Are you back in black?

Did your chiropractic practice rebound in 2010? Check the results of our annual nationwide survey to see where you stand.

BY STANFORD ERICKSON

Our 13th Annual Salary & Expense Survey would seem to indicate that the effects of the recent economic recession are abating.

Patients in chiropractic care are rebounding to what it was prior to 2009.

Doctors of chiropractic's average gross billings in the 2010 survey totaled $541,396, compared to $389,387 in our 2009 survey. In 2008, average gross billings totaled $534,596.

Average gross collections in 2010 were $323,421, better than $271,543 in 2009 but still lagging behind 2008 at $377,983.

Patients are back but, it would appear they are paying bills still somewhat slowly.

DCs also are working a bit harder. In 2010, DCs who responded to the survey indicated they were providing 33.1 hours per week in patient care compared to 32.2 hours in 2009. But this year, the DCs are a lot more productive, averaging 122.4 patients per week compared to 110.0 patients in 2009.

Chiropractic sea change?

Also, our 13th Annual Salary & Expense Survey — when looked back at five years from now — might represent the beginning of a transformational sea change in chiropractic.

Our 2010 Web-based survey with 538 responders, which was one of the strongest responses by doctors of chiropractic in the last several years, indicates that women chiropractors are making increased inroads into the profession.

Of the total respondents, 22.8 percent were women. This compares to 16.4 percent in 2009 and 17.7 percent in 2008.

The outlook for growth of women in chiropractic is further attested by the fact that women students at most chiropractic colleges are now approaching 50 percent. Guy F. Riekeman, DC, president of Life University, told *Chiropractic Economics* that he has seen credible forecasts in which women will represent 70 percent of all healthcare providers including chiropractic by the year 2025.

Male doctors of chiropractic who responded to our survey averaged 45.2 years of age while female DCs who filled out the survey averaged 40.7 years of age. In total compensation, male DCs averaged $117,600 in the 2010 survey while their female counterparts averaged $87,009.

Economic turnaround?

The recession may have also encouraged some doctors of chiropractic in solo practice to retire, leave the profession, or join an existing group practice.

The number of DC responders who indicated they were in solo practice in 2010 was 66.1 percent compared to 70.9 percent in 2009 and 70.4 percent in 2008. Group practices and franchises stayed about the same in 2010 and 2009.

The increase in associates that responded to our survey in 2010 jumped to 9.4 percent compared to 3.9 percent in 2009, which may give credence to solo practitioners and graduates joining existing group practices.

Practice management

The 2010 survey also indicates that DCs responded to the poor business environment by adding specialties and new modalities to their practices. Specialties that increased in chiroprac-

tic practices in the 2010 survey were physical therapy, nutritionists, trainers, medical doctors, and osteopaths. Modalities cited as increasing in 2010 were: nutrition, massage, weight loss, acupuncture, and homeopathy.

In more difficult times, it is recommended that to grow a practice you should increase advertising. That was not the case according to the 2010 survey. Advertising fell to $10,660 on average compared to $12,604 in 2009 and $14,072 in 2008.

Validity of the survey

Chiropractic Economics has conducted this same salary and expense survey for the past 13 years with a few minor tweaks and question changes as the times change, and yet the results are different every time.

The high response rate of this survey, however, is encouraging to the editors of *Chiropractic Economics* as to its validity. Our survey often is cited by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. ■

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3-Year Comparison of Respondent Information

Personal Characteristics	2010	2009	2008
Average age	44.5	44.9	41.9
Male	77.2%	83.6%	82.1%
Female	22.8%	16.4%	17.7%
Years in practice	16.3	16.2	13.2
Solo practitioner	66.1%	70.9%	70.4%
Group practitioner/partner	23.5%	23.8%	24.9%
Associate	9.4%	3.9%	4.7%
Franchise owner	1.0%	1.4%	3.9%
Practice Characteristics			
Suburban	55.5%	59.0%	59.7%
Urban	26.1%	28.3%	26.7%
Rural	18.4%	12.7%	13.6%
No. of employees	3.2	2.9	3.2
Hours/week in patient care	33.1	32.2	31-35
Average PVA	40.8	36.4	33.7
Average patient visits/week	122.4	110.0	120.0
Average new patients/week	5.9	5.7	5.0
Income Comparisons			
Average gross billings	$541,396	$389,387	$534,596
Average gross collections	$323,421	$271,543	$377,983
Average DC salary	$87,538	$94,454	$111,263
Average DC total comp.	$112,368	$145,791	$165,686
Expenses			
Advertising	$10,660	$12,604	$14,072
Malpractice insurance	$2,405	$2,335	$2,686
Office lease or mortgage (yr)	$26,146	$23,692	$23,232

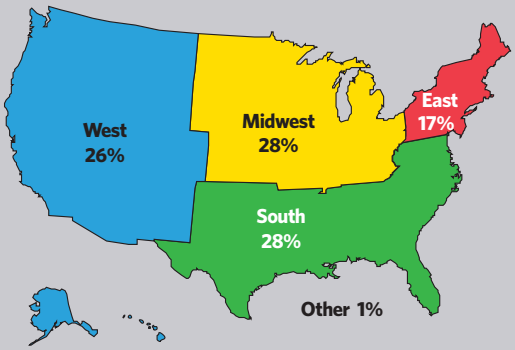
About this survey

Our 13th Annual Salary & Expense Survey had 538 doctors of chiropractic responding to our confidential, Web-based questionnaire — the most responders in a number of years.

The high response rate probably was due to a number of factors; including the fact our website, www.ChiroEco.com, dominates all electronic interaction with the chiropractic community and that we invited a number of state associations to encourage their members to participate in the survey.

