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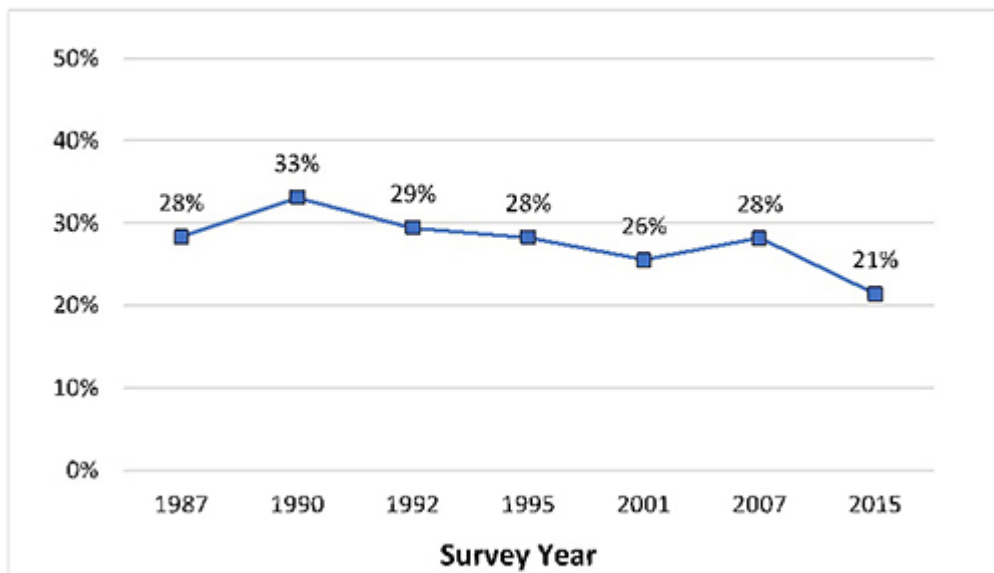
AAP study: Percent of pediatricians facing malpractice claims drops

by from AAP Research

The proportion of pediatricians reporting that they have faced a malpractice claim at some point during their career has declined over time, according to a new study based on data from the AAP Periodic Survey of Fellows.

In 2015, 21% of pediatricians (primary care and subspecialty combined) reported ever having been the subject of a claim or lawsuit, a decrease from a peak of 33% in 1990 (see figure 1).

Figure 1: % of pediatricians reporting having had 1 or more lawsuits or claims, 1987-2015



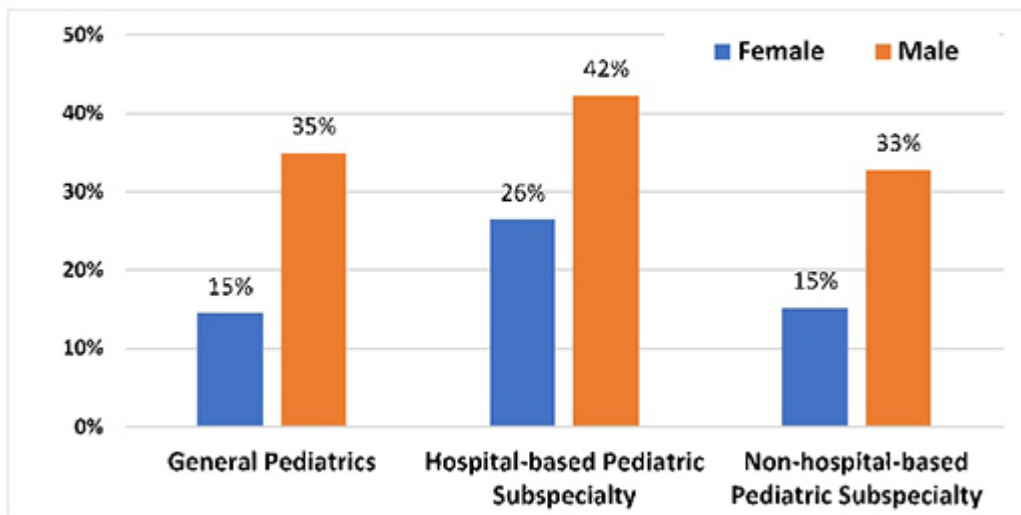
Source: Bondi SA, et al. *Pediatrics*. March 25, 2020, <http://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-0711>.

The study also found male pediatricians and hospital-based pediatric subspecialists were more likely to report that they have been subject to a claim or lawsuit. Across surveys, 36% of men had been subject to a claim or lawsuit compared to 17% of women. Thirty-six percent of hospital-based pediatric subspecialists experienced a claim or lawsuit compared to 26% of nonhospital-based subspecialists and 24% of generalists (see figure 2).



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Figure 2: % of pediatricians reporting having malpractice lawsuits or claims by gender and specialty, 1987-2015 combined



Source: Bondi SA, et al. *Pediatrics*. March 25, 2020, <http://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-0711>).

The findings were published today in "Trends in Pediatric Malpractice Claims 1987-2015: Results from the Periodic Survey of Fellows" (Bondi S, et al. *Pediatrics*. March 25, 2020, <http://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-0711>).

Study authors concluded that "Medical malpractice is a fluctuating environment because both the law and medical practice are continually changing. It is critical, therefore, to periodically revisit malpractice risk and its impact on pediatricians."

The data for the study were drawn from seven AAP Periodic Surveys conducted among nonretired U.S. members between 1987 and 2015, in collaboration with the Committee on Medical Liability and Risk Management.

Resources

- [Pediatricians and the Law columns in AAP News](#)
- [AAP policies on medicolegal topics](#)
- [For information on the Periodic Survey, visit http://www2.aap.org/research/periodicsurvey.htm](http://www2.aap.org/research/periodicsurvey.htm) or contact Blake Sisk at 630-626-6630 or bsisk@aap.org.