



AMERICAN  
OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

# OMP

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Osteopathic  
Medical  
Profession Report

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# 2020-21

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# Osteopathic Medical Profession Report



**B**uilding on a proud 129-year history of providing distinctive, whole-person care, the osteopathic medical profession continues to chart record-breaking growth and expansion with each passing year. In 2021, the profession added nearly 7,500 osteopathic physicians (DOs) to the health care work force and osteopathic profession.

Accounting for approximately 11% of all physicians in the United States, DOs bring a unique, patient-centered approach to every specialty across the full spectrum of medicine. Moreover, DOs hold some of the most prominent positions in medicine today, including overseeing care for the President of the United States, the NASA medical team, Olympic athletes and many who serve in the uniformed services.

Osteopathic medicine was founded on the principle that structure and function are reciprocally interrelated. This philosophy remains a cornerstone of osteopathic education and training today, with an emphasis on connecting with patients to treat the whole person—mind, body and spirit.

**Editor's Note: The Osteopathic Medical Profession (OMP) Report, produced by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), tracks expansion and growth within the osteopathic medical profession and examines current demographics and trends related to DOs and osteopathic medical students. Beginning this year, publication of the OMP report will transition to July, aligning with culmination of the AOA's fiscal year reporting and the AOA Annual Business Meeting.**

# DO Strong & DO Proud

As one of the fastest-growing medical professions in the U.S., osteopathic medicine continues to attract thousands of prospective physicians each year who choose to begin the journey toward becoming a DO. In fact, 26% of medical students in the U.S. attend an osteopathic medical school.

This past year, the number of osteopathic physicians in the U.S. climbed to nearly 135,000—an 80% increase over the past decade. More than 7,000 new osteopathic physicians who graduated in spring 2021 will now enter the graduate medical education pipeline and, ultimately, help alleviate the physician shortage expected to impact access to care over the coming decade.

## 2020-21 By The Numbers

**134,901**

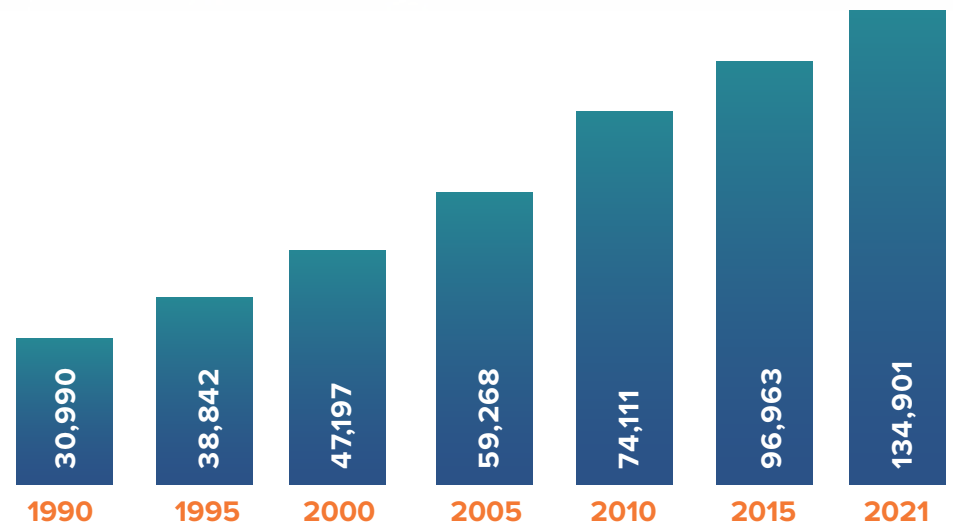
DOs in the U.S.\*

**33,800**

Osteopathic medical students\*\*

**168,701**

Total osteopathic physicians  
and students in the U.S.



\* All living DOs, including an estimated 7,445 osteopathic medical students who graduated in 2021. Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 2021.

\*\* Includes 8,945 first-year osteopathic medical students expected to matriculate in the 2021-22 academic year. Source: Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation.



# A Growing Profession

Two decades of significant growth in the number of students who choose osteopathic medicine has led to an increase in the number of physicians under age 45. Two thirds of actively practicing DOs fall into this category, totaling more than 78,000 physicians.

The number of female DOs, particularly those under age 45, also continues to grow dramatically. Women have played a key role in the osteopathic profession since the first osteopathic medical school was founded in 1892. Overall, females make up 43% of DOs in active practice today and nearly three-quarters of these are under age 45. Keeping pace with national trends, female students constituted a majority in the ranks of first-year osteopathic medical school matriculants in 2020, according to data from the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine.

