



## Joy of Medicine:

# Physician Wellness and Workforce

The Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society (SSVMS) advocates for physician wellbeing at the individual and organizational level through the Joy of Medicine program. In 2018, 2020, and 2022, SSVMS conducted statewide physician well-being surveys to devise and recommend physician well-being strategies for Sacramento area medical groups and physician organizations to implement.

A fourth well-being survey was conducted from March 25, 2025 through April 6, 2025 and sent via email to physicians that practice medicine in the Sacramento region. These findings are benchmarked against the prior survey results.

The objectives of the 2025 survey were:

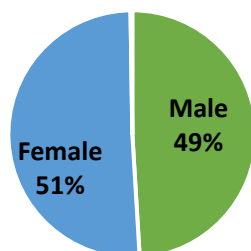
1. To assess the degree of burnout physicians in the Sacramento region are experiencing compared to burnout levels measured in 2018, 2020, and 2022.
2. To measure the impact of physician wellness initiatives implemented by medical groups, health systems, physician practices, and the Medical Society subsequent to recommendations made by SSVMS in 2018, 2020, and 2022.
3. To identify professional satisfaction successes and areas of improvement that medical groups, physician organizations, and health systems can implement to improve physician wellness.

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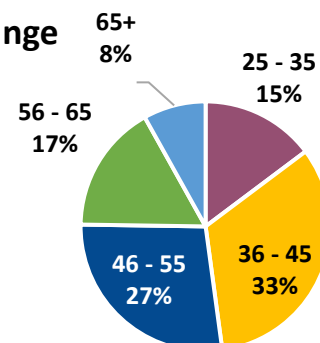
## Section 1: Demographics

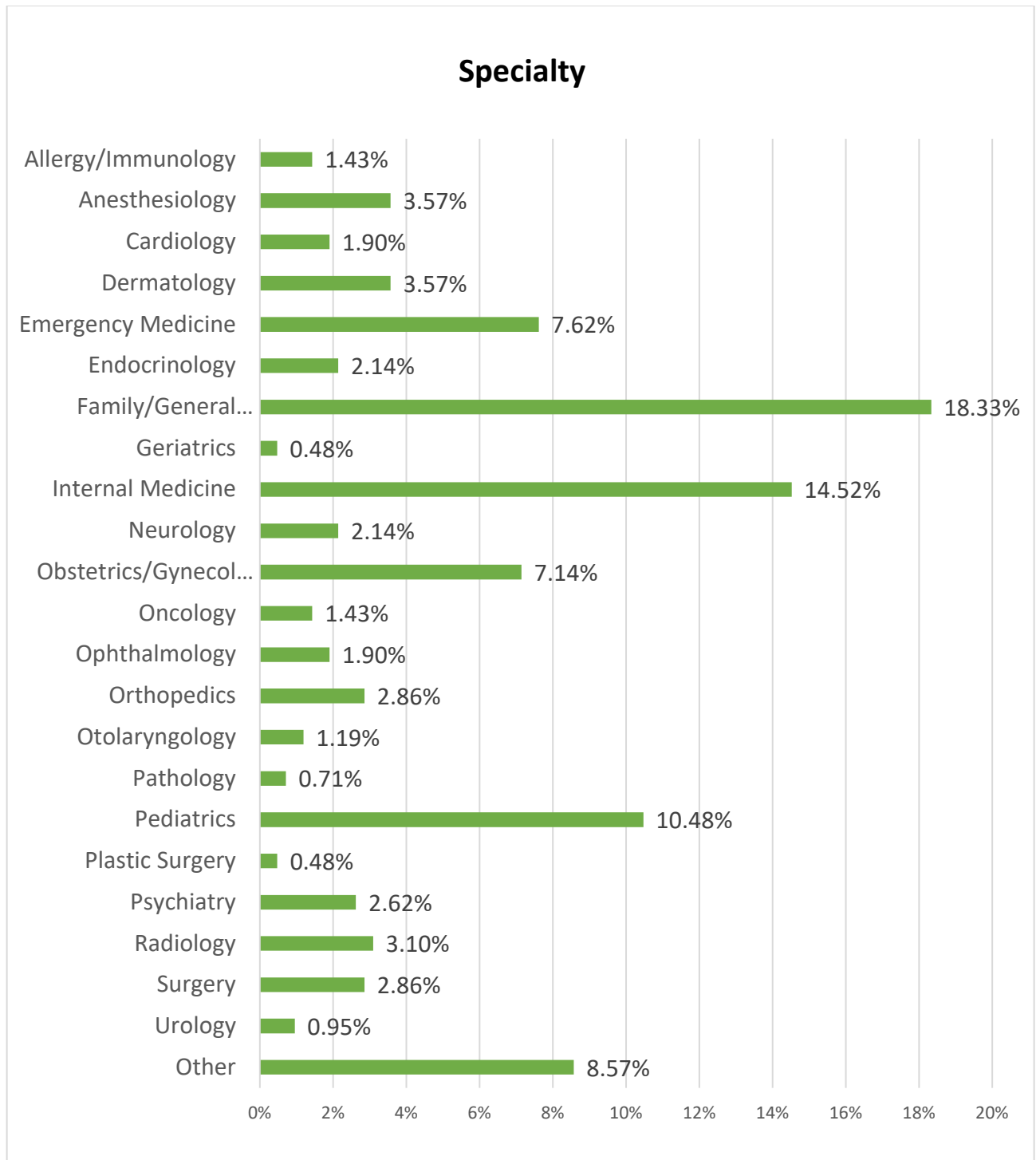
The survey was deployed to 4,606 practicing physicians in Sacramento, El Dorado, and Yolo Counties (CA) over a 2-week period in 2025. A sample of 420 (9.1%) physicians anonymously completed the survey, and participants were incentivized with a \$10 gift card. The demographic sample of participants accurately reflects the physician population in the Sacramento region.

