

20% of clinicians considering leaving primary care in light of COVID-19-linked financial challenges: survey

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The primary care industry is contracting in the face of financial challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, [according to a new survey](#) (PDF) from the Larry A. Green Center and Primary Care Collaborative.

In August, 2% of practices closed while another 2% are considering bankruptcy, the survey found.

One in 10 practices indicated they were uncertain of their solvency for the coming month. The survey also found 20% of clinicians said they were considering leaving primary care, and 13% said they were uncertain of their future in the profession.

The survey was conducted by the Larry A. Green Center, a research group in Richmond, Virginia, and garnered 636 responses from doctors in 47 states. The survey is part of a series looking at the attitudes of primary care clinicians and patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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It comes amid other indicators of financial concern for the primary care over the last month, the survey found, including:

- 47% of clinicians saying they've had clinicians or staff out due to illness or self-quarantine
- 21% have had layoffs or furloughs
- 28% have had a 30% to 50% drop in fee-for-service revenue (46% have seen a similar drop in patient volume)
- 24% have shut down pre-pandemic quality initiatives
- 34% have cut services offered to patients
- 34% have pulled back or cut educational training

Meanwhile, clinicians reported observing examples of worsening patient health and social conditions including higher levels of mental health concerns (86%), more sleep issues (77%), weight gain (73%), food insecurity among patients (34%), housing insecurity among patients (38%) and an increased difficulty paying bills reported by patients (58%).

“Patients—many who have delayed care and are in economic jeopardy with federal unemployment support sunsetting—are presenting with a broader array of needs,” said Ann Greiner, president and CEO of PCC, in a statement. “Primary care is responding by strengthening partnerships with public and behavioral health yet experiencing historic drops in revenue. We say to public and private policy makers:

Primary care needs an immediate lifeline."