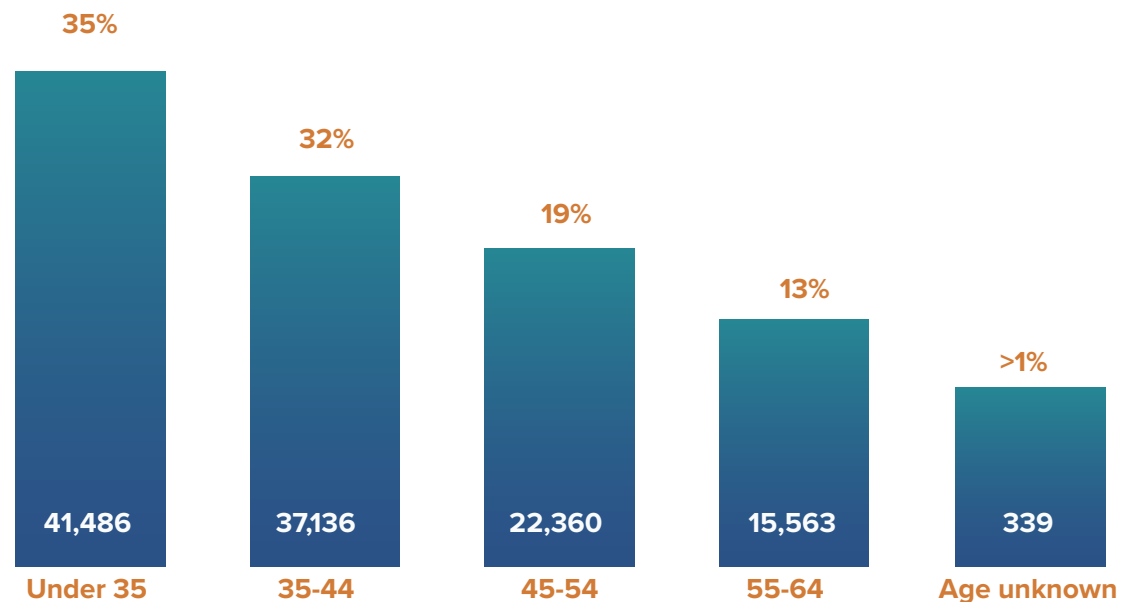
## 67%

of actively practicing DOs are under age 45

## 74%

of actively practicing female DOs are under 45

### Actively practicing DOs by age:



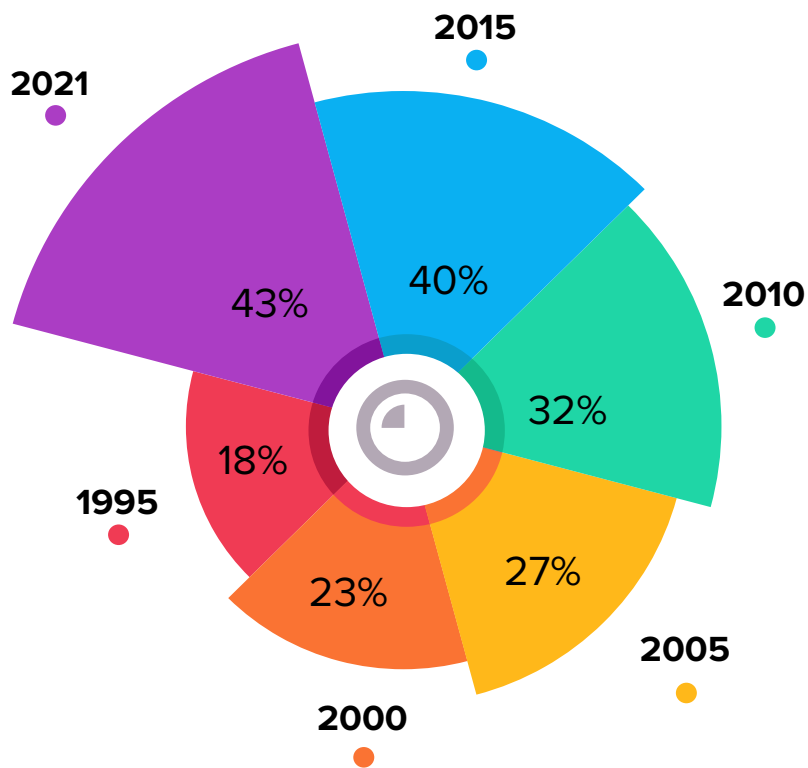
## TOTAL: 116,884

Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 31, 2021. A total of 419 DOs with unknown gender not included.