Regional representation. Any response more than 400 is fairly statistically valid.

This survey, which was conducted between March and April, found the respondents well represent all regions of the country — South, 28 percent; Midwest, 28 percent; East, 17 percent; and West, 26 percent. Another 1 percent came from people outside the U.S.



A number of states were not represented in the survey: Alaska, Hawaii, Vermont, and Wyoming.

Statistics. You will find references to only averages (or means) in this year's survey. Feedback from readers impressed us that the survey is better understood by only stating averages. The average is the number calculated by dividing the total by the number in the set — an arithmetic average.

Our survey respondent

AGAIN THIS YEAR, we appealed to a wide range of individuals, from 25 to 80 years old, who have been in practice for approximately 10 months to more than 55 years. By looking at averages, we can paint a picture of a "typical" respondent, who is:

- Male (22.8 percent of respondents were female);
- 44.5 years old;
- A solo practitioner (66.1 percent); and
- Licensed in 1.5 states.

Our average respondent:

- Owns 1.0 clinic;
- Prefers to practice in the suburbs (55.5 percent);
- Employs 3.2 individuals in the clinic (1.9 of whom work full time);
- Sees 122.4 patients each week;
- Has a patient-visit average (PVA) of 40.8;
- Attracts 5.9 new patients each week; and
- Sees patients 33.1 hours a week.

This respondent:

- Has average billings of $541,396 and collections of $323,421 for a reimbursement rate of 59.7 percent;
- Sells products to patients for 5.2 percent of gross revenues;
- Pays his CAs $26,101 and himself $87,538; and
- Enjoys average total compensation of $112,368.

Finally, this typical respondent spends $26,146 on office leases or mortgages; $10,660 on advertising and $2,405 on malpractice insurance annually. ■

Overview of 2010 Respondents

Personal Characteristics

Average age	44.5
Male	77.2%
Female	22.8%
Years in practice	16.3
Solo DC	66.1%
In a group or partnership	23.5%
Associate	9.4%
Franchise owner	1.0%
No. of state licenses	1.5

Clinic Characteristics

Clinics	1.0
Urban	26.1%
Suburban	55.5%
Rural	18.4%
Employees	3.2
Average PVA	40.8
Average patients/week	122.4
Average new patients/week	5.9
Cash practice	21.5%

Specialty

General	60.6%
Family	20.9%
Sports/Rehab	10.3%
Pediatrics	1.1%
Other	7.1%

Specialists In Clinic

LMT	77.8%
Acupuncturist	16.2%
PT	8.6%
Nutritionist	14.1%
Trainer	12.1%
MD/DO	10.1%
Other	9.1%

Income

Average billings	$541,396
Range	12K-3.4M
Average collections	$323,421
Range	10K-2.4M
% income from retail	5.2%

Average salaries

Average associate	$56,333
Average MD/DO	$110,000
Average CA	$26,101
Average LMT	$24,823
Average PT	$66,674
Average DC	$87,538
Total DC comp.	$112,368

Average Expenses

Advertising	$10,660
Malpractice insurance	$2,405
Office lease/mortgage (yr)	$26,146

Modalities Provided

Nutrition	64.7%
PT	59.5%
Exercise	62.1%
Massage	57.5%
Weight Loss	30.5%
Acupuncture	23.9%
Homeopathy	14.0%

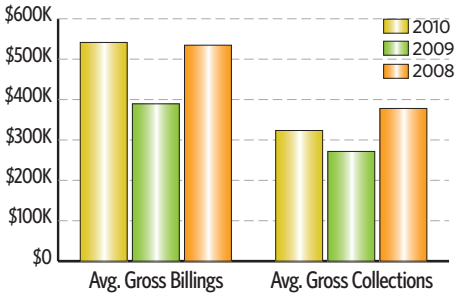
Let your voice be heard! Be on the lookout for your chance to participate in our upcoming Fees & Reimbursements Survey.

Average billings and collections

A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN billings and collections was seen over last year's survey, but is closer to what was reported in 2008. In 2008, respondents reported average gross billings of $534,596. In 2009, that number decreased to $389,387 — but increased to $541,396 in this year's survey.

Collections saw a nice increase compared to last year. Similar to the billings' scenario, average collections increased from last year's numbers only to be more in line, but still less, with the year before. In 2008, average gross collections were $377,983. They decreased to $271,543 in 2009, only to increase this year to $323,421. ■

3-Year Comparison of Average Gross Billings and Collections



A comparison of doctors

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED how chiropractors compare to medical doctors? Each year, *Medical Economics* magazine publishes a comparable survey outlining compensation, patient hours, malpractice insurance, and more.

This year, our survey found that the average total compensation of respondents was $112,368. *Medical Economics* survey, which was released in September 2009, reported that 31 percent of all general and family practitioners had a total compensation of under $120,000. This was the biggest percentage reported for any range.

According to each survey MDs spend more hours a week in patient care than chiropractors. Chiropractors average 33.1 hours a week in patient care, while MDs reported a median total of 46 hours per week.

Chiropractors, however, averaged 122.4 patient visits per week, while MDs reported a median total of 107 patients per week.

To compare more statistics between chiropractors and medical doctors, you can find *Medical Economics'* latest survey by visiting its website, www.memag.com.

Noteworthy: The survey completed by *Medical Economics* reports median numbers — the middle value in a list of numbers — while *Chiropractic Economics* uses only mean averages. ■

Group versus solo

WHEN COMPARING our 2010 survey versus the 2009 survey, it would appear more chiropractors joined groups.

