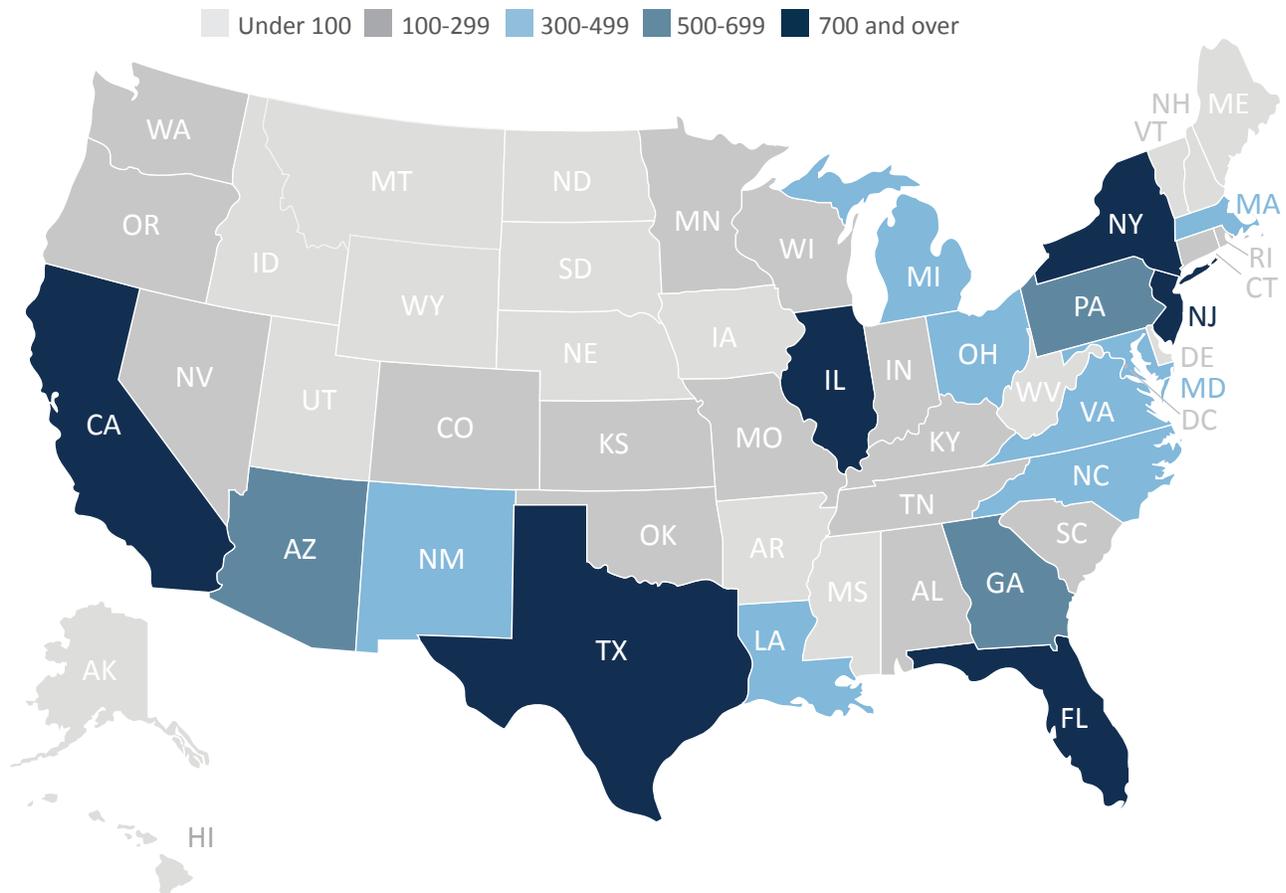


QUESTION 11: How many Latino health professionals are practicing in the United States?

ANSWER: In general, Hispanics¹ are severely underrepresented in the health professions, particularly among high-wage occupations such as physicians and surgeons.

- Although Hispanics make up more than one in seven (15.4%) Americans, they account for only about one in 17 (5.9%) health care professionals in the U.S.²
- Latinos compose the smallest share (5.8%) of all currently employed physicians and surgeons in the U.S., followed by non-Hispanic Blacks (6.2%) and Asians (16.6%).³ In 2007, just over 1,100 Hispanics graduated from medical school, representing 6.8% of total graduates.⁴ (See Figure 1 and Table 1 for a state-by-state breakdown of Hispanic physicians in the U.S.)
- Latinos are also underrepresented in several other critical health professions. They make up about one in 21 (4.7%) registered nurses, one in 14 (7.1%) licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, one in 11 (9.3%) physician assistants, and one in 17 (5.9%) pharmacists.⁵
- However, Latinos are better represented among professionals in health care service and support occupations (20.2%), such as nursing or home health assistance, which are vital to high-quality health care delivery.⁶

Figure 1: Distribution of Hispanic Nonfederal* Physicians by State, 2008



* Nonfederal physicians exclude those employed by the federal government. These data include retired physicians as well as those currently practicing.
Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, "Distribution of Nonfederal Physicians by Race, 2008," Statehealthfacts.org, <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=431&cat=8&sub=100&yr=63&typ=1&sort=684&o=a> (accessed April 2009).

