

TennCare Primary Care Providers

TennCare primary care providers include those M.D.s and D.O.s with medical specialties of general practice, family practice, pediatrics, internal medicine, obstetrics or obstetrics/gynecology, and general preventive medicine (public health) who reported serving the TennCare population. Mid-level providers -- nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, and physician assistants -- are also included.

The full-time TennCare equivalency of each provider's practice was calculated based on the number of self-reported hours a provider is in direct patient care to the TennCare population--that is, not performing hospital or nursing home rounds, administrative work, teaching, etc., multiplied by the percent of each provider's practice that is devoted to TennCare. A default of 30 percent was used for those physicians who stated they took TennCare patients but who did not indicate a percentage.

A standard of a 40-hour work week in direct patient care is considered the equivalent of one full-time provider. Those reporting over 40 hours a week were counted as no greater than 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE).

In 2003, there were a reported 2,356 FTE TennCare primary care physicians estimated to be actively practicing direct patient primary care in the state. Of this total, 1,882, or 80 percent, were reportedly practicing in the four metropolitan counties of Davidson, Knox, Hamilton, and Shelby. Data for mid-levels show that a total of 103 FTE TennCare primary care providers were actively practicing in the state. Approximately 75 percent (or 77) were located in the 91 rural areas.

The numbers of persons who comprise TennCare enrollees was provided by the Bureau of TennCare and was obtained from their monthly rolls for December 31, 2002. In addition, the number of TennCare providers in metropolitan areas was obtained from the Bureau of TennCare and may contain some duplication due to the mechanism by which information is reported to the Bureau of TennCare by the managed care organizations (MCOs) and also how it is keyed into the database by TennCare.