In 2009, on average, group practices consisted of 4.3 employees, with 2.9 being full time. In 2010, the average group practice had 5.2 employees, with 3.8 being full time. Solo practices had 2.4 employees with 1.6 full-time employees in 2010 and 2.4 employees with 1.4 full-time employees in 2009.

As expected, average billings for group practices in 2010 were higher than solo practices: $666,521 for groups and $382,780 for solos.

The discrepancy occurs, however, in compensation.

- Salary for group DCs averaged $130,804 with a total compensation of $150,486 versus $80,849 average salary for solo practitioners with a total compensation of $97,224.

(Note: Total compensation for unincorporated DCs is defined as earnings after tax-deductible expenses, but before income tax. For DCs in a professional corporation, it is the sum of salary, bonuses, and retirement/profit-sharing contributions made on their behalf.)

- Group DCs also obtained greater paid time off, 83.0 percent compared to 58.9 percent for solo DCs.
- Retirement benefits also favored the group practitioner: 42.2 percent compared to 29.2 percent for solo practitioners.

Group expenses for advertising, malpractice insurance, and office lease or mortgage naturally were higher at group practices averaging $62,469 compared to $31,028. But as a percent of revenue, group expenses represented 1 percent of revenue compared to 8 percent for solo practices.

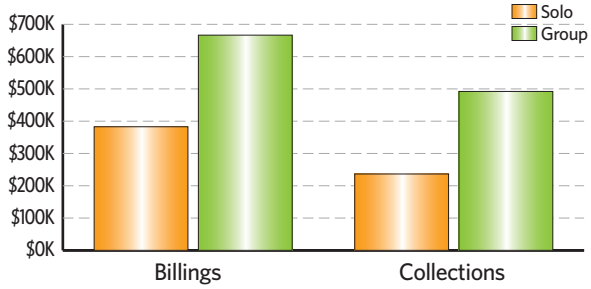
In our 2009 survey, solo practitioners saw on average 90.9 patients per week. Business improved for the solo DCs in 2010; they saw on average 105.3 patients. Group practices also experienced patient improvement. On average, groups saw 159.9 patients per week in 2010 compared to 147.4 patients per week in 2009.

Both group and solo practitioners worked about the same number of hours per week: 33.7 hours for group and 32.2 hours for solo DCs. ■

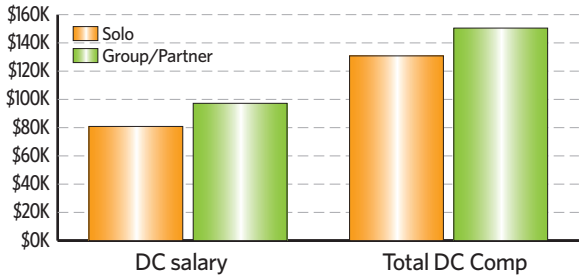
Comparison of Solo & Group Practices

Clinic Label	Solo	Group
Clinic	64.9%	63.1%
Wellness center	30.1%	30.3%
Medical spa	0.2%	0.0%
Rehab center	4.5%	6.5%
Franchisee	0.0%	0.0%
Clinic Statistics		
No. of employees	2.4	5.2
No. of FT employees	1.6	3.8
PVA	38.7	37.4
No. of patients/week	105.3	159.9
New patients/week	4.8	8.4
Cash only	23.3%	20.2%
Mean billings	$382,780	$666,521
Mean collections	$236,462	$492,152
Compensation and Benefits		
Retirement	29.2%	42.2%
Healthcare benefits	30.8%	39.2%
Incentives or bonuses	48.1%	61.4%
Profit sharing	10.4%	10.5%
Paid time off	58.9%	83.0%
Average CA	$24,577	$25,517
Average LMT	$20,287	$23,685
Average DC	$80,849	$130,804
Average total DC comp.	$97,224	$150,486
Services Provided		
LMT	77.2%	67.7%
Acupuncturist	15.9%	16.9%
PT	6.0%	10.1%
Other	9.8%	8.4%
Nutritionist	15.1%	10.1%
Trainer	11.3%	15.2%
MD/DO	6.0%	16.9%
Expenses		
Advertising	$8,817	$15,896
Malpractice insurance	$2,210	$2,946
Office lease or mortgage (yr)	$20,001	$43,627

Solo vs. Group: Average Billings and Collections



Solo vs. Group: Average DC Compensation



DC vs. Integrated Healthcare Clinics: Significant Comparisons

Practice Type	Integrated	DC Only
Solo	57.8%	73.2%
Group/partnership	31.3%	19.7%
Franchisee	0.0%	0.7%
Clinic Label		
Clinic	53.6%	68.7%
Wellness center	36.9%	25.3%
Medical spa	0.0%	0.7%
Rehab center	9.5%	5.3%
Location		
Urban	30.9%	23.9%
Suburban	52.4%	57.9%
Rural	16.7%	18.2%
Specialty		
General	50.6%	63.7%
Family	20.4%	20.8%
Sports/Rehab	19.3%	8.1%
Pediatrics	1.3%	1.1%
Other	8.4%	6.3%
Clinic Statistics		
No. of employees	4.3	2.8
No. of FT employees	3.0	1.7
PVA	43.3	32.8
Patients per week	125.1	118.7
New patients/week	6.5	5.7
Cash only	24.0%	20.0%
Expenses		
Advertising	$11,860	$9,976
Malpractice insurance	$2,745	$2,235
Office lease/mortgage (yr)	$33,583	$23,659
Compensation and Benefits		
Offers retirement plan	31.6%	33.1%
Healthcare benefits	46.3%	22.5%
Offers incentives or bonuses	62.9%	49.0%
Profit sharing	9.2%	10.9%
Paid time off	75.4%	62.8%
Average CA	$28,234	$25,317
Average LMT	$23,107	$21,077
Average DC	$95,694	$84,369
Average total DC comp.	$116,205	$111,479

Integrated healthcare versus solo practices

PRACTICES WITH A CHIROPRACTOR (DC) and a medical doctor (MD) and/or physical therapist (PT) are considered integrated healthcare practices or multidisciplinary practices.