### Gender

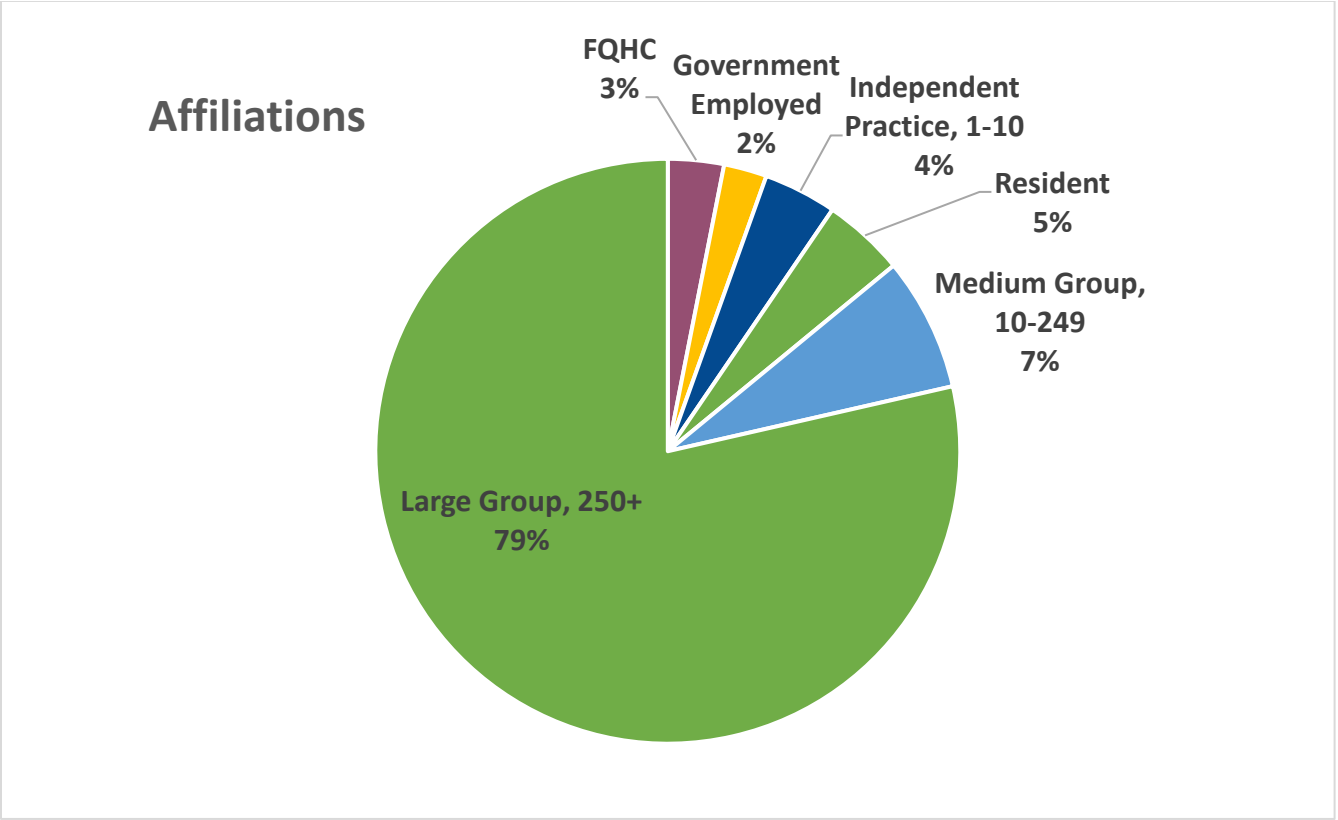


### Age range



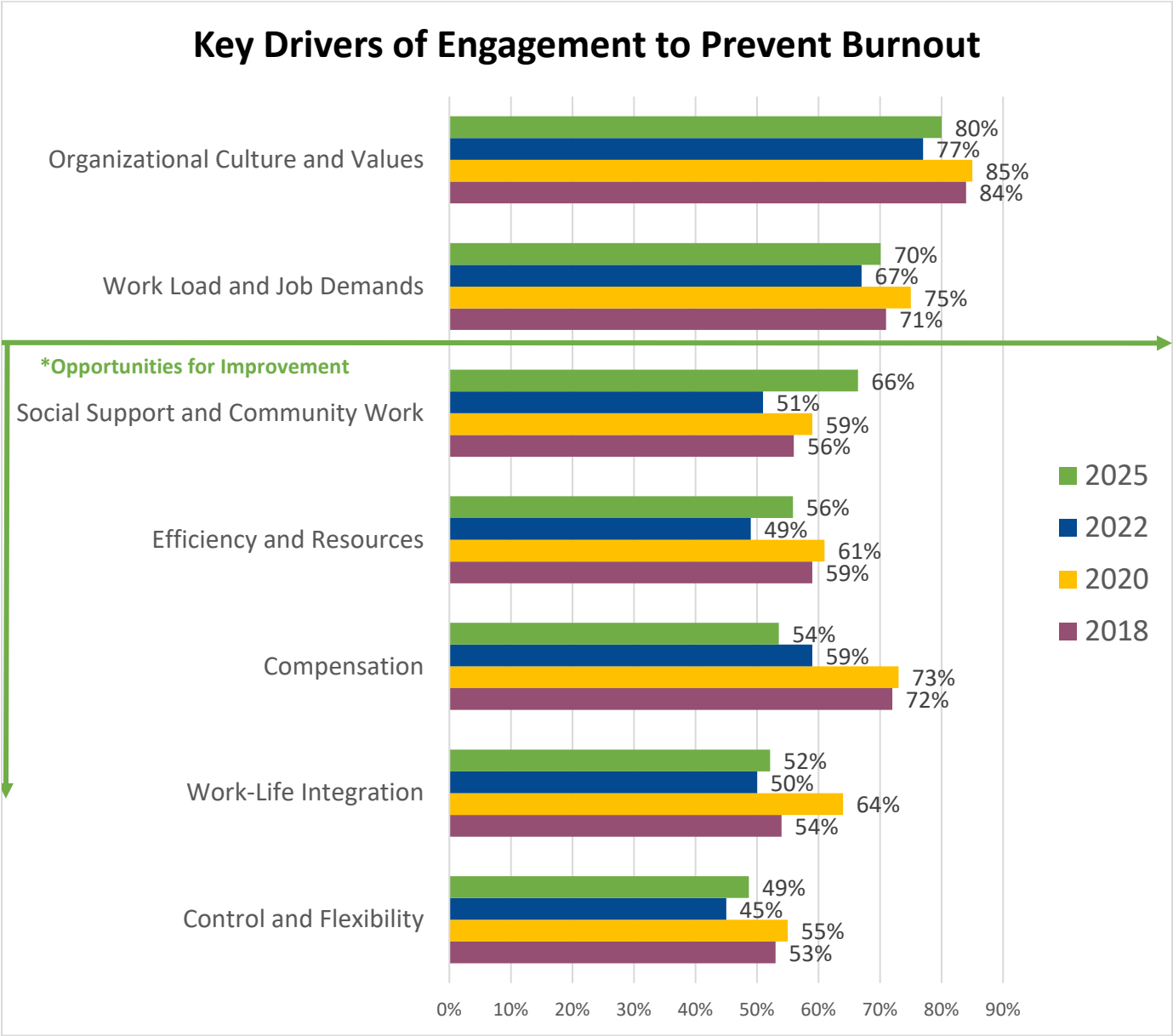


Race/Ethnicity	
Asian	37.62%
White	37.62%
Black or African American	7.14%
Prefer not to say	5.48%
Two or more	3.81%
Hispanic or Latino	3.33%
Middle Eastern or North African	3.10%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.71%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.71%
Other	0.48%



## Section 2: Key Drivers of Engagement to Prevent Burnout

Engaged physicians that find joy and