

**The career pathways of family physicians
after graduating from South African training programmes from
2008-2022**

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Introduction

- South Africa's National Development Plan of 2030
- The introduction of family medicine as a speciality 2007
- Nine training programmes 2008 onwards
- Career paths and distribution of graduates



Aim and objectives

- To determine the career pathway of family physicians after graduating from South African training programmes
- To identify the distribution of family physicians (geographics, sector distribution, the types of posts occupied)
- To identify the relationship between training site and location of practice
- To determine factors influencing their career path

Methods

- Cross-sectional descriptive survey
- Study population, sample size and approach to sampling via SAAFP
- Creation and validation of questionnaire
- Data collection with REDCap
- Data analysis with SPSS vs28

Results - who answered the survey?

Gender (N=83)	n (%)
Male	54 (65.1)
Female	28 (33.7)
Other	1 (1.2)
Age (N=83)	
30-39 years	21 (25.3)
40-49 years	49 (59.0)
50- 59 years	11 (13.3)
60-69 years	2 (2.4)
Year of qualification (N=82)	
2008-2012	10 (12.0)
2013-2017	29 (34.9)
2018-2022	43 (51.8)

- Response rate $83/186 = 44.6\%$
- Mean age 44.0 years (SD 6.1)

Results - what are they doing?

Current job title (N=83)	
Medical officer	13 (15.7)
General practitioner	14 (16.9)
Specialist family physician	44 (53.0)
Clinical manager	5 (6.0)
Facility manager	1 (1.2)
Chief operations officer	1 (1.2)
Academia	5 (6.0)

Current facility type (N=83)	
Primary care/general practice	39 (47.0)
District hospital	20 (24.0)
Regional hospital	6 (7.2)
Tertiary hospital	3 (3.6)
District clinical specialist team	1 (1.2)
Sub-district specialist	2 (2.4)
University	5 (6.0)
Specialised hospital	1 (1.2)
Unemployed	2 (2.4)
Unknown	2 (2.4)
NGO	1 (1.2)
Other	1 (1.2)
Sector of practice (N=83)	
Public	53 (63.9)
Private	18 (21.7)
Both	12 (14.5)

Results - where are they now?

Current practice location (N=82)	
Not practicing in South Africa	17 (20.5)
Eastern cape	4 (4.8)
Free State	1 (1.2)
Gauteng	7 (8.4)
<u>KwaZulu Natal</u>	15 (18.1)
Limpopo	1 (1.2)
Mpumalanga	2 (2.4)
Northern Cape	1 (1.2)
North-West	7 (8.4)
Western Cape	37 (44.6)

Results - training programmes and current practice location

University of training	Province of current practice										P value
	EC	FS	Gauteng	KZN	Limpopo	MP	NC	NW	WC	Out of RSA	
SU					3.8				96.2		<0.001
UCT	9.1								81.8	9.1	
UFS		33.3					33.3		33.3		
UKZN				82.4					14.3	17.6	
UP			57.1			28.6			14.3		
Wits			7.7					53.8	7.7	30.8	
WSU	75.0			25.0							
SMU/UL			100.0								

Results - what issues were important to career decisions?

Workplace factors	
Relationship with colleagues in the clinical team	63.9
Opportunities for promotion	59.0
Recognition and acknowledgement	54.2
Amount of clinical support	53.0
Job content	53.0
Relationships with management	45.8
Overtime requirements	45.8
Workload	43.4
Flexible working hours	38.6

Personal factors	%
Needs of spouse	44.6
Needs of children	43.4
Issues related to safety and security	41.0
Salary or remuneration	41.0
Issues related to community	25.3
Issues related to travel	18.1
Needs of extended family	13.3
Needs of/for social network	7.2

What issues were associated with different outcomes?

- Factors associated with public vs private sector pathway:
 - Relationship with colleagues in the clinical team (77.4% vs 15.1%, $p=0.005$)
 - Issues related to safety and security (50.0% vs 23.5%, $p=0.023$)
- Factors associated with emigration
 - No statistical associations
- Factors associated with being in a FP post
 - No statistical associations

Conclusion

- Family physician work within the public sector
- Occupy both family physician and medical officer posts as specialists.
- Inequitable distribution of family physicians
- Two factors influence their career decisions