

Salary Surveys Report Declines in Pulmonologist, Allergist and Nurse Incomes

The 2016 Medscape Physician Compensation Report relates that orthopedic surgeons and cardiologists earn on average the most of those physicians surveyed (\$443,000 and \$410,000 annually) (1). Pulmonologists and critical care physicians fell in the middle of the spectrum of physician incomes (\$281,000 and \$306,000 respectively). Allergists were at the lower end (\$205,000). Physicians in each category earned more or the same in 2016 than in 2015 except pulmonologists and allergists which were down compared to 2015 incomes of \$296,000 (\$15,000 decline) and \$243,000 (\$38,000 decline). As in years past, the survey is nonscientific. Physicians were asked to provide their annual compensation for patient care including salary, bonus, and profit sharing if employed, earnings after taxes, and deductible business expenses (but before income tax) if in private practice.

The reason for the decrease is unclear but self-employed physicians (i.e., private practice) earned substantially more than employed physicians (\$64,000 more for men, \$44,000 more for women) (1). If more pulmonary physicians are becoming employed, this could be one reason for the decline in income. In 2016, the Medscape survey reported 59% of men and 72% of women were employed (1).

Nurses also made less on average in 2016. Incomes decreased from \$79,000 annually for RNs in 2015 to \$78,000 in 2016 (2). LPNs had a more substantial decrease from \$46,000 to \$43,000. RN's not employed full time made the same hourly wage as those employed full time (\$37/hour) and LPNs not employed full time actually made more per hour than those employed full time (\$23 compared to \$21/hour). The two most common reasons that nurses gave for decreased income was switching jobs or working less overtime.

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References

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2. Yox SB, Stokowski LA, McBride M, Berry E. Medscape RN/LPN Salary Report 2016. Medscape. November 2, 2016. Available at: http://www.medscape.com/features/slideshow/nurse-salary-report-2016?src=WNL_specrep_nursesalary_170209_MSCPEDIT_usmds&uac=9273DT&implID=1286926&faf=1#page=1 (accessed 2/9/17).