fulfillment in their work are the backbone of a successful organization. Based on Shanafelt’s facets of physician burnout and engagement categories (organizational culture and values, social support and community work, work-life integration, control and flexibility, workload and job demands, efficiency and resources, and meaning in work) survey participants answered 13, 6-point Likert scale questions that reflected attitudes on organizational behavior. This section of the survey was used by SSVMS in 2018, 2020, and 2022 to note professional satisfaction and identify areas for improvement for organizations to consider. Categories below a 70% approval rating are noted as opportunities for improvement.



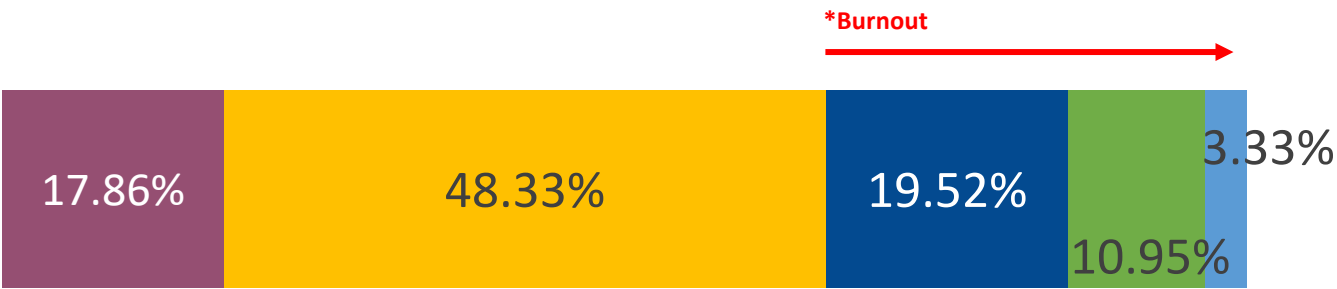
### Section 3: Burnout Assessment

The survey also included a question to assess the levels of burnout experienced by physicians in the Sacramento region by including the Mini-Z, a single non-proprietary burnout measure that has been validated to fully assess levels of burnout in multiple studies.

