2024 HEALTH POLICY SURVEY RESULTS

Western Section American Urological Association



Eugene Y. Rhee, M.D., MBA Chair, Health Policy Committee

<u>An educational supplement to the WSAUA Health Policy Forum,</u> <u>October 27, 2024 – Grand Hyatt Hotel, Kauai, Hawaii</u>



2024 Health Policy Committee

Chair: Eugene Rhee, MD, MBA

Name	HP District	Territory
Greg Lund, MD	1	Alaska
Ken Berger, MD	2	Washington
Brian Duty, MD	3	Oregon
Peter Bretan, MD	4	N. Cal +Alameda & Contra Costa Counties
Joseph R. Kuntze MD	5	San Francisco, San Mateo & Santa Clara Counties and Central California
John Lam, MD	6	Los Angeles +Ventura County
Roger Sur, MD	7	San Diego
Karen Stern, MD	8	Arizona
Lisa Bland, MD	9	Idaho, Montana, Wyoming
Seth Cohen, MD	10	Orange County
Forrest Jellison, MD	11	Inland Empire
Joseph Candela, MD	12	Nevada
Lane Childs, MD	13	Utah

Revised 7-11-24

Advisors:

- Imm. Past-Chair: Jeffrey M. Frankel, MD
- Advocacy/Practice Mgmt: Jason Jameson, MD
- Young Urologist Rep: Juan Andino, MD*
- Consultant: Amani Abou Zam-zam, MBA

2024

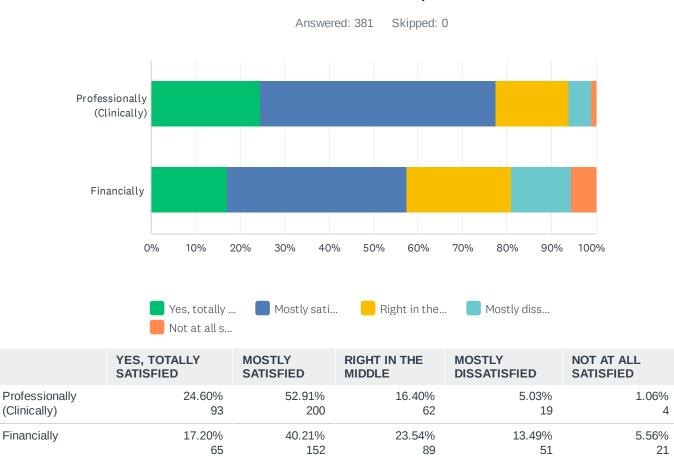
OVERALL RESPONSE RATE

Total Possible = 1,882

Total Responding = 381

20.24%

Q1 Are you satisfied with your urologic practice? (please select one choice for each row)

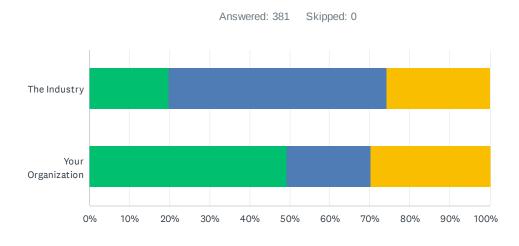


TOTAL

378

378

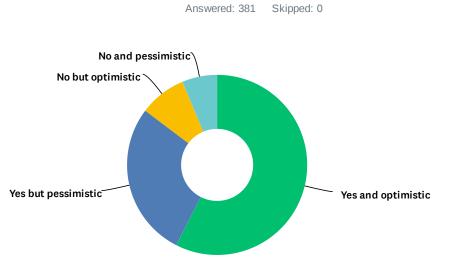
Q2 Overall, how do you assess the current state of the healthcare industry and that of your own organization?



