

300 this September, for a total of 2500 first-year medical students.

Hypertension chair: The first ever Canadian Chair in Hypertension Prevention and Control will be filled by Dr. Norm Campbell from the University of Calgary. The chair has funding of \$900 000 over 5 years from the Canadian Hypertension Society, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Canada's Research-based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D), sanofi-aventis and Blood Pressure Canada. Campbell will expand the Canadian Hypertension Education Program, develop a comprehensive national surveillance plan, increase public awareness and lobby to eliminate indiscriminate addition of salt by the public food sector.

Teamster doctors: Frustrated by a 20% cut in fee schedules and restrictions on medical care by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, nearly 300 central New York State physicians have joined the 1-million strong Teamsters Local 1149. According to *amednews.com*, the union is planning to push for state legislation to allow physicians to bargain collectively, something federal antitrust law now prohibits. — Compiled by Barbara Sibbald, *CMAJ*

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PULSE

Happy doctors? Balancing professional and personal commitments

A recent Pulse article (*CMAJ* 2006;174[8]:1070) gave a glimpse into the degree of satisfaction specialists reported having with their current professional lives. In this issue, additional results from the 2004 CFPC/CMA/RCPC National Physician Survey reveal some more surprises, this time with how respondents viewed the balance between their personal and professional lives.

As Fig. 1 shows, physicians in spe-

cialties such as cardiology, urology and radiation oncology, which are often perceived as having better lifestyles (i.e., better work hours and lighter call schedules, and therefore more time for personal commitments) were among the 10 least satisfied specialist groups. Physicians among the 10 most satisfied groups, including psychiatry, ophthalmology, psychiatry, dermatology and radiology, were less of a surprise.

Less than 50% of the members of 7 specialist groups (respirology, urology, endocrinology/metabolism, gastroenterology, medical oncology, he-

matology and biochemistry) were “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the balance between their professional and personal commitments.

The low satisfaction rates among Canada's physician workforce is an impetus for further examination of this issue. There is ample literature on physician well-being, and although few would probably question that progress has been made, it is clearly not yet enough. — Mark O. Baerlocher, Toronto

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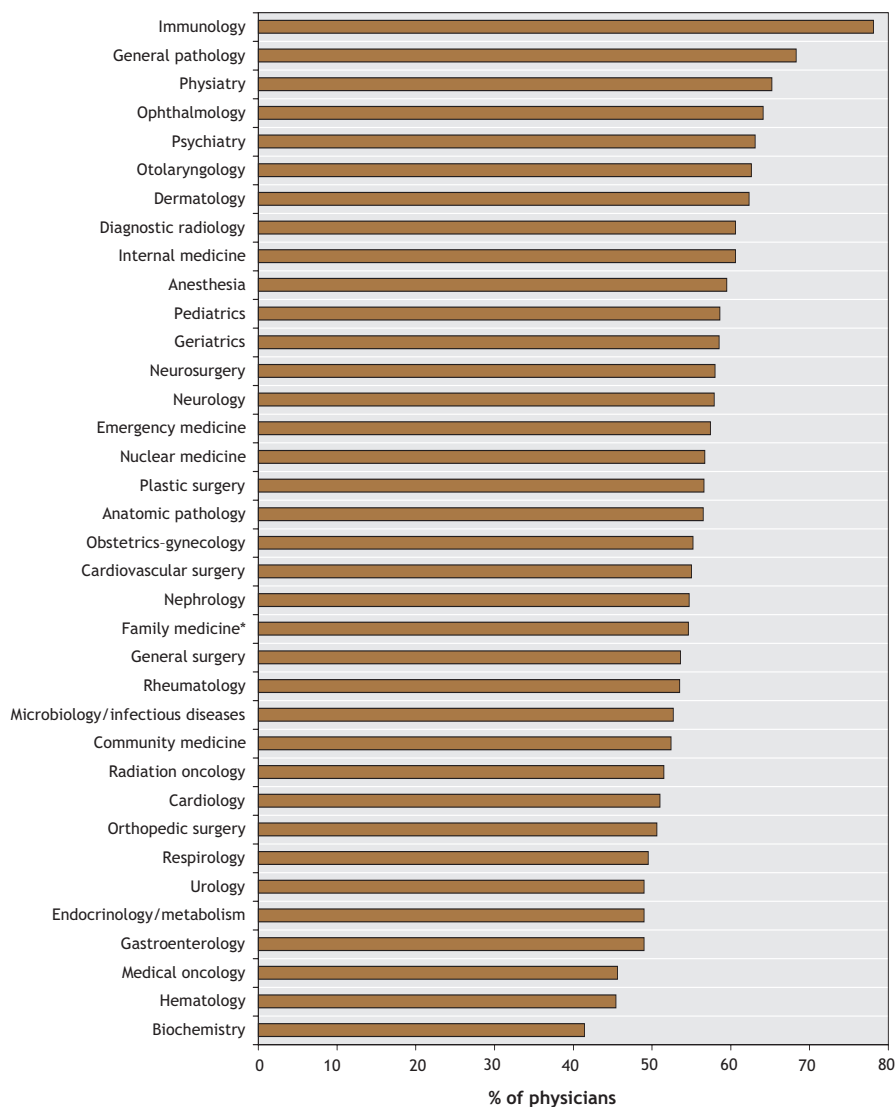


Fig. 1: Proportion of physicians who were somewhat or very satisfied with the balance between their personal and professional commitments, by specialty. Source: 2004 CFPC/CMA/RCPC National Physician Survey. *Includes CCFP and non-CCFP family physicians.