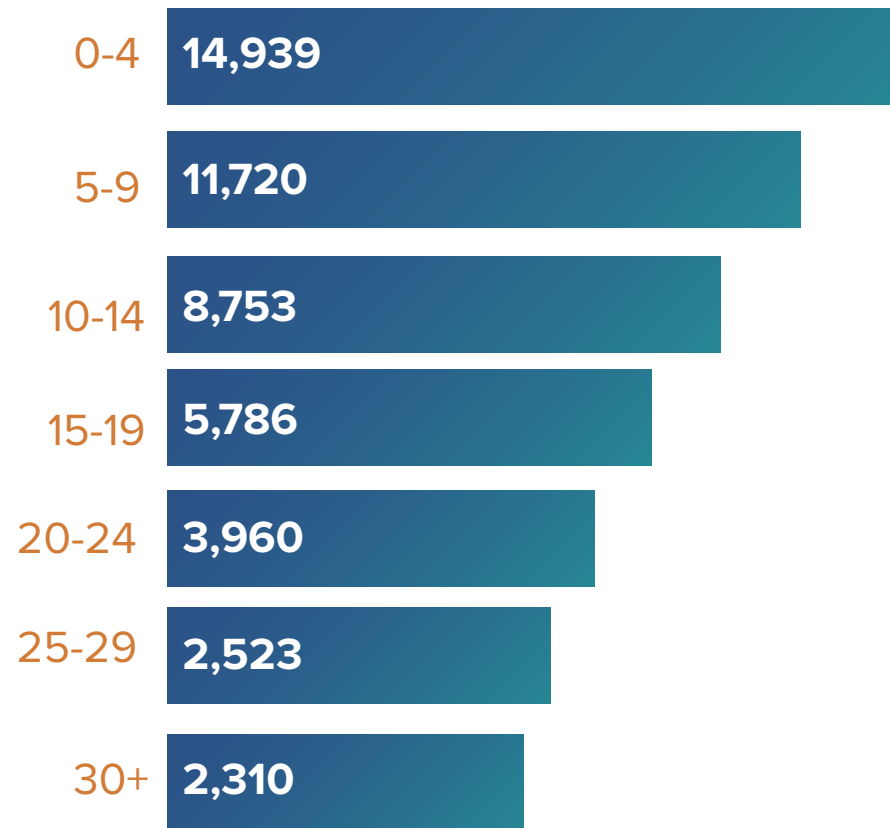
# On the Rise

## Female DOs in active practice:



Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 31, 2021;  
AOA OMP Reports 1995–2015.

## Female DOs in active practice by years after graduation:



**TOTAL: 49,991**

Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 31, 2021.

# Full Spectrum of Specialties

Across the nation, more than 117,000 DOs in active practice treat patients in a wide variety of specialties and practice settings. Building on the osteopathic profession's historic emphasis on careers in primary care, more than half of osteopathic physicians focus their practice in primary care specialties including family medicine, internal medicine and pediatrics.

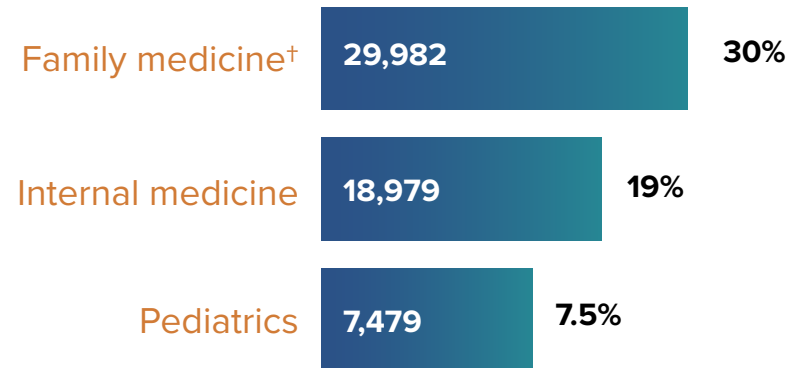
However, over the past decade, the number of DOs choosing non-primary care specialties has steadily increased. The osteopathic profession's body, mind, and spirit approach to care can be applied across the full spectrum of medicine. As such, DOs provide distinctive and valuable contributions to the practice of medicine in all specialties.