📕 Right Track 👘 🛑 Wrong Track 🛑 Undecided

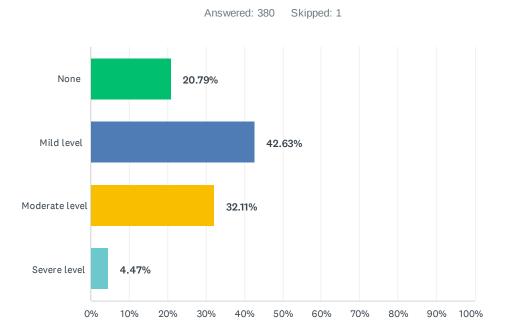
	RIGHT TRACK	WRONG TRACK	UNDECIDED	TOTAL
The Industry	19.79% 75	54.35% 206	25.86% 98	379
Your Organization	49.21% 186	21.16% 80	29.63% 112	378

Q3 Do you feel that your current practice is viable and will remain so for the next 3-5 years?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes and optimistic	57.48%	219
Yes but pessimistic	27.82%	106
No but optimistic	8.40%	32
No and pessimistic	6.30%	24
TOTAL		381

Q4 Using the following definition of burnout, how would you define your current level of burnout? (If you're experiencing chronic exhaustion, cynicism, detachment from your job or personal life, a sense of ineffectiveness, and a decline in performance, or physical symptoms, you might be moving toward burnout.)



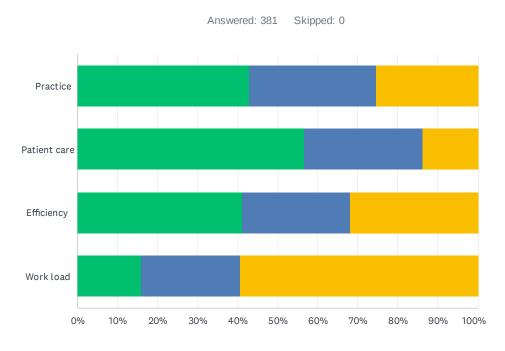
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	20.79%	79
Mild level	42.63%	162
Moderate level	32.11%	122
Severe level	4.47%	17
TOTAL		380

Answered: 381 Skipped: 0 Disagree 4.99% Neutral 19.42% Agree 75.59% 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Q5 Taking urology call (on-call work) significantly adds stress to my life

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Disagree	4.99%	19
Neutral	19.42%	74
Agree	75.59%	288
TOTAL		381

Q6 Which of the following best describe the overall impact of an EHR on you and your practice?

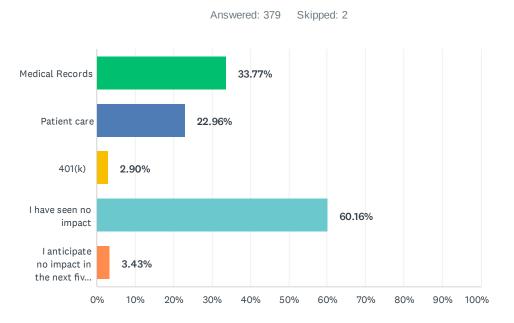


Neutral im... Negative i...

Positive im...

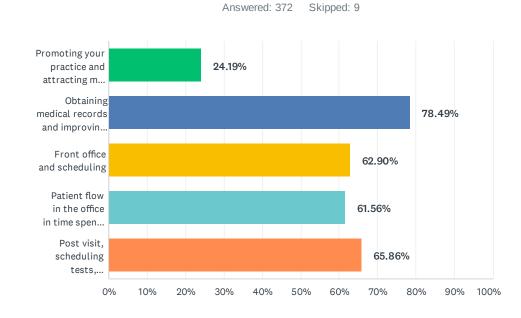
	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEUTRAL IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT	TOTAL
Practice	42.89%	31.84%	25.26%	
	163	121	96	380
Patient care	56.73%	29.55%	13.72%	
	215	112	52	379
Efficiency	41.05%	27.11%	31.84%	
	156	103	121	380
Work load	16.05%	24.74%	59.21%	
	61	94	225	380

Q7 Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) has become the magic word for the future of medicine. Have you seen any impact at this point and where would you see it impact ideally?



