

Senior Project

by

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Survey of Wisconsin Optometrists

Abstract

A total of 250 Wisconsin optometrists were randomly surveyed about their practices. 124 ODs replied. Basic statistical analysis was done on the data to find out information of office policies and services provided.

Introduction

This Survey was done to find out in what areas optometrists practice. How many hours they spend on their career and where they work. The survey results will better help future optometrists choose where and what they want to do with their optometry degree.

Method

A random selection of ODs from Wisconsin was chosen, a total of 250 doctors were mailed a single page survey. 23 questions were asked and a choice of answers to circle were given or the option of filling in their own answer was available. 124 doctor's replied, which came out to be 50%. A tally of each doctor response was recorded for each question. All the data for each question was calculated independently. A mean, median, mode, highest response, and lowest response was recorded for each percentage type question. The mode was only recorded if one number was the result. Each doctor was asked how many complete eye exams they gave on an average day. Then, the doctor was asked to determine what percentage of exams were spent in the categories provided. The choices were primary care, RGP's, specialty contacts, soft contacts, toric contacts, pediatrics, vision therapy, disease, co-management, foreign body removal, disabled population, nursing home visits, moderate low vision, and advanced low vision. If a doctor left a space blank it was assumed that zero time was spent in this area. Doctors were also asked to circle an answer for certain number of question about their practices. The questions were as follows. What type of building do you practice in - private, office space, or mall? Doctor's were asked if they rent, lease, or own their building space. What time do you open your office - 7, 8, 9, or other? What time do you close your office - 4, 5, 6, or other? Are you open on Saturdays? How many evenings are you open a week - none, one two, or other? How many hours do you work a week - 30, 40, 50? And how many staff members to you employ - <5, 5-7, 7-10, or other? A mean number was taken from the results and calculated into percentages.

Results

Results from the question, how many complete eye exams they gave in an average day and what percentage of exams were spent in the categories provided. Out of 115 doctors that replied to this question, the average number of patients seen per day is 15. With the lowest number being 3 and the highest response being 45. The median number was 14.

The average percentage of exams performed by doctors that were categorized as primary care exams was **58.5%**. With the median being 50%, and the mode was 50%. The lowest response was 20%, and the highest was 99%.

The average percentage of exams that involve RGP's was **3.7%**. The median was 2% and the mode was 5%. The lowest percentage was 1% and the highest was 25%.

The average percentage of exams that involve specialty contact lenses was **2.6%**. The median was 2% and the mode 2%. The lowest was 1% and the highest was 20%.

The average percentage of exams involving soft contact lenses was **2.11%**. The median was 20% and the mode was 20% also. The lowest was 12% and the highest was 80%.

The average percentage of exams spent fitting toric contact lenses was **7.9%**. The median was 5% and the mode was 5%. The lowest was 2% and highest was 30%.

The average amount of exams spent doing pediatrics was **7.3%**. The median was 5% and the mode was 5%. The lowest was 1% and the highest was 40%.

The average amount of exams involving vision therapy was **0.58%**. The median was 2% and the mode was 1%. The lowest was 1% and highest was 20%.

The average amount of exams involving treating and diagnosing disease was **13.1%**. The median was 10% and the mode was 5%. The lowest was 1% and the highest was 80%.

The average amount of exams spent participating in co-management of a patient was **4.2%**. The median was 5% and the mode was 2%. The lowest was 1% and the highest was 60%.