**56.5%**  
of DOs practice in  
primary care fields\*

**43.5%**  
practice in other  
specialties

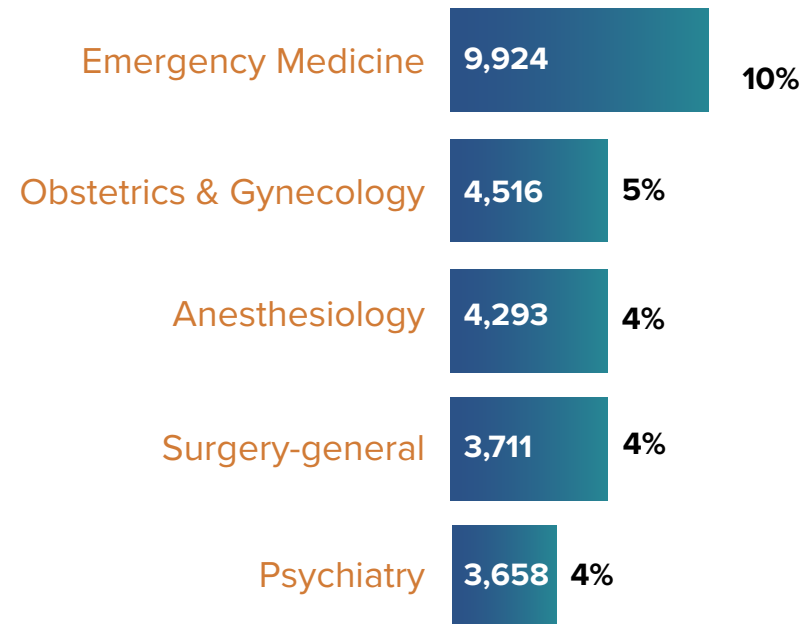
Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 31, 2021.

## DOs in primary care specialties:



\* Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 31, 2021. Based on 99,917 DOs with reported specialty; 17,386 DOs with unknown specialty not included.  
† Includes physicians who practice ONMM.

## Top 5 non-primary care specialties:



Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 31, 2021.



# TOTAL DOs in practice, by state

53%\*

5,000+

CA	10,124	8.6%
PA	9,352	8.0%
FL	8,670	7.4%
NY	8,420	7.2%
MI	7,407	6.3%
TX	6,634	5.7%
OH	6,008	5.1%
NJ	5,190	4.4%

41%\*

1,000-4,600

IL	4,545	3.9%
AZ	3,233	2.8%
VA	3,102	2.6%
MO	3,063	2.6%
OK	2,493	2.1%
CO	2,471	2.1%
NC	2,432	2.1%
WA	2,126	1.8%
IA	1,986	1.7%
GA	1,897	1.6%
IN	1,777	1.5%
TN	1,691	1.4%
WV	1,568	1.3%
KY	1,556	1.3%
WI	1,487	1.3%
OR	1,481	1.3%
SC	1,436	1.2%
MA	1,356	1.2%
AL	1,343	1.1%
MD	1,268	1.1%
MN	1,188	1.0%
UT	1,141	1.0%
NV	1,094	0.9%
ME	1,070	0.9%
KS	1,013	0.9%

6%\*

<1,000

CT	871	0.7%
MS	787	0.7%
ID	642	0.5%
AR	598	0.5%
NH	455	0.4%
NM	434	0.4%
DE	428	0.4%
LA	400	0.3%
HI	392	0.3%
NE	384	0.3%
MT	323	0.3%
RI	323	0.3%
AK	294	0.3%
SD	214	0.2%
WY	171	0.1%
DC	162	0.1%
VT	117	0.1%
ND	116	0.1%

\* Active practice consists of all osteopathic physicians, including DOs in training, under the age of 65 who are not known to be inactive or retired.

Source: AOA Physician Masterfile, May 2021.



# Era of Opportunity

Following graduation from osteopathic medical school, DOs complete postgraduate training in the form of internships, residencies and fellowships. This training generally lasts three to eight years and prepares DOs for licensure and board certification in their chosen specialty. As the osteopathic profession continues to expand, the AOA remains deeply committed to ensuring accessibility of postgraduate training opportunities for all DOs.

In June 2020, the AOA joined with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine to celebrate the culmination of the five-year transition to a single accreditation system for graduate medical education in the U.S.

The first-ever combined NRMP match, held in spring 2020, resulted in a record number of osteopathic medical students matching into residency programs through the main residency match. Many additional candidates secured residencies via the NRMP's Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP), resulting in successful placement for 99.3% of DO graduates seeking graduate medical education, according to AACOM.