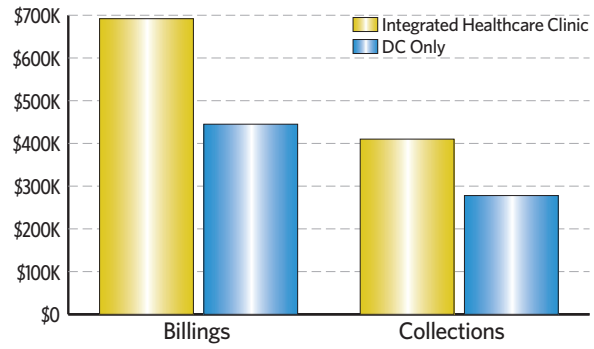
In theory, integrated practices are best for consumers of health and, therefore from a marketing approach, should be best for the professional healthcare provider. In practice, there had been steady growth in integrated practices until our 2010 survey.

Fewer solo doctors of chiropractic expanded into an integrated practice, according to our 2010 survey, than those DCs who responded in 2009. There was a 10 percentage-point falloff in integrated practices among solo DCs in our 2010 survey.

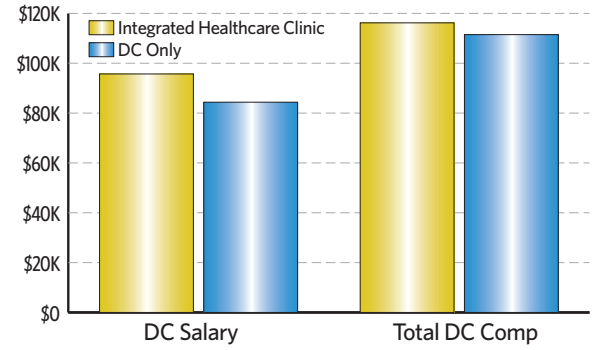
Group practices added MDs and/or PTs by almost 5 percentage points.

Billings. Integrated practices had billings of $691,952 in our 2010 survey versus $602,260 in our 2009 survey. Solo DC billings in 2010 were $445,030 compared to $362,236 in 2009.

DC vs. Integrated Healthcare Clinics: Comparison of Financials



A Look at Average DC Compensation



Collections. Integrated practice collections averaged $410,096 in 2010 versus $367,102 in 2009. Solo DC collections averaged $277,957 in 2010 compared to $276,789 in 2009 — not much of a difference.

Salaries and total compensation. In 2010, DCs' integrated practice salaries and total compensation both decreased from 2009: salaries averaged $95,694 versus $114,689 in 2009; total compensation for DCs averaged $116,205 in 2010 versus $137,891 in 2009.

Solo practitioners' salaries in 2010 averaged $84,369 compared to $81,069; total compensation for solo DCs in 2010 averaged $111,479 compared to $99,925 in 2009.

Total compensation for unincorporated DCs is defined as earnings after tax-deductible expenses, but before income taxes.

For DCs in a professional corporation, it is the sum of salary, bonuses, and retirement/profit-sharing contributions made on their behalf.

More data of interest

What's in a name? Integrated practices have generally called themselves clinics. But over the last couple of years, more refer to themselves as wellness centers.

In our 2009 survey, 64.3 percent called themselves clinics compared to 53.6 percent in 2010. In 2009, 26.3 percent referred to themselves as wellness centers compared to 36.9 percent in 2010.

Rural growth. Integrated practices in rural areas nearly tripled in 2010 from 6.6 percent in 2009 to 16.7 percent in 2010.

Specialties. Our 2010 survey also indicated that integrated practices became more specific in their care. Family practices, sports/rehab practices, and pediatric practices all expanded. ■

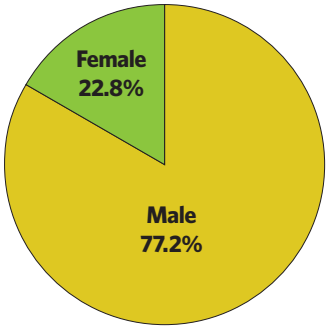
Breaking down gender

IT DOESN'T MATTER what the topic is — you can be sure that at some point, gender played a role. The same can be said for our annual salary survey.

This year, 22.8 percent of our survey takers were female, which is an increase from previous years. In 2009, 16.4 percent were female; in 2008, 17.7 percent; and in 2007 19.6 percent.

Women still reported having lower average salaries ($63,628, compared to $98,047 for men) and lower average total compensation ($87,009, compared to $117,600 for men).

Male vs. Female Respondents



A look at other statistics may indicate why:

Hours spent with patients. This year's survey still indicates women spend fewer hours a week in patient care compared to male chiropractors. While 67.1 percent of men spend more than 31 hours a week in patient care, only 45.4 percent of women work the same hours.

For chiropractors working 30 hours and fewer per week, women led this group with 54.6 percent, while men had only 32.9 percent who spent less than 31 hours a week in patient care.

Patients. Females have a lower patient-visit average (PVA) than males (34.4 vs. 38.7) and they see fewer patients per week (105.5, compared to 124.6 for males). These statistics, however, were an improvement over last year's numbers.