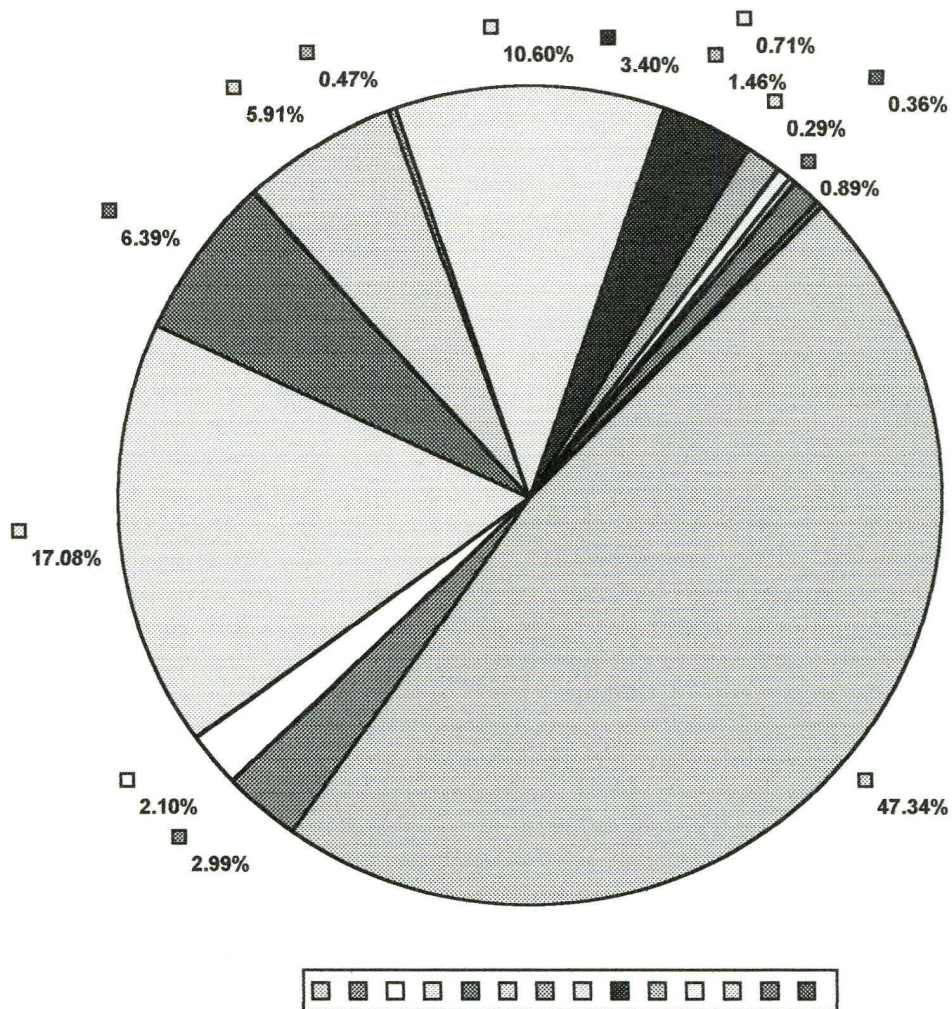
The amount of exams doctors spent with foreign body removal was **1.8%**. The median was 2% and the mode was 1%. The lowest was 1% and highest was 20%.

The amount of exam time spent working with the disabled population was **0.88%**. The median was 1% and the mode was 1%. The lowest was 1% and the lowest was 8%.

The average amount of exam time doctors spent going to do eye care at nursing homes was **0.36%**. The median was 2% and the lowest was 1% and highest was 5%.

The average amount of exams involving moderate low vision was **1.1%**. The median was 2% and the mode was 2%. The lowest was 1% and the highest was 5%.

The average amount of exams involving advanced low vision was **0.45%**. The median was 2% and the mode was 2%. The lowest was 1% and the highest was 20%.



Do you have your own office building, have office space in a building, or work at a space in a shopping mall setting? 49% have an office building. 27% have their practice in office space and 21% work in a shopping mall setting.

Do you rent, lease, or own your practice's office space? 19% of optometrists rent their practice's office space. 26% lease their practice's office space, and 38% own their office space.

Optometrists surveyed were asked what time they open their practices in the morning. 2% open at 7 AM, 56% open at 8 AM. And 35% open at 9 AM, with 6% saying their open at an other time not listed.

The optometrists surveyed were asked what time their office stays open until in the evenings. 0.8% close at 4 PM, 56% close at 5 PM, 22% close at 6 PM, and 22% close at a time not listed.

Optometrists were asked if their practices are open on Saturdays, 65% said yes, and 35% said no.

Doctors were asked how many, if any, evenings are their offices open per week. 17% of optometrists surveyed said their offices are not open during the week. 29% of offices are open one evening per week. 28% of optometrist's offices are open two evenings a week. And 18% of OD's surveyed said their offices are open more than two nights a week.

Optometrists were asked how many hours, on average, they work per week. 21% said they work 30 hours, 60% said they work 40 ours, and 19% said they work 50 hours per week.

Optometrists were asked how many staff members they employ at their office. 35% said they employ less than 5 people. 31% said they employ 5 to 7 people, and 17% said they employ 7 to 10 people. 14% said they employ more than 10 people at their office.