**Mini-Z: Overall, based on your definition of burnout, how would you rate your level of burnout in the past two weeks?**

**Burnout Levels**

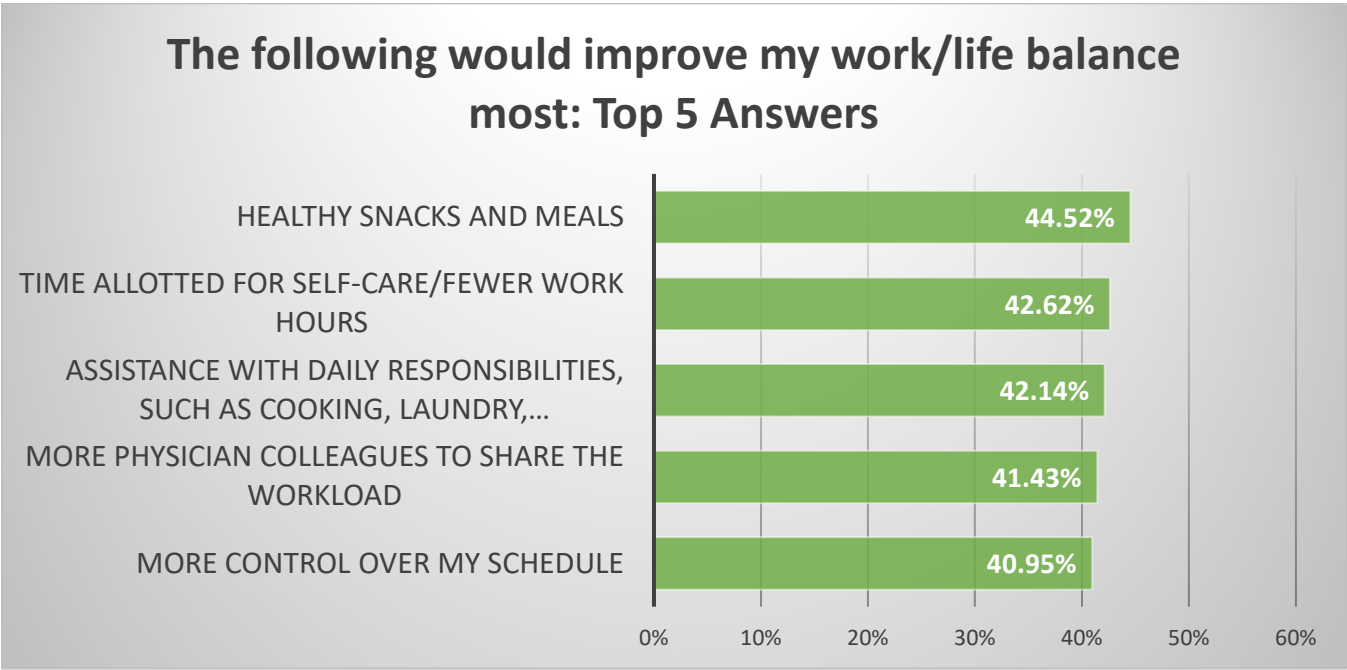
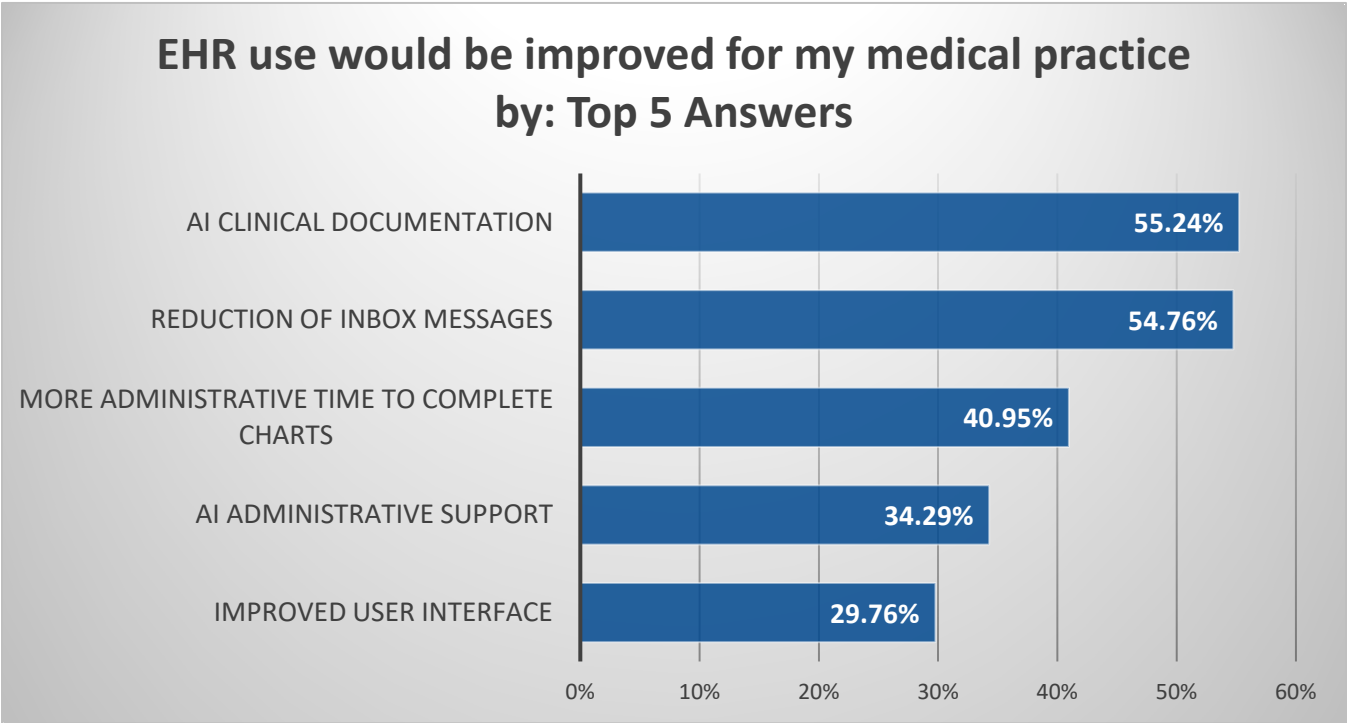
- 2025 - 34%
- 2022 - 45%
- 2020 - 33%
- 2018 - 35%



