



Research brief: TEXAS FAMILY PHYSICIANS AND FAMILY PLANNING

Results from a statewide survey

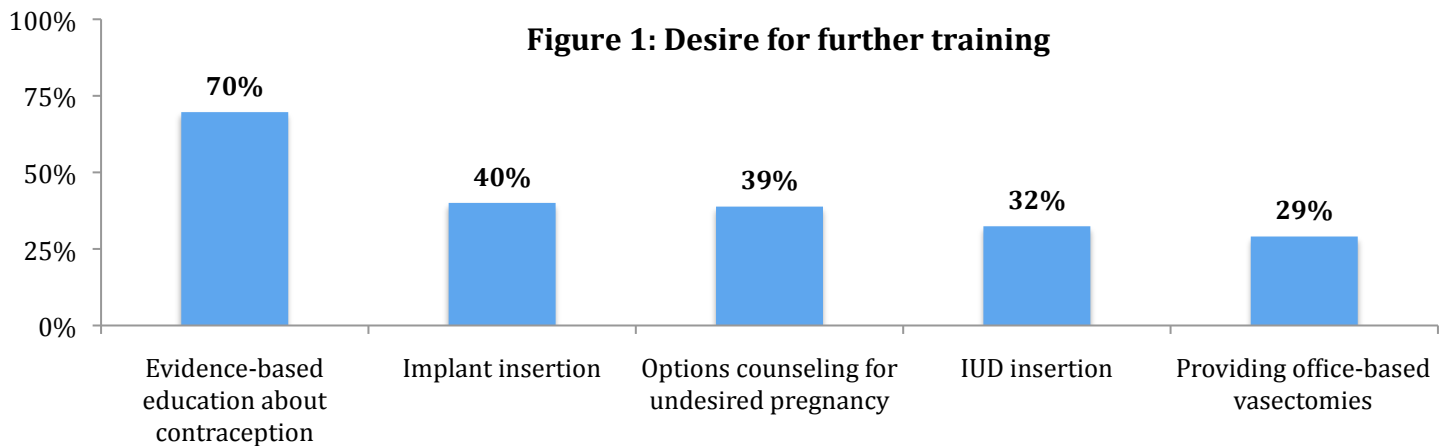
This research brief highlights findings from a survey of 693 family physicians in Texas about their knowledge, attitudes, and provision of family planning care in 2014 and 2015.

FINDINGS

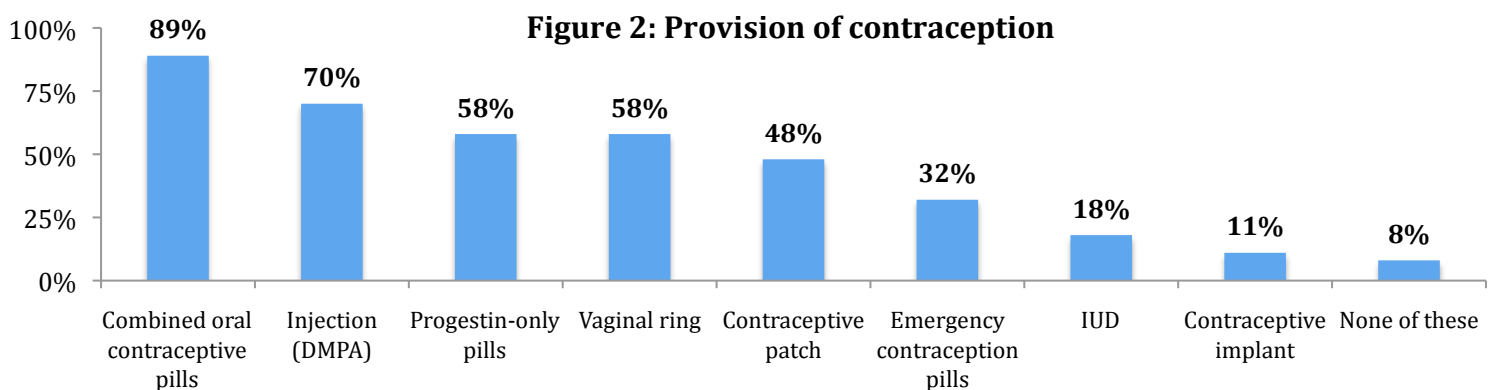
Family physicians in Texas want to provide family planning care for their patients.

- Almost all (98%) agreed that comprehensive contraceptive care is within the scope of family medicine.
- The vast majority (86%) agreed that providing comprehensive contraceptive care is something they want to do for their patients.

Although some family physicians (30% or less) felt proficient in providing a range of family planning services, many desired further training.



Provision of contraceptive methods was variable and notably lower for highly effective, reversible methods such as IUDs and contraceptive implants.



