

Where Have All the Generalists Gone?



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With the days of the primary care-based blockbusters passing, is the generalized primary care physician also disappearing? The medical professional and pharma markets are both evolving in specialty areas in a search for profitability. This is evidenced by the number of niche products that are expected to be launched in the next couple of years. Likewise, there are a number of pressures causing a reduction in the number of generalists.

Remuneration

Have you tried to see a dermatologist recently? The ones that are not generating a cash-based service by injecting Botox® or other cosmetic procedures are falling behind government funded-based practices. As with many plastic surgeons, these physicians have found specializing in a current trend can increase incremental cash revenue.

Table 1

Top areas of full-time specialization for FP/FMs

GP specialist	Count
Emergency medicine	1,758
Hospitalist	203
Palliative care	177
Geriatrics	164
Psychotherapy	159
Worker's compensation	104

Variety

How many times a day would you want to see a runny nose? FPs are specializing at an increasing rate. Professional Targeted Marketing (PTM) follows every physician in Canada to determine the full-time activity of their practice. There are currently > 4,000 FPs that specialize full time and no longer have traditional primary care practices. See Table 1 for a listing of the top categories. There are another 300 FPs in administration or research who do not prescribe.

Reputation

Internal medicine (IM) has a very high degree of specialization. Of the 6,588 IMs in Canada, > 5,000 of them have gone on to specialize. Certainly, the growing amount of

knowledge in medicine requires specialization just to keep on the leading edge. And, of course, from this increase in expertise, the research grants and speaking engagements often follow.

In addition, there are a number of growing specializations that PTM is tracking such as Hospitalists, Native medicine, Emergency medicine and community medicine that affect patient flow and prescribing dynamics. PTM has 23 full time researchers following these changes in specialization and updating their mailing addresses—every day. Aside from the change in market dynamics, this information is critical to maintain an efficient communication platform to ensure that messages reach the most receptive audience or potential prescribers to maximize return on investment. **CPM**

Prism Healthcare Intelligence is a pharmaceutical market research company specializing in online surveys and qualitative interviews. For more information about this survey or other Prism capabilities, please contact pchalkley@prismresearch.ca or visit www.prismresearch.ca