

## Healthcare access data

Government and medical studies project that patients will experience a critical shortage of physicians:

- **65 million people lack adequate access** to primary care physicians. They live in over 6,000 Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas, according to the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). It would take 16,585 practitioners to meet their need for primary care providers.<sup>i</sup>
- **50 medical studies** have projected critical shortages of physicians.<sup>ii</sup>
  - One study projects a **shortage of 90,000 to 200,000 physicians by 2020** and predicts that average wait times for medical specialties will increase dramatically.<sup>iii</sup>
  - “If physician supply and use patterns stay the same, the United States will experience a **shortage of 124,000 full-time physicians by 2025**,” concludes a report by the American Association of Medical Colleges.<sup>iv</sup>
- **45% of doctors would consider quitting** if Congress passes health care overhaul.<sup>v</sup>

Risking the loss of faith-based professionals by weakening conscience protections risks access for millions of patients:

- One in eight hospitals in the U.S. is affiliated with the Catholic Church; they employ more than 750,000 people and handle 16% of hospital admissions.<sup>vi</sup>
- Each year, one in six patients in the U.S. is cared for in a Catholic hospital.<sup>vii</sup>
- Polling<sup>viii</sup> bodes ill for access if faith-based healthcare professionals lose conscience protections:
  - 95% of faith-based physicians agreed, "I would rather stop practicing medicine altogether than be forced to violate my conscience."
  - 32% of faith-based healthcare professionals report having "been pressured to refer a patient for a procedure to which [they] had moral, ethical, or religious objections."
  - 20% of faith-based medical students say they are "not pursuing a career in Obstetrics or Gynecology" because of perceived discrimination and coercion in that field.

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<sup>i</sup> “Shortage Designation: HPSAs, MUAs & MUPs,” HRSA web site <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/>

<sup>ii</sup> “Recent Studies and Reports on Physician Shortages in the U.S.,” Association of American Medical Colleges, April 2009. <http://www.aamc.org/workforce/stateandspecialty/recentworkforcestudies.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> Merritt, J., J. Hawkins, et al. (2004). “Will the Last Physician In America Please Turn Off The Lights? A Look at America’s Looming Doctor Shortage.” Irving, TX, Practice Support Resources, Inc. For a summary of this study and book, see

<http://www.aameda.org/MemberServices/Exec/Bookreviews/spg05/Will the Last Physician in America.pdf>

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- <sup>iv</sup> “The Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand: Projections Through 2025,” AAMC report, October 2008. [https://services.aamc.org/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=Product.displayForm&prd\\_id=244](https://services.aamc.org/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=Product.displayForm&prd_id=244)
- <sup>v</sup> “45% Of Doctors Would Consider Quitting If Congress Passes Health Care Overhaul,” *Investor's Business Daily*, Posted 09/15/2009 07:09 PM ET. <http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=506199>
- <sup>vi</sup> “Health-Care Overhaul Creates Dilemma for Some Catholics,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 5, 2009.
- <sup>vii</sup> Catholic Health Care in the U.S., January 2009 report of the Catholic Health Association. <http://www.chausa.org/NR/rdonlyres/68B7C0E5-F9AA-4106-B182-7DF0FC30A1CA/0/FACTSHEET.pdf>
- <sup>viii</sup> On behalf of the Christian Medical Association, The polling companyTM, inc./ WomanTrend conducted an online survey of members of faith-based organizations, fielded March 31, 2009 to April 3, 2009. It was completed by 2,865 faith-based healthcare professionals. [http://www.freedom2care.org/docLib/200905011\\_Pollingsummaryhandout.pdf](http://www.freedom2care.org/docLib/200905011_Pollingsummaryhandout.pdf)