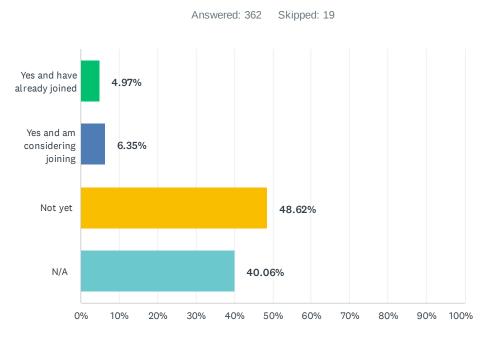
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Medical Records	33.77%	128
Patient care	22.96%	87
401(k)	2.90%	11
I have seen no impact	60.16%	228
I anticipate no impact in the next five years	3.43%	13
Total Respondents: 379		

Q8 Where would you like to see the future of technology/A.I./other advancements to help better proportion your time and create efficiency.



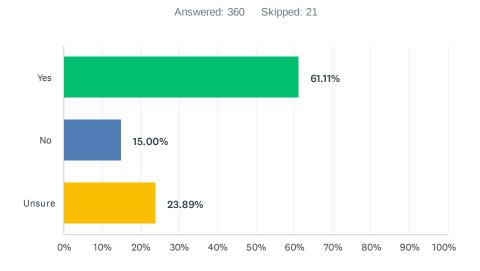
ANSWER CHOICES RESPONSES 24.19% 90 Promoting your practice and attracting more patients to the practice 78.49% 292 Obtaining medical records and improving the flow of information 62.90% 234 Front office and scheduling 61.56% 229 Patient flow in the office in time spent with a patient disseminating information 65.86% 245 Post visit, scheduling tests, surgeries, follow ups Total Respondents: 372

Q9 Have you been impacted/approached by private equity group? If yes, are you considering joining private equity or have you joined a private equity group?



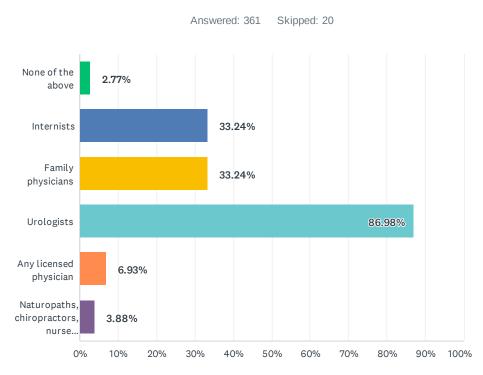
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes and have already joined	4.97%	18
Yes and am considering joining	6.35%	23
Not yet	48.62%	176
N/A	40.06%	145
TOTAL		362

Q10 Do you think men's health clinics, which focus on male reproductive and urinary health, pose a public health threat due to their promotion of unproven treatments?



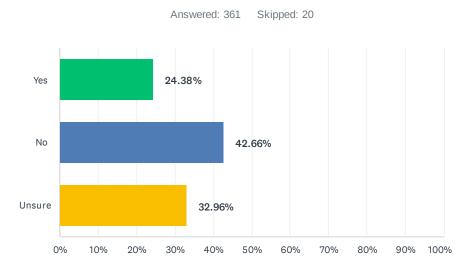
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.11% 2	220
No	15.00%	54
Unsure	23.89%	86
TOTAL	3	360

Q11 The primary providers for men's health clinics should be? (may choose more than one)



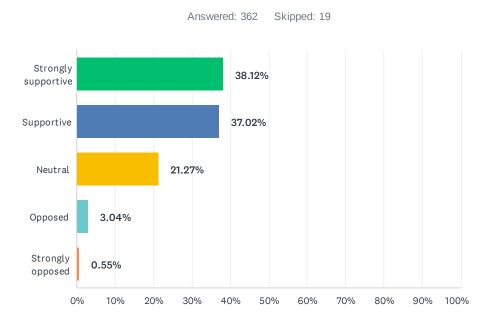
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	2.77%	10
Internists	33.24%	120
Family physicians	33.24%	120
Urologists	86.98%	314
Any licensed physician	6.93%	25
Naturopaths, chiropractors, nurse practitioners, or physician assistants	3.88%	14
Total Respondents: 361		

Q12 Do you have any payer contracts that provide quality incentives?