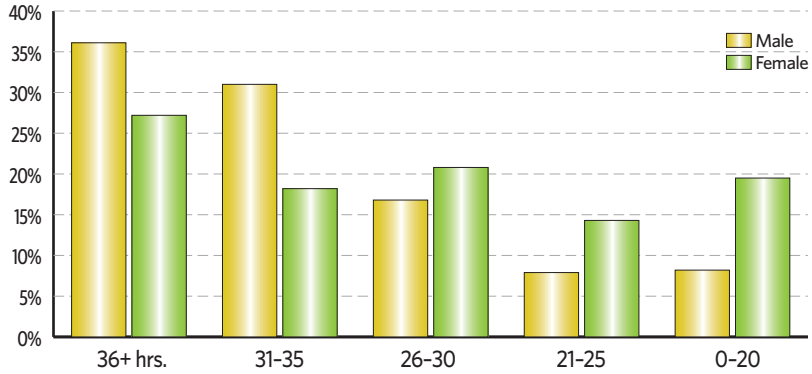
Females also acquire fewer new patients each week than their male counterparts (5.0, compared to 6.4).

Groups or partnerships. A higher percentage of women than men are involved in a group or partnership, 38.5 percent compared to 23.1 percent, respectively.

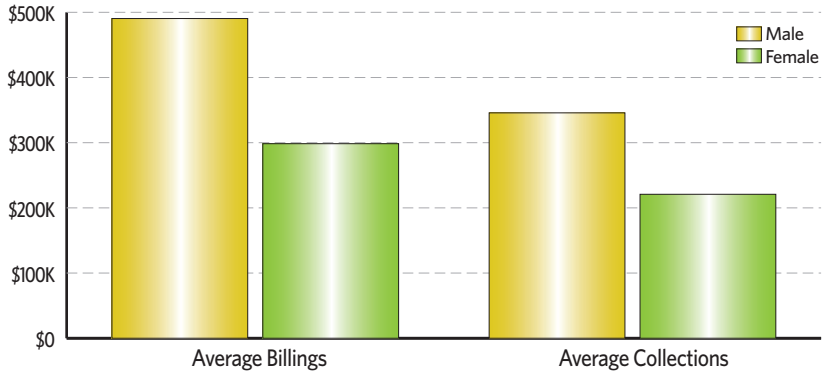
Advertising. Similar to previous years, women have spent less on advertising than men.

Compared to last year, women spent less ($8,097) while men spent more ($11,283). ■

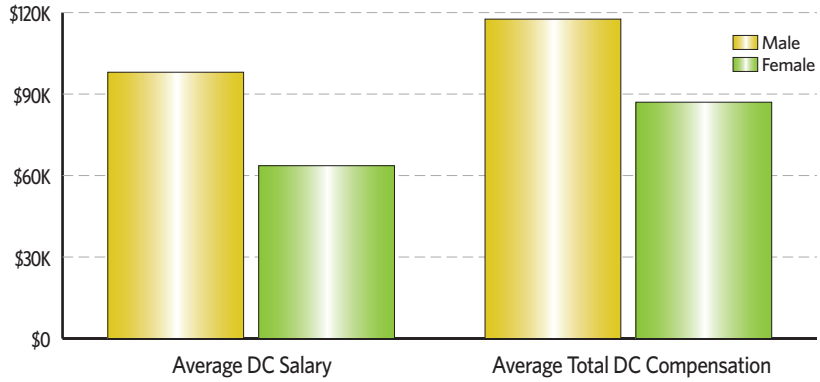
Gender Differences: Hours Spent in Patient Care



Gender Differences: Billings and Collections



Male vs. Female: Average Salary and Total Compensation



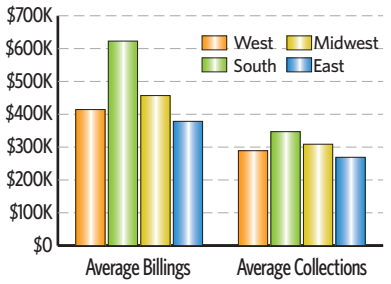
South reigns yet again

FOR THE LAST FEW YEARS, the South has boasted the best earnings — and this year is no exception. Respondents in southern states had an average of $622,876 in billings, an average of $347,058 in collections, and an average total compensation of $126,333.

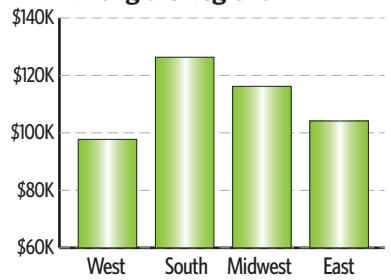
Respondents in the Midwest came in second when it came to average billings ($456,958), average collections ($308,824), and average total compensation ($116,206) — an increase from last year's third-place finish ($108,771).

This year, DCs in the East had the lowest average billings ($378,492) as well as the lowest collections ($269,029). The East also had the lowest average associate salary ($47,277) and the lowest average salary paid to the chiropractor ($82,666), but came in third when it came to average total DC compensation ($104,145). The average total compensation for DCs in the West, however, was the lowest at $97,751. ■