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**99.3%** of DO applicants successfully placed into residency programs following the first combined NRMP Match

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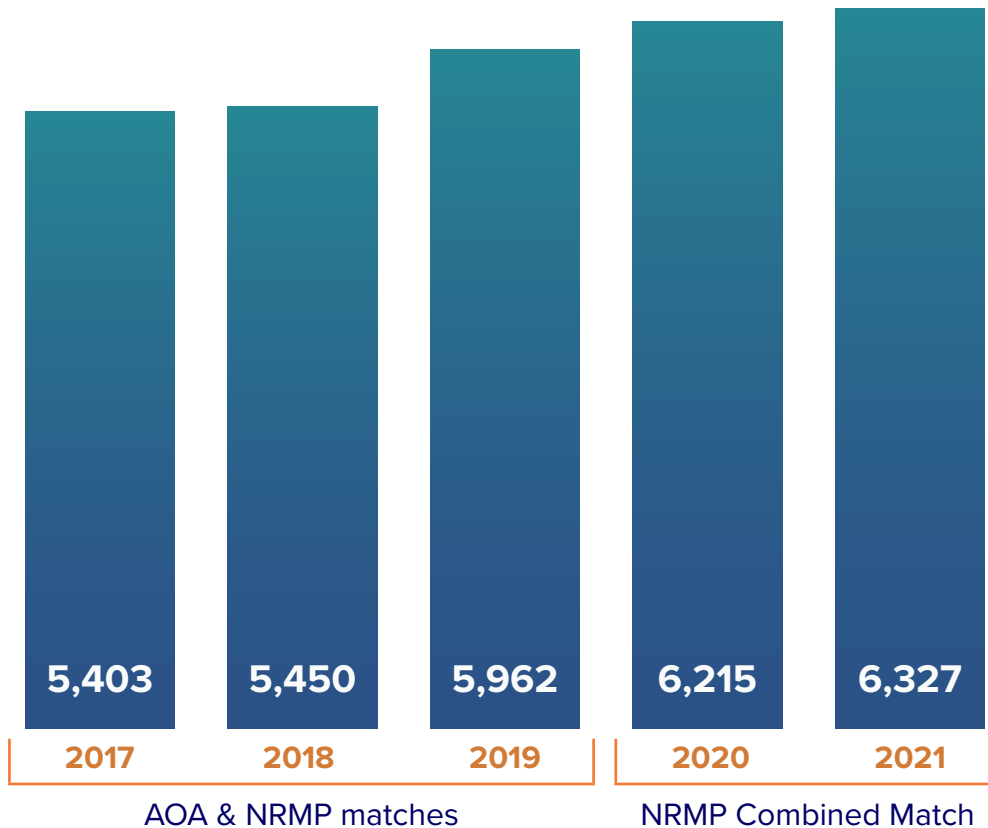
The 2021 NRMP match proved equally successful for osteopathic applicants, with nearly 6,600 DOs and students matching into residencies, a net increase of 359 compared with match rates from 2020.

In addition to preserving placements for osteopathic trainees, the new accreditation system provides a programmatic distinction of Osteopathic Recognition for training programs that demonstrate a commitment to the principles and practice of osteopathic medicine. In 2020, more than 2,700 residents (both DO and MD) trained in designated osteopathic positions across more than 230 ACGME-accredited programs with Osteopathic Recognition.

# Growth in residency match rates for DO applicants

The number of osteopathic medical students and DOs who match successfully into postgraduate training programs continues to increase year over year.

## AOA and NRMP matches



Source: National Resident Matching Program



# Building for the Future

The AOA's Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) currently accredits 37 colleges of osteopathic medicine operating at 58 sites for the 2021-22 academic year. One in four medical students in the U.S. today attends an osteopathic medical school, with more than 7,000 graduates entering the physician work force each year. Because many DOs practice close to their education and training institutions, COMs play a key role in positioning the profession to address health care access issues in underserved and rural communities.

New COMs in California and Texas, as well as locations in Louisiana, New York and Oklahoma opened in 2020 to help meet the growing need for osteopathic physicians. An additional school in Provo, Utah will deliver instruction for the 2021-22 academic year.



**37**

**colleges of osteopathic medicine**

**33**

**states**

**58**

**sites, including branch campuses and additional locations**

**33,800\***

**osteopathic medical students**

\* Includes 8,945 first-year osteopathic medical students expected to matriculate in the 2021-22 academic year. Source: Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation.



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