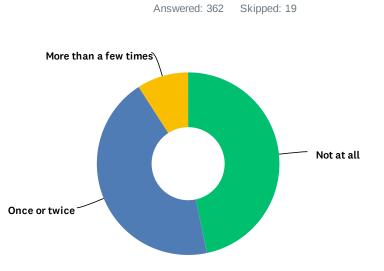
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	24.38%	88
No	42.66%	154
Unsure	32.96%	119
TOTAL		361

Q13 How do you feel about Advance Practice Providers (APP's) in the urology workforce?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly supportive	38.12% 13	38
Supportive	37.02% 13	34
Neutral	21.27%	77
Opposed	3.04%	11
Strongly opposed	0.55%	2
TOTAL	36	52

Q14 Over the last 4 years, have you (or your staff) been in fear for your personal safety while in the performance of your patient care giving?



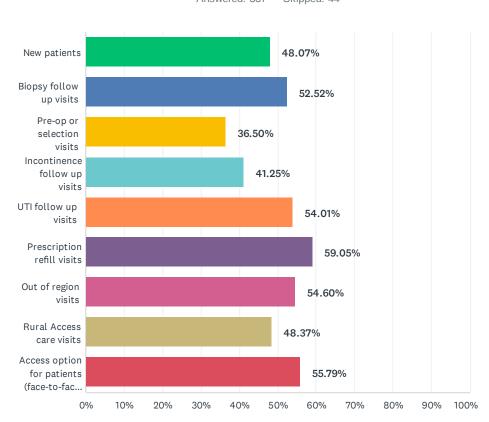
	NOT AT ALL	ONCE OR TWICE	MORE THAN A FEW TIMES	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Response	46.69% 169	44.20% 160	9.12% 33	362	1.62

Answered: 360 Skipped: 21 Yes planning 25.83% to expand Yes continue 55.83% status Quo Yes but planning to 7.78% scale back No 10.56% 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Q15 Are you planning to continue offering Telehealth to your patients?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes planning to expand	25.83%	93
Yes continue status Quo	55.83%	201
Yes but planning to scale back	7.78%	28
No	10.56%	38
TOTAL		360

Q16 For what type of visits are you using billable Telehealth or telephone visits? (check all that apply)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
New patients	48.07%	162
Biopsy follow up visits	52.52%	177
Pre-op or selection visits	36.50%	123
Incontinence follow up visits	41.25%	139
UTI follow up visits	54.01%	182
Prescription refill visits	59.05%	199
Out of region visits	54.60%	184
Rural Access care visits	48.37%	163
Access option for patients (face-to-face, video visits or phone)	55.79%	188
Total Respondents: 337		

Answered: 337 Skipped: 44

Q17 Please describe any other billing or health policy issues that have been raised in your state or area that are important to you?