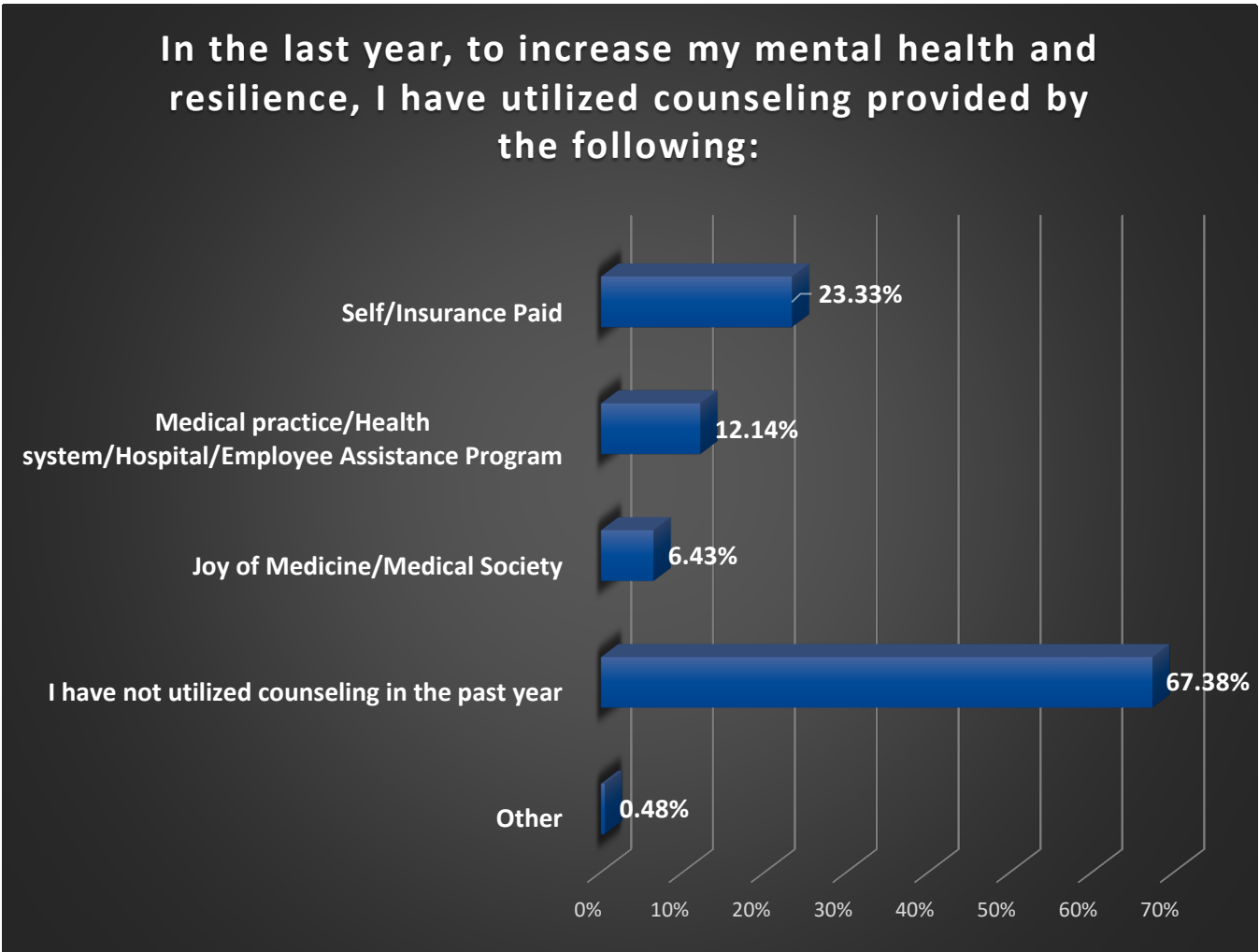
- I enjoy my work, I have no symptoms of burnout.
- Occasionally I am under stress and I don't always have as much energy as I once did, but I don't feel burned out.
- I am definitely burning out and have one or more symptoms of burnout, such as physical and emotional exhaustion.
- The symptoms of burnout that I am experiencing won't go away. I think about frustration at work a lot.
- I feel completely burned out and often wonder if I can go on. I am at a point where I may need some changes or may need to seek some sort of help.

