always select business partners and vendors on the basis of objective criteria and disclose any potential and actual conflict of interest in a timely manner, both on an annual basis and as they might arise. We follow our policies and principles of good business ethics pertaining to gifts, entertainment and business courtesies.

We are honest and ethical in our interactions with physicians and other referral sources. Physicians and other health care providers are often able to refer patients to our facilities. Federal and state laws have specific requirements that we follow to ensure referrals are proper, based on the needs of the patient and not in return for gifts or special favors. We prohibit paying for referrals or accepting anything of value in exchange for the referrals of patients.

We are responsible for speaking up whenever we believe our values, policies or the law are being violated or have questions about doing the right thing. If I see or suspect a situation that may be a violation of our values, this Code, our policies, or the law, I will speak up. I know that an issue cannot be addressed if it is not raised.

Our Responsibilities

All of us have a role to play in protecting INTEGRIS Health's reputation; doing our part means that we have the following responsibilities:

- Be familiar with and follow the information contained in this Code, as well as the INTEGRIS Health Code Guidance, policies, procedures, laws and regulations that apply to you and your job.
- Ask questions and report concerns.
- Always act in a professional, honest and ethical manner.
- Licensed professionals employed by INTEGRIS Health are required to abide by the Professional Ethical Standards of the Professional Organizations which license them.
- Work as a team and treat others respectfully.
- Proactively seek to resolve problems.
- Cooperate and be truthful when responding to an investigation, inspection or audit.
- Certify that you have read, understood and follow this Code.

Leaders Have Additional Responsibilities:

- Set an example for others to follow.
- Ensure caregivers understand the policies, procedures, laws and regulations that apply to their work.
- Be approachable. Maintain a setting where others feel comfortable asking questions or raising concerns.
- Be respectful and provide appropriate and timely responses to questions or concerns.
- Assess developing circumstances quickly and accurately, keeping the Compliance Department informed of potential compliance concerns.
- Be fair and consistent when enforcing our standards and when holding caregivers accountable.
- Never ask or pressure anyone to do something you would feel uncomfortable or are prohibited from doing yourself.
- If you supervise third parties, ensure they understand their obligations to this Code and our expectations.

Making Good Decisions

Making good decisions is not always easy. At times you will feel under pressure or may be unsure of what to do. When faced with a difficult decision, ask yourself:



Yes

If you answered "yes" to all of these questions, then the decision to move forward is probably OK.

Not Sure

Ask your supervisor or another internal resource for guidance.

No

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, stop and seek help. The action could have serious consequences.

How Do I Report A Concern?

- Discuss the issue with someone in your Chain of Command.
- Talk to Human Resources, Legal Services or the Compliance Department.
- Email Compliance at compliance@integrisok.com or report using the online form by using this QR code.
- Call the Integrity Line at 888-243-9597.



Our Integrity Line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All contacts are confidential, to the limit allowed by law. If you prefer, you can make an anonymous report. It is important to provide as much information as possible (e.g., who, what, when, where,) which will help us review the report and investigate any potential Code violation or misconduct.

We support those who raise concerns and never tolerate retaliation. You can be comfortable sharing concerns and asking questions without worrying about retaliation. We take retaliation claims seriously; they will be investigated, and if substantiated, retaliators will be disciplined up to and including termination of employment.