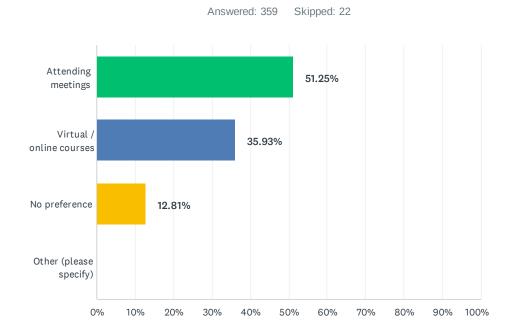
Answered: 105 Skipped: 276

#	RESPONSES	DATE
<i>"</i> 1	We're not paid enough and they keep trying to pay us less	8/31/2024 6:26 PM
2	Working for a hospital allows them to dictate your practice pattern, and if you don't like it they can halt the flow of new patients in their organization to you which is exactly what happened to me. So I retired as do not have a viable practice anymore	8/29/2024 8:23 PM
3	Concerned that there is no recognition that Medicare advantage plans will likely end our ability to be financially viable in the future	8/29/2024 11:41 AM
4	Not sure	8/28/2024 6:54 PM
5	none that I am aware of	8/28/2024 7:06 AM
6	What is the average wrvu reimbursement rate per state	8/27/2024 9:24 PM
7	Not aware.	8/26/2024 11:50 AM
8	The Blues are the sheriff in my area	8/25/2024 6:48 PM
9	Prior auths Inappropriate downcoding and claims denials	8/25/2024 6:20 PM
10	low medicare and medicaid reimbursements	8/25/2024 11:21 AM
11	Medicare reimbursement going down	8/23/2024 4:23 PM
12	HoLEP is far under -reimbursed compared to other BPH surgeries that are less efficacious. I think the RVUs should be commensurate to the quality , difficulty, and durability of this superior operation	8/22/2024 9:49 AM
13	NA	8/20/2024 11:28 PM
14	prior authorization	8/20/2024 11:40 AM
15	testosterone coverage	8/20/2024 7:12 AM
16	medicare sequestration	8/19/2024 1:26 PM
17	I have established patients who are out of state and need to drive in-state to do telehealth appointments with me.	8/19/2024 12:39 PM
18	More concerned with federal imp	8/19/2024 11:32 AM
19	Prior authorization for prescriptions is extremely burdensome	8/19/2024 10:31 AM
20	Coding changes	8/19/2024 5:15 AM
21	Standardization of reimbursement for Telehealth visits.	8/18/2024 3:50 PM
22	Robotic billing codes not up to date.	8/18/2024 3:05 PM
23	coverage for new technology like hifu that is fda approved and paid for by medicare but not by blue cross blue shield	8/17/2024 5:41 PM
24	I strongly support continued telehealth services with recommendation to allow for across state lines	8/17/2024 1:00 PM
25	We must support the continuation of payment for Telehealth from CMS and private payers. We	8/17/2024 10:54 AM
	must be able to provide Telehealth services across state lines.	

27	None	8/17/2024 7:42 AM
28	Not applicable	8/16/2024 10:14 PM
29	None that I can think of	8/16/2024 9:39 PM
30	None	8/16/2024 2:54 PM
31	GET in Hawaii	8/16/2024 2:14 PM
32	decreased reimbursement	8/16/2024 1:31 PM
33	Aquablation-> pain!	8/16/2024 1:19 PM
34	prior auth requirement	8/16/2024 12:54 PM
35	None	8/16/2024 12:49 PM
36	The Blues own CA. They are , and have been, obstructive by nature toward physicians.	8/16/2024 12:40 PM
37	failures of insurance to keep up with inflation	8/16/2024 12:31 PM
38	Oregon value added tax is absurd and hurts us badly	8/16/2024 11:26 AM
39	Urologist shortages and ER coverage are a big problem in most of our state (Arizona)	8/16/2024 11:13 AM
40	None	8/16/2024 11:04 AM
41	Decreased compensation	8/16/2024 10:49 AM
12	Surgery for transgender individuals	8/16/2024 10:47 AM
13	n/a	8/16/2024 10:39 AM
14	None	8/16/2024 10:37 AM
15	None	8/16/2024 10:35 AM
16	insurance reimbursement has NOT changed even though overhead is much higher and staff want more money hourly.	8/16/2024 10:27 AM
17	Insurance coverage and contract issues	8/16/2024 10:26 AM
18	insurance barriers to advances in cancer diagnostics and testing	8/16/2024 10:22 AM
19	covid gag rules -	8/14/2024 6:31 PM
50	I would love to end California Fluoroscopy licensing.	8/14/2024 4:40 PM
51	insurance companies continuing to deny things that we know are payable!	8/14/2024 2:17 PM
52	Prior authorization induced delays in clinical care	8/12/2024 3:43 AM
53	Negative direction for tort reform	8/4/2024 3:45 PM
54	Urology health personnel shortage.	8/4/2024 11:09 AM
55	Ach or beta 3 coverage	8/3/2024 4:10 PM
56	ER closures	8/2/2024 10:11 AM
57	The ability to provide virtual visits in close neighboring states.	8/2/2024 9:34 AM
58	Medicare Physician Assistant/associate reimbursement at 80%	8/2/2024 4:33 AM
59	Inability to add Microscope code to varicocelectomy	8/1/2024 7:50 PM
60	Na	8/1/2024 5:03 PM
61	N/A	8/1/2024 4:54 PM
62	N/A	8/1/2024 4:48 PM
63	Naturopaths performing vasectomies, independent chaperones for GU examinations, completing consent forms for GU examinations and DREs.	7/31/2024 4:43 PM