Regional Comparisons of Average Billings and Collections



How Average Total DC Compensation Compares Among the Regions



Comparing the Regions

	West	South	Midwest	East
Personal Characteristics				
Average age	43.0	45.9	41.9	47.0
Male	76.4%	79.3%	77.9%	89.0%
Female	23.6%	20.7%	22.1%	11.0%
Solo	66.1%	63.3%	67.2%	79.7%
Group/partnership	24.7%	28.3%	22.1%	14.9%
Associate	8.3%	8.4%	9.1%	5.4%
Franchisee	0.9%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%
Years in practice	13.7	15.8	14.0	18.4
Licenses	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.5
Clinics owned	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0
Location				
Urban	32.7%	31.4%	18.7%	17.5%
Suburban	53.3%	49.6%	56.7%	67.6%
Rural	14.0%	19.0%	24.6%	14.9%
Clinic Statistics				
No. of employees	2.8	3.6	3.3	2.8
No. of FT employees	1.8	3.2	2.1	1.4
PVA	31.9	42.9	40.0	31.0
Patients per week	90.5	123.3	137.7	115.2
New patients/week	5.8	6.9	5.8	4.7
Cash only	30.9%	16.4%	11.0%	24.6%
Average billings	$414,352	$622,876	$456,958	$378,492
Average collections	$289,049	$347,058	$308,824	$269,029
Expenses				
Advertising	$8,966	$13,673	$11,341	$6,184
Malpractice insurance	$2,266	$2,328	$2,570	$2,181
Office lease or mortgage (yr)	$24,772	$29,470	$25,968	$19,666
Salaries				
Average associate	$59,666	$55,868	$52,470	$47,277
Average CA	$26,465	$26,246	$25,233	$26,659
Average LMT	$26,000	$22,968	$25,814	$28,750
Average DC	$91,125	$97,372	$87,603	$82,666
Average total DC comp.	$97,751	$126,333	$116,206	$104,145

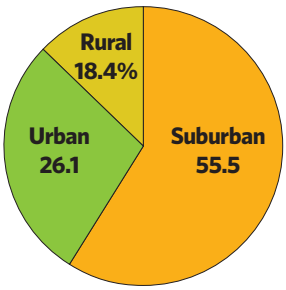
Rockin' the suburbs

WHETHER IT'S HOW YOU spend money, make money, or the number of patients who walk through your door — your locale can affect your practice.

Is your clinic suburban, urban, or rural? Ultimately, where you chose to practice can be the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful practice.

Once again, suburban practitioners reigned supreme, with 55.5 percent saying they practiced in the suburbs. Urban DCs followed with 26.1 percent and rural recorded the least amount of respondents with 18.4 percent.

Location Preferences

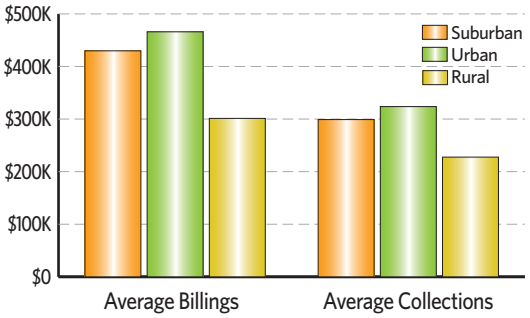


Unlike last year's survey, urban doctors reported the highest billings and collections, averaging $465,896 and $323,712, respectively.

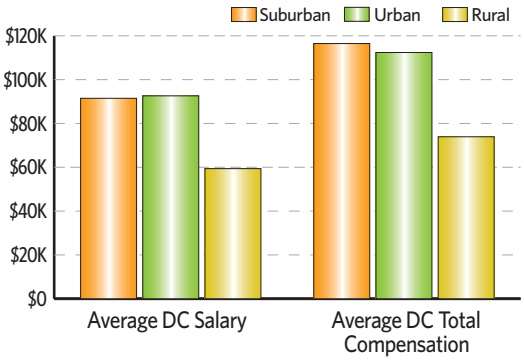
Likewise, urban chiropractors reported the highest average annual salary ($92,604), while suburban DCs had an annual average salary of $91,493, and rural practitioners averaged $59,380.

According to our survey, suburban DCs took the top again for an average total compensation of $116,471. Just under that, urban DCs reported an average total compensation of $112,387, while rural practitioners reported a total compensation of $73,921. ■

Suburban, City, and Rural Comparisons



Average DC Compensation by Locality



Young guns again

HOW MANY HOURS do you work a week? Is it more than your fellow DCs or less? Our respondents, aged 25 years old to 80 years old, indicated how much time they spent in patient care each week.

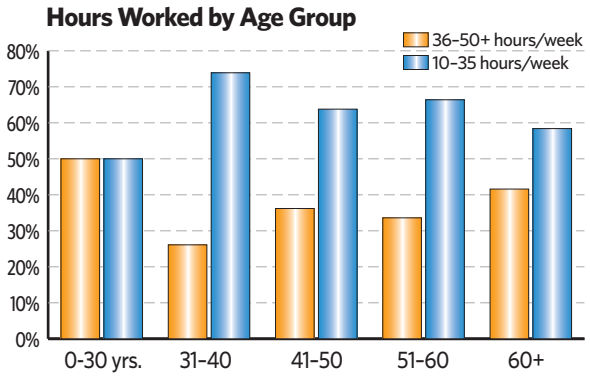
The "under 30" respondents are the go-getters of all the age groups — with 50.0 percent reporting they spend 36 or more hours per week with patients. The "over 60" group was not too far behind with 41.6 percent.

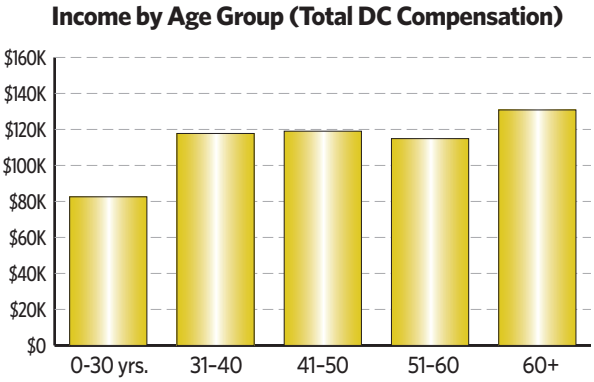
The group that spent the least amount of time with patients was the 31- to 40-year-old age group, with only 26.1 percent disclosing they spend 36 or more hours with patients.