## Section 4: Organizational Improvement Suggestions

The next section of the survey gave physicians an opportunity choose their top five ways to effectively address severe pain points that correlate directly with physician burnout: work-life integration and the electronic health record (EHR).



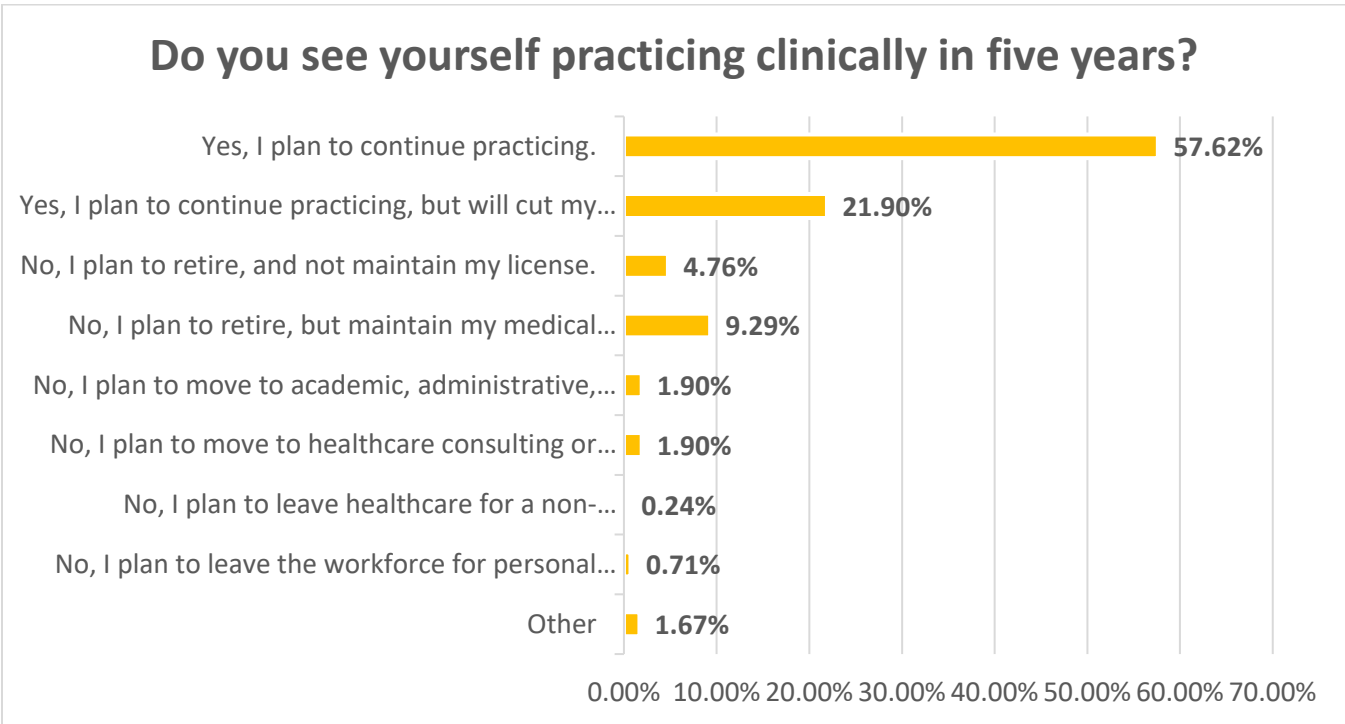
Section 5: Wellness Services Utilized in the Last Year



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## Section 6: Practice Intentions Over the Next Five Years

The final section asked physicians whether they see themselves continuing to practice medicine over the next five years.



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## Key Takeaways

- Burnout decreased to 34%; up from a high of 45% in 2022.
  - More in line with the 33% in 2020 and 35% in 2018.
  - National burnout in 2025 is 44%
- 67% did not access counseling in the past year, up from 34% in 2022.
  - Of those experiencing burnout, 63% did not access counseling in the past year, up from 44% in 2022.
- Only 58% plan to continue practicing at the current level of hours for the next five years.
  - 22% plan to reduce their hours.
  - 20% plan to retire or no longer see patients.
  - Of those experiencing burnout, 29% are age 55 or younger and plan to cut their hours.



## Recommendations

Based on the burnout rates compared to the national average (34% in Sacramento area vs. 44% nationally), the Greater Sacramento Area appears to be a good place to practice medicine. There does appear to be a looming tsunami of reduced hours on the horizon. SSVMS recommends that medical groups and practices:

- Recruit more physicians to share the workload.
- Implement artificial intelligence into the electronic health record to reduce the time burden.
- Provide healthy meals and snacks to physicians working long hours.
- Promote physician access to wellness resources including mental health services and peer engagement activities such as those offered through the SSVMS Joy of Medicine Program.

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