Access to care for uninsured	7/30/2024 10:16 AM
Authorization is cumbersome, P2P inefficient	7/29/2024 9:13 PM
NA	7/29/2024 7:30 PM
Telehealth visits not recognized by CMS as equivalent to face to face visi	its 7/29/2024 5:08 PM
Vasectomies done by naturopathic providers	7/29/2024 10:18 AM
NA	7/29/2024 10:18 AM
nation wide ehr. how many of these patients care about the secrecy of the they care more about doctors having the most current info available to hel even the best ehr systems get hacked. thats life.	
Denials for surg scheduling overnight stay after surgery by ins companies stays or deny entire procedure	dictating full inpt 7/29/2024 7:29 AM
None	7/29/2024 6:41 AM
none	7/29/2024 6:40 AM
Main issue is CA and insurance strangle hold on reimbursement levels. Correach by phone, etc. to discuss issues.	ompanies are to 7/29/2024 6:34 AM
medicare rates	7/29/2024 6:08 AM
Drug prices	7/28/2024 11:48 PM
DEI is a cancer that is infiltrating medical schools and residency programs I would question the academic credentials of any minority Physician - not but because of the prioritization of social criteria for medical school and re Academic achievement should be the primary criteria.	because I am racist,
Billing reimbursement in the hospital setting vs in the hospital clinic setting	g 7/28/2024 9:44 PM
Prior auth, better Medicare and medi-cal reimbursement	7/28/2024 9:22 PM
Limitations of reproductive health access for women is a huge health polic	cy issue. 7/28/2024 9:05 PM
UCSF and Stanford not caring for post op complication Refuses to transfe	er pt to their hospital 7/28/2024 8:52 PM
MA's prohibited from placing or removing foleys	7/28/2024 7:40 PM
Payment in a timely manner	7/28/2024 7:39 PM
None	7/28/2024 7:30 PM
Rural health clinics	7/28/2024 7:00 PM
Testosterone insurance coverage	7/28/2024 6:36 PM
Health care employee increased minimum wage.	7/28/2024 6:31 PM
None	7/28/2024 6:25 PM
Remote supervision of rad onc	7/28/2024 5:54 PM
Modifier 25 payment Minimum pay for health care workers Continued mea MIPS/CMS garbage in garbage out "quality" program	aninglessness of 7/28/2024 5:47 PM
N/a	7/28/2024 5:43 PM
There has been a rise in the number of hostile visits. While I do not feel er personally, my staff often desribe these difficult patients. We could use m urologists and staff about how to manage this frustrating rise against civili	ore advice for
N/A	7/28/2024 5:27 PM
N/A	7/28/2024 5:15 PM