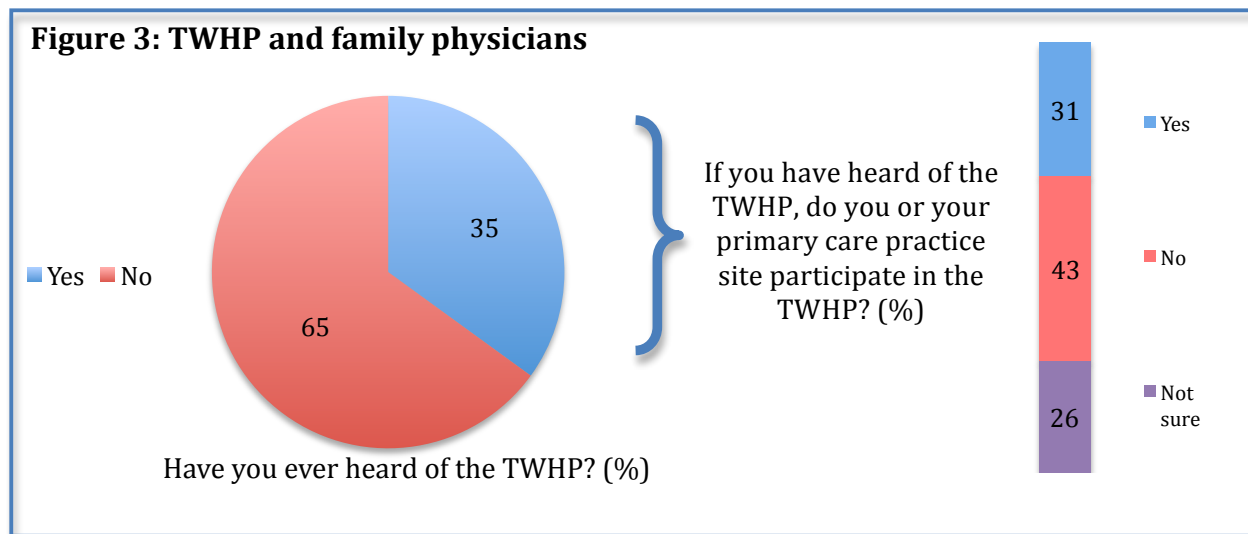
Among family physicians who offered IUDs and contraceptive implants, barriers to providing devices frequently included issues around billing/reimbursement and limited funds for devices and supplies.

Limitation	IUD providers (n=122)	Contraceptive implant providers (n=80)
Inadequate system for billing or reimbursement for devices	24%	20%
Financial barriers in their practice to purchase necessary devices and supplies	20%	18%

The majority of Texas family physicians who responded to the survey were not aware of recent changes to the state budget that prioritized funding distribution of family planning funds to primary care providers.

- 79% (536) were not aware that recent changes to the state family planning budget prioritized funding distribution of family planning funds to primary care providers.
- When asked if they felt recent changes to family planning funding in Texas would affect their patients, 36% (246) said yes.

Most Texas family physicians were unfamiliar the Texas Women’s Health Program (TWHP).



Potential implications

- Family physicians are well positioned to provide comprehensive family planning care for their patients, but many are not yet doing so, limiting options for patients who need this care.
- Texas family physicians desire additional training in family planning care, which could take place at academic conferences.
- Family physicians need new strategies to access available funding to meet their patients’ need for family planning care.

Methods

Participants were recruited from TAFP conferences, TAFP News Now, and by mail between July 2014 and March 2015. Participants had to be board-certified family physicians, licensed and practicing in Texas at the time of survey completion, and see women of reproductive age (13-50) in their practice.

A total of 693 unique completed surveys were included in this analysis, which represents approximately 15% of the TAFP membership.

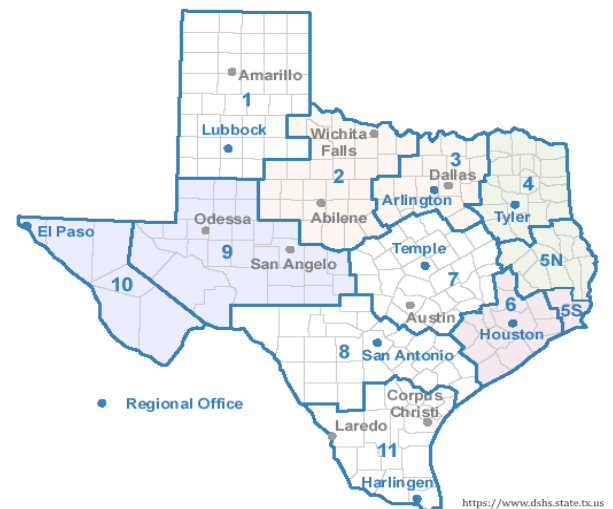
Tables 1-3 show demographic information for the study population.

Table 1: Respondent characteristics (n=693)	
Race	(%)
White	60
Asian	20
Hispanic	12
Black	6
Prefer not to say	4
Other	2
Gender	(%)
Male	50
Female	49
Prefer not to say	1
Years since residency (mean)	14.3

Table 2: Practice characteristics	
Practice type	(%)
Private	58
Public	19
Academic	13
Other	13
Hospital	11
Practice setting	
Suburban	41
Urban	40
Rural	19
In the previous 6 months...	
...patients that were female and age 13-50	39
...female patients age 13-50, with whom you discussed contraception at least once	36

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by DSHS Health Service Region		
Region	TAFP members (%)	Study sample (%)
1	4	4
2	3	2
3	25	26
4	4	5
5	2	1
6	22	24
7	17	18
8	13	12
9	2	2
10	2	2
11	7	4

Figure 4: Map of Texas DSHS Public Health Service Region, 2014



This research was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Albert Einstein College of Medicine and made possible in part by the cooperation of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians (TAFP). Questions and comments can be emailed to Bhavik Kumar, MD MPH at texasfamilydocs@gmail.com