

APA Fact Sheet Series on Psychologist Supply and Demand Projections 2015-2030:

Demand by Employment Setting

Key Findings

- By 2030, there is a projected demand of **101,120 FTE** psychologists in the U.S., an increase of **5,940 FTEs (6%)** from 2015.
- By employment setting, projected demand for psychologists in 2030 is highest for services provided in **offices of health practitioners - 41,800 FTEs**, or 41% of total projected demand in 2030 - followed by **elementary and secondary schools (15,610 FTEs)** and **hospitals (14,960 FTEs)**.
- Between 2015 and 2030, the largest demand increase for psychologists is expected to be in **hospitals**, with an increase of **3,060 FTEs**, followed by **“other settings”** (an increase of 1,370 FTEs), and **individual and family service settings** (an increase of 440 FTEs).

Background

Workforce projections¹ examine current and future psychologist supply and demand in the United States from 2015 to 2030. Supply is determined on the basis of the number of licensed psychologists active in the workforce,² new entrants, and workforce participation patterns, whereas demand is determined on the basis of current patterns of service utilization and projected demographic changes of the U.S. population.

The projections are described in terms of full-time equivalent (FTE) psychologists. An FTE is defined as a licensed, doctoral-level psychologist who works 39 hours per week.

Findings

From 2015 to 2030, the national demand for psychologists is projected to increase to 101,120 FTEs. That is an increase of 5,940 FTEs (6%) from the demand level in 2015.

By employment setting, projected demand for psychologists in 2030 is highest for services provided in offices of health practitioners - 41,800 FTEs, or 41% of total projected demand in 2030.³ Employment settings with the next highest projected demand include elementary and secondary schools (15%), hospitals (15%), and outpatient care centers (10%). Institutions of higher education (4%), and individual and family services (4%) represent smaller proportions of projected demand.

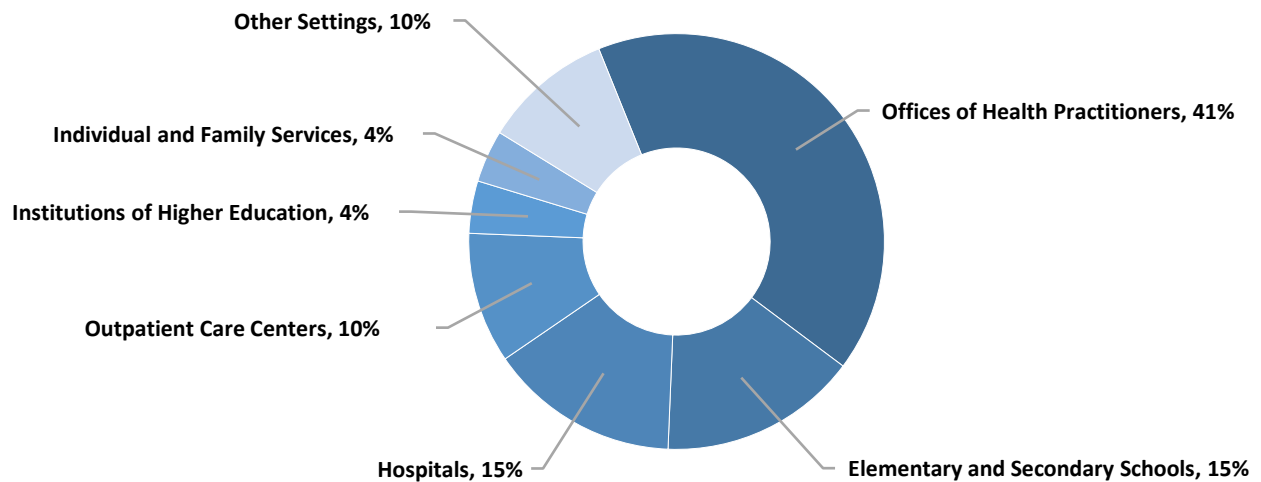
Between 2015 and 2030, the largest increase in psychologist demand is expected to be in hospitals (an increase of 3,060 FTEs, or 26%), followed by “other settings” (an increase of 1,370 FTEs, or 15%) and individual and family services settings (an increase of 440 FTEs, or 12%).

¹ IHS Markit. (2018). *Psychologist workforce projections for 2015-2030: Addressing supply and demand*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

² Includes licensed psychologists actively working in a position that requires a psychology license, or in a position that does not require a psychology license but uses clinical skills and/or training as a psychologist.

³ Examples of offices of health practitioners include offices of physicians, mental health practitioners, other health practitioners, and psychologists in private practices. Examples of hospitals include general hospitals, acute care hospitals, long term and specialty hospitals, Veterans Affairs hospitals, and other public hospitals. Examples of medical outpatient care centers include family planning clinics, alcohol and drug abuse clinics, physical therapy clinics, and some hospital-based clinics. Examples of institutions of higher education include universities and professional schools. “Other settings” include settings not specified elsewhere, including psychologists practicing in businesses and industry.

Projected Demand for Psychologists by Employment Setting, 2030



Note: Percentages are based on total projected demand for psychologists in 2030 (101,120 FTEs). Total may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: IHS Markit, *Psychologist workforce projections for 2015-2030: Addressing supply and demand* (2018).

Projected Demand for Psychologists by Employment Setting, 2015-2030

Employment Setting	2015 Demand (FTEs)	2030 Demand (FTEs)	FTE Change	Percent Change
Offices of Health Practitioners	41,510	41,800	290	1%
Elementary and Secondary Schools	15,310	15,610	300	2%
Hospitals	11,900	14,960	3,060	26%
Outpatient Care Centers	9,940	10,300	360	4%
Institutions of Higher Education	3,980	4,120	140	4%
Individual and Family Services	3,680	4,120	440	12%
Other Settings	8,850	10,220	1,370	15%
All	95,180	101,120	5,940	6%

Note: This table summarizes projected demand for psychologists based on current utilization patterns and projected demographic changes. FTE Change = 2030 Demand – 2015 Demand; Percent Change = FTE Change / 2015 Demand. Projected FTEs were rounded to the nearest ten. Details may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Source: IHS Markit, *Psychologist workforce projections for 2015-2030: Addressing supply and demand* (2018).

Limitations

Workforce projections are based on available data that reflect current patterns. Several limitations are worth noting. Demand is based on service utilization rather than need. It is likely that the need for psychological services exceeds current utilization levels. While the projections include psychology specialties, available data do not enable separate projections by specialty. Workload definitions for psychologists in federal data sources emphasize mental health services, rather than health services more broadly. It is likely that the projections underestimate psychologists' provision of physical health-related services. Therefore, demand for health services may be higher than estimated here.