Discussion

The optometrists surveyed work an average of forty hours a week seeing about 15 patients a day. Doctors working in commercial offices worked on average 40 hours per week, while optometrists working in private practices varied from 30 to 50 hours a week. Doctors that worked in a group practice saw more patients than the average 15. Private practice and commercial optometrists both saw around the average number of patients. Over half of an optometrist's day is spent doing primary care exams, followed by contact lens and disease based exams. Primary care, contact lenses and disease based exams were done equally between the different modes of practice. Pediatrics, co-managing, vision therapy, low vision, and nursing homes were done in small amounts mostly by private practice optometrists. Half of optometrists surveyed own their own office and it is located in a private building. Most optometrists surveyed open at 8 AM, close at 5 PM, and over half are open on Saturdays. Optometrists that work in commercial and private practices were open on Saturdays, while group practice doctors were not. Half of OD's surveyed are open one or two nights a week, more if they work at a commercial office. Doctors in all modes of practices have an average of up to seven employees.

Conclusion

The doctor's of Wisconsin were very responsive to this survey. With a fifty percent return rate, my results were quite accurate. Optometrists are able to offer different areas of service that they have interest in. Most OD's seem to have busy practices and keep their office hours at a normal 40-hour week to keep patients happy and the optometrists has some free time. All in all, optometry is a great career option with many areas to work in.

Resources

- 1: Jordan M, Stelmack J, Hollyfield R, Richer S. J Am Optom Assoc 1991 Jan;62(1):32-6 Specialization in low vision rehabilitation and visual therapy.
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- 3: Arch Ophthalmol 1999 Feb;117(2):288
- 4: Arch Ophthalmol 1998 Jul;116(7):917-20 RAND, Health Sciences Program, Santa Monica, USA. lee00106@mc.duke.edu
- 5: Franzel GA, McAlister H. J Am Optom Assoc 1992 Nov;63(11):790-1 What role will residency education take in the profession by the year 2000?
- 6: Peters H. Optom Vis Sci 1990 Jul;67(7):494-6
- 7: Pace LL. J Am Optom Assoc 1988 Aug;59(8):592 Certification of optometric specialties.
- 8: Knapp WB. J Am Optom Assoc 1979 May;50(5):597-601 The age of specialization and its future influence on optometry.
- 9: Amos JF, Sullins WD Jr. J Am Optom Assoc 1999 Jul;70(7):415-6 Does optometry need fellowship education?
- 10: Haffner AN. J Am Optom Assoc 1995 Nov;66(11):666-7 Urgent challenges to optometric education.
- 11: Hopping RL. Optom Vis Sci 1994 Feb;71(2):94-7 Optometric education: planning for the future.
- 12: Grosvenor T. Optom Vis Sci 1993 Aug;70(8):622-7 Who will be tomorrow's optometric educators?
- 13: Haffner AN. Optom Vis Sci 1993 Aug;70(8):614-5 Graduate education in optometry--what do we need?
- 14: Gruning CF J Am Optom Assoc 1992 Dec;63(12):833-5 What are the pros and cons of requiring postgraduate residency training as an entry-level practice requirement?
- 15: Amos JF. J Am Optom Assoc 1992 Nov;63(11):787-9 What role will residency education take in the profession by the year 2000?

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Dear Dr.

Hello, my name is **Roxanne Doyle**. I am a senior at the **Michigan College of Optometry** in Big Rapids, Michigan. I am doing an anonymous survey for my senior thesis. The survey is questions about how doctors spend time in their office. I am interested in your practice being part of my survey. The results from this survey will be used for the sole purpose of this project, they will not be used again in any way. Please take a moment to fill out and return this survey in the stamped envelope by **November 1, 2002**. Thank you for your time.

How many patients a day do you give exams to? _____

What percentage of the week is spent caring for the each category of patients:

Primary Care _____	Disease _____
RGP Contact Lens _____	Co-Management _____
Specialty Contact Lens _____	Foreign Body Removal _____
Spherical Soft Contact Lens _____	Disabled _____
Toric Soft Contact Lens _____	Nursing Home _____
Pediatrics _____	Moderated Low Vision _____
Vision Therapy _____	Advanced Low Vision _____

Circle the answer that applies:

A) Office location:	Private Building	Office Space	Shopping Mall	
B) Office Building:	Rent	Lease	Own	
C) Opening Time:	7AM	8AM	9AM	Other _____
D) Closing Time:	4PM	5PM	6PM	Other _____
E) Open Saturdays:	YES	NO		
F) Evening open a week:	NONE	ONE	TWO	Other _____
G) Hours worked per week:	30	40	50	Other _____
H) Number of staff:	<5	5-7	7-10	Other _____