Again this year, age and compensation seemed to correlate, with older, more experienced DCs having higher average total compensations.

The "over 60" group saw the highest average compensation at $130,842, with the other age groups lagging behind. The average total compensations for the 41- to 50-year-old age group came in second with $119,041, the 31- to 40-year-old age group followed with $117,765, and the 51- to 60-year-old age group trailed with $114,904.

The youngest group came in last with $82,572. ■





They work hard for the money

As you know, it takes many people to make a practice run smoothly. With all the hard work put in from your staff, are they being compensated fairly and receiving good benefits?

One way to improve staff retention and ensure your staff stays happy, is to reward them for the hard work they put in.

For this survey, we asked for salary information on full-time employees only — not part time — to try and get a better understanding of salaries. We defined "full time" as employees who work 30 hours or more a week.

We found that practices employ on average 3.2 employees, with 2.2 qualifying as full time.

The average salary paid to those full-time employees was:

- CA — $26,101;
- Licensed massage therapist (LMT) — $24,823;
- Physical therapist (PT) — $66,674;
- Associate — $56,333; and
- DCs paid themselves $87,538.

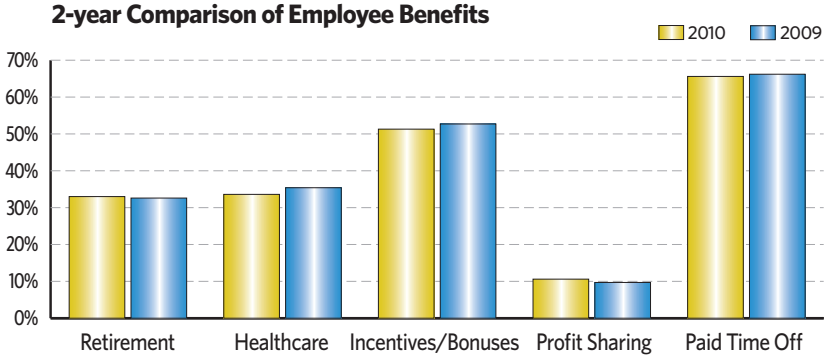
While salaries are important, many people consider the benefits a job offers much more important than money alone. This year's survey saw a slight increase in retirement programs. Thirty-three percent of our respondents offered some type of retirement plan compared to 32.6 percent last year.

However, those offering a healthcare plan declined from 35.4 percent last year to 32.6 this year.

Respondents offering paid time off — a combination of vacation and/or sick days — dropped to 65.5 percent this year compared to 66.2 percent last year and 73.5 percent in 2008.

This year, however, those offering incentives and bonuses and/or profit sharing rose from 52.7 percent last year to 57.9 percent this year. ■

2-year Comparison of Employee Benefits



Say my name

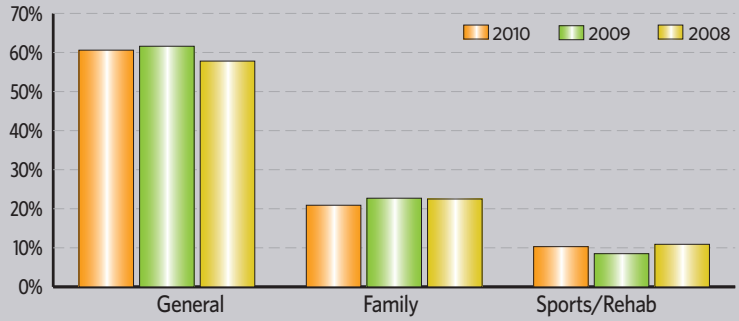
The name on the door can make or break your practice. What you call your practice determines which type of patients you see, the type of practice you are, and how people will perceive you.

Having a general practice still reigned in 2010 when it came to the specialty with 60.6 percent of the respondents choosing that over having a family practice (20.9 percent) or a sports/rehab practice (10.3 percent).

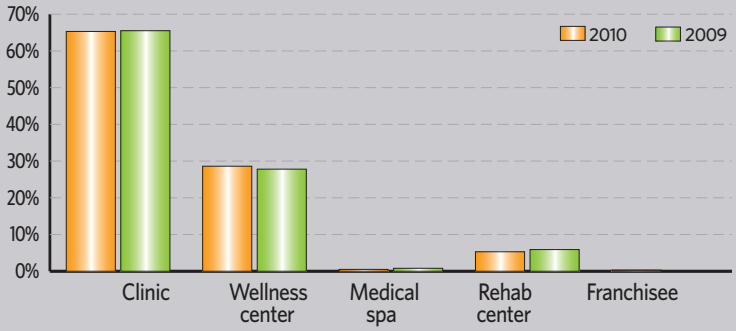
Clinic still continues to be the popular label, with 65.3 percent of respondents saying "clinic" most closely matches the name of their practice.

Wellness center was still second at 28.6 percent and rehab center takes third place again with 5.3 percent. All labels are close to the same as a year ago.

Chiropractic Specialties



2-Year Comparison of Practice Labels



Show me the money

ALTHOUGH OUR SURVEY only covers a few, there are many different ways your practice brings in money.

This year, we asked about insurance reimbursement, cash payments for treatments, auto insurance, Medicare, workers' compensation reimbursements, retail, diagnostics, Medicaid, and consulting.

The amount of revenues generated from each source remained approximately the same as the previous year, however, it should be noted that both auto insurance and Medicare rose slightly, while insurance and cash decreased.