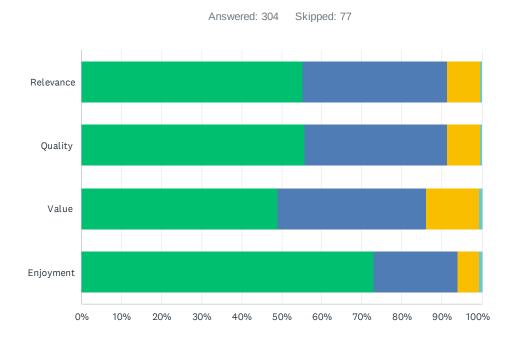
96	None	7/28/2024 4:58 PM
97	Washington reportedly had a bill to bring Medicaid reimbursement up to Medicare levels but this apparently died in committee so we have been forced to try to limit how many Medicaid patients we see as a practice as reimbursement for these patients unfortunately is not reasonable. Insurance denials or peer to peer requirements for patients with clear indication for procedures or medications are infuriating and continue to interfere with patient care	7/28/2024 4:57 PM
98	In my area, academic facilities are getting significantly higher reimbursement for possibly lower quality of care from several PPO's. Also, there are facility fee payments. I find this absurd as academic facilities also generally get larger funding from state. This is unfair and should be addressed by AUA and AMA.	7/28/2024 4:56 PM
99	Continued decrease in payments	7/28/2024 4:53 PM
100	Declining reimbursement overall Unpaid call On call burden Burnout Workplace safety Emr bloat Administrative bloat and rising cost of care while public perception is putting pressure on physician salaries	7/28/2024 4:48 PM
101	As you know, prior authorizations and denials are onerous, time consuming, non-productive, detrimental to patient care and should be abolished.	7/28/2024 4:45 PM
102	reimbursement related to uncommon procedures and bundling of multiple procedures	7/28/2024 4:42 PM
103	none	7/28/2024 4:40 PM
104	Need unity and a concerted voice	7/28/2024 4:39 PM
105	Prior authorizations and step therapy continue to create roadblocks and delays	7/28/2024 4:34 PM



Q18 For your CME needs, which do you generally prefer?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Attending meetings	51.25%	184
Virtual / online courses	35.93%	129
No preference	12.81%	46
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		359

Q19 If attended in the last 10 years, how would you rate the Western Section annual meetings?



	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE	
Relevance	55.12% 167	36.30% 110	8.25% 25	0.33% 1	303		1.54
Quality	55.78% 169	35.64% 108	8.25% 25	0.33% 1	303		1.53
Value	49.17% 149	36.96% 112	13.20% 40	0.66% 2	303		1.65
Enjoyment	72.94% 221	21.12% 64	5.28% 16	0.66% 2	303		1.34

Average

Poor

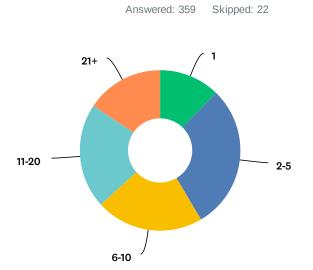
Excellent

Good

Q20 Please indicate your type of practice? (please check all that apply)

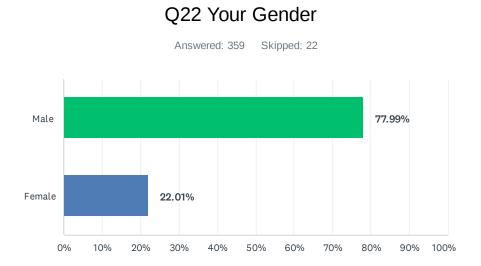
Answered: 359 Skipped: 22

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Private practice, urology solo	10.31%	37
Private practice, urology group or network	18.66%	67
Private practice, multi-specialty group	10.03%	36
Employee of an integrated health delivery system (e.g. Kaiser Permanente)	17.27%	62
Government / military employee	6.69%	24
Employee of teaching hospital / Academic center	24.23%	87
Employee of a hospital system	15.04%	54
Administrative	0.56%	2
Retired	1.67%	6
Other (please specify)	3.06%	11
Total Respondents: 359		



Q21 How many urologists are in your practice / group?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1	12.26% 44
2-5	29.25% 105
6-10	21.73% 78
11-20	21.17% 76
21+	15.60% 56
TOTAL	359



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	77.99%	280
Female	22.01%	79
TOTAL		359