Answers to the research questions that people are asking about Latinos' health and interactions with the health care system

Table 1: Number and Percentage of Hispanic Nonfederal* Physicians in the U.S. by State, 2008

State	Percentage of Population Hispanic	Percentage of Physician Workforce Hispanic	Number of Physicians Hispanic	Number of Physicians in Workforce
Alabama	2.9%	2.3%	265	11,510
Alaska	4.5%	1.5%	26	1,707
Arizona	30.4%	3.2%	552	17,248
Arkansas	4.8%	1.0%	68	6,684
California	3.7%	2.4%	2,817	115,740
Colorado	19.5%	1.5%	229	15,408
Connecticut	12.0%	1.5%	225	15,257
Delaware	7.2%	2.4%	64	2,718
District of Columbia	8.8%	1.6%	81	5,074
Florida	21.2%	9.4%	5,507	58,656
Georgia	7.4%	2.2%	514	23,489
Hawaii	6.3%	0.9%	42	4,636
Idaho	9.8%	1.4%	44	3,196
Illinois	13.8%	2.2%	920	42,510
Indiana	4.5%	1.0%	165	16,273
Iowa	5.6%	0.9%	67	7,704
Kansas	8.2%	1.4%	111	7,816
Kentucky	2.2%	1.1%	120	11,318
Louisiana	2.5%	2.5%	319	12,926
Maine	1.0%	0.7%	35	4,898
Maryland	7.4%	1.9%	473	25,354
Massachusetts	6.8%	1.2%	425	34,320
Michigan	3.7%	1.1%	382	34,091
Minnesota	4.4%	1.0%	184	17,702
Mississippi	6.2%	1.0%	59	6,071
Missouri	3.3%	1.3%	235	17,946
Montana	2.3%	0.8%	22	2,636
Nebraska	7.1%	1.2%	62	5,131
Nevada	24.1%	1.9%	115	5,954
New Hampshire	2.1%	0.9%	39	4,510
New Jersey	16.9%	2.3%	757	33,501
New Mexico	41.3%	5.6%	314	5,583
New York	16.8%	2.0%	1,777	88,179
North Carolina	6.2%	1.2%	324	26,716
North Dakota	1.8%	1.1%	19	1,786
Ohio	2.8%	1.7%	413	38,566
Oklahoma	6.6%	1.4%	125	8,712
Oregon	10.5%	1.1%	139	12,669
Pennsylvania	4.3%	1.1%	562	49,575
Rhode Island	10.7%	1.6%	72	4,591
South Carolina	3.5%	1.0%	117	11,829
South Dakota	2.5%	0.8%	17	2,069
Tennessee	3.6%	1.1%	200	18,560
Texas	38.7%	5.9%	3,518	59,797
Utah	11.9%	0.8%	51	6,588
Vermont	1.3%	0.6%	16	2,778
Virginia	6.8%	1.7%	403	24,091
Washington	8.8%	1.0%	202	20,923
West Virginia	0.4%	1.7%	94	5,387
Wisconsin	6.2%	1.0%	177	17,311
Wyoming	7.7%	1.2%	15	1,237
United States	15.4%	2.8%	27,699	991,066

* Nonfederal physicians exclude those employed by the federal government. These data include retired physicians as well as those currently practicing.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation, "Distribution of Nonfederal Physicians by Race, 2008," Statehealthfacts.org, <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=431&cat=8&sub=100&yr=63&typ=1&sort=684&o=a> (accessed April 2009).

Endnotes

¹ The terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish, and other Hispanic descent; they may be of any race. Furthermore, unless otherwise noted, estimates in this document do not include the 3.9 million residents of Puerto Rico.

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, "Household Data Annual Averages," Table 11: Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, <ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/lfaaat11.txt> (accessed April 2009).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Kaiser Family Foundation, "Distribution of Medical School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity, 2008," Statehealthfacts.org, <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?ind=454&cat=9> (accessed April 2009).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.