



## Availability of Primary Care Physicians in North Dakota

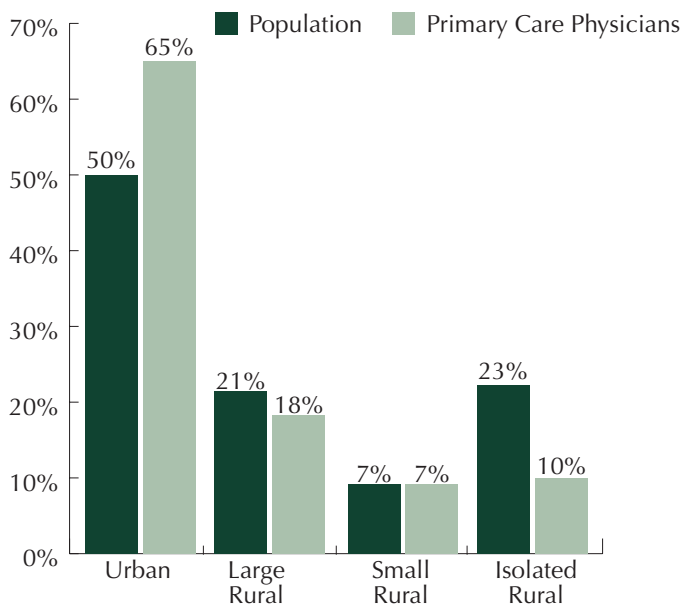
*This fact sheet is Number 21 in a series of analyses regarding physicians in North Dakota. It was developed using 2013 data from the American Medical Association physician master file. This document is an updated version of Fact Sheet Number 10 in this series.*

Primary care physicians are defined as those practicing in family/general practice (FP/GP), general internal medicine (GIM), and general pediatrics (Gen Ped).

In 2013, there were 582 active direct patient primary care physicians in North Dakota. Of those, 381 (65%) practiced in urban areas, 104 (18%) in large rural areas, 41 (7%) in small rural areas, and 56 (10%) in isolated rural areas.

In general, urban areas are defined as those with a population greater than 50,000. Larger rural areas have a population between 10,000 and 49,999; small rural area between 2,500 and 9,999; and isolated rural area have populations less than 2,500.

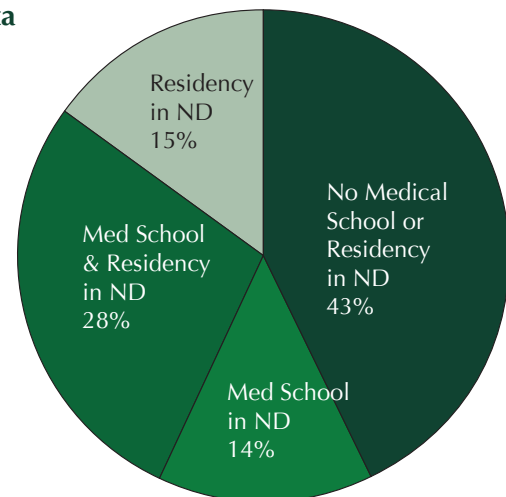
**Figure 1. Comparison of Percentage of Primary Care Physicians Associated by Rural/Urban Status of North Dakota Population**



- The greatest primary care disparity is in isolated rural areas, which have 23% of the population but only 10% of the primary care physicians.

- More than two-thirds (65%) of North Dakota's primary care physicians practice in urban areas where half (50%) of the population resides.
- Urban areas have the highest rate of primary care physicians to population ratio (1.1 per 1,000). The ratio in large rural is 0.7, small rural is 0.9, and isolated rural is 0.4 per 1,000.

**Figure 2. Location of Medical School and Residency for Primary Care Physicians Currently Practicing in North Dakota**



- Over half (57%) of North Dakotan practicing primary care physicians either attended medical school or received residency training (or both) in North Dakota. The comparable percentage for North Dakota's non-primary care physicians is 28% (289).
- Of the primary care physicians practicing in North Dakota, 42% went to medical school in North Dakota and 43% did their residency in North Dakota.
- Nearly one-third (28%) of the primary care physicians practicing in North Dakota obtained both their medical school and residency training in North Dakota.

**Table 1. Age and Sex of Primary Care Physicians in North Dakota by Rural/Urban Status**

	All		Female		Male		Age
	N	%	N	%	N	%	Mean
Urban	381	35%	135	35%	246	65%	48.5
Large Rural	104	33%	34	33%	70	67%	50.4
Small Rural	41	37%	15	37%	26	63%	51.9
Isolated Rural	56	32%	18	32%	38	68%	52.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>49.4</b>

- Primary care physicians in large and isolated rural areas are slightly more likely to be male (67% and 68%).
- Primary care physicians in small and isolated rural areas are older than their urban counterparts.

**Table 2. Specialty of Primary Care Physician by Rural/Urban Status**

	FP/GP		GIM		Gen Ped	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Urban	197	52%	121	32%	63	17%
Large Rural	67	64%	22	21%	15	14%
Small Rural	31	76%	9	22%	1	2%
Isolated Rural	39	70%	13	23%	4	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>14%</b>

- Over half of the primary care physicians are in family medicine or general practice (57%).
- 76% of the primary care physicians in small rural and 70% in isolated rural areas practice in family medicine/general practice.
- Nearly one-third of the urban primary care physicians are in general internal medicine.
- The percentage of general pediatric primary care physicians is twice as high in urban and large rural areas as in small/isolated rural areas.

## Conclusions

The urban areas of North Dakota have 65% of the primary care physicians—and a far greater proportion of the state’s non-primary care physicians—while only having 50% of the total population in North Dakota. The population of North Dakota’s small and isolated rural areas have disproportionately fewer primary care physicians per person than their urban counterparts. Statewide, only about one third of the primary care providers are female.

## Data

*The physician data is from the 2013 American Medical Association physician master file.*

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