Auto insurance, Medicare, and retail all rose 1.1 percent from the previous year. ■

Sources of Income

	2010	2009
Insurance	41.1%	42.1%
Cash	31.9%	34.3%
Auto Insurance	12.9%	11.8%
Medicare	12.6%	11.5%
Workers' comp	4.9%	4.4%
Retail	5.2%	4.1%
Diagnostics	2.4%	2.8%
Medicaid	2.9%	2.6%
Consulting	0.9%	0.7%

Sell-ebration

OFFERING PRODUCTS to patients is a great way to bring in added revenue to your practice, and apparently, most DCs agree. More than 96 percent of all respondents said they sold at least one product in their practice.

Each year, the number of chiropractors selling products increases. Last year 96.2 percent of DCs sold products and in 2008 it was 91.8 percent.

Which products do respondents offer? The top five include:

Nutritional products/supplements. At 76.5 percent, this category still remains the top choice;

Ointments. With 70.1 percent, almost equal to last year, ointments remained in the top five;

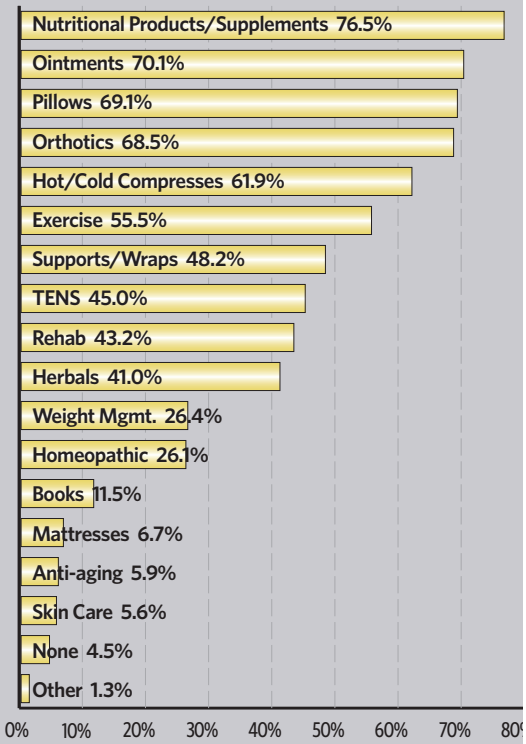
Pillows. 69.1 percent of the respondents still placed pillows at the top of their list;

Orthotics. Is fourth this year with 68.5 percent; and

Hot/cold compresses. 61.9 percent, remaining steady from the previous year.

Noteworthy: The percent of chiropractors offering TENS increased to 45 percent, up from 36.3 percent last year. Similarly, homeopathic products increased from 18.6 percent last year, to 26.1 percent this year.

Which Products Are Offered to Patients?



How low can you go?

TWO COMPONENTS to a profitable business are low overhead costs and good revenues. Our survey asked respondents to identify their expenses in three key areas — advertising, malpractice insurance, and office lease or mortgage.

Advertising. Average costs in this year's survey were $10,660, representing a decrease from last year's costs of $12,605.

Malpractice insurance. Respondents reported an average expense of $2,405, pretty comparable to last year's costs of $2,335.

Office lease or mortgage. Average costs were $26,146, a fairly sizeable increase from $23,692 in 2009 and $23,259 in 2008. ■

Major Practice Expenses

	2010	2009
Advertising	$10,660	$12,605
Malpractice insurance	$2,405	$2,335
Office lease or mortgage (yr)	$26,146	$23,692

Specialists make it happen

NOT ONLY IS IT BENEFICIAL to be a specialist in a clinic, but employing specialists also increases your practice's bottom line.

Each year, the results of our survey show an increase in compensation, among other things.

More than half of our survey respondents said they employed at least one specialist in their clinic — whether it is a licensed massage therapist (LMT), physical therapist (PT), acupuncturist, medical doctor (MD or DO), nutritionist, or trainer. These specialists may work as either an employee or as a contractor.

Clinics employing specialists see more patients per week (131.1, compared to 111.9 patients per week in nonspecialist clinics); bill more (average of $622,530 versus $376,840); and collect more (average of $371,809 versus $269,204).

Ultimately, what this equates to is higher compensation for the doctors of chiropractic.

The average total compensation for DCs who employ specialists is $116,050, compared to $107,952 for those who don't.

The only category where DCs without specialists full time topped those with was in the new patients' category.

Chiropractors who employed specialists, average 5.5 new patients a week compared to 6.1 for nonspecialist doctors.

Modalities offered

Most of the respondents have at least one specialist on staff, with many choosing to hire an LMT. Our survey showed that 80.9 percent of *all* respondents have at least one LMT.

Other popular specialists include:

- Acupuncturist, 17.5 percent;
- Nutritionist, 15.1 percent;
- Trainer, 12.5 percent;
- MD/DO, 10.5 percent; and
- PT, 10.0 percent.

Respondents indicated they offer many modalities, even if they do not have specialists who provide them. These modalities include:

- Nutrition, 64.4 percent;
- Exercise, 61.9 percent;
- Physical therapy, 59.3 percent;
- Massage, 57.3 percent;
- Weight loss, 30.5 percent;
- Acupuncture, 24.0 percent; and
- Homeopathy, 14.1 percent.

How Specialists Boost Your Income

	Specialists (Employed)	No Specialists (Contracted)
Mean Total Comp	$116,050	$107,952
Expenses		
Advertising	$13,033	$8,289
Malpractice insurance	$2,427	$2,388
Office lease/mortgage (yr)	$29,853	$29,720
Salary		
Associate	$57,681	$48,214
CA	$28,915	$24,759
LMT	$25,038	$20,000
PT	$75,333	$40,696
DC	$92,796	$89,839