

2026 Medicine, Podiatric & Economics Annual Conference

The Future of Healthcare Delivery & Health Policy

US Healthcare and its Changes Affecting the Health System

New Knowledge and Technology

- Emerging technology and medical know how is the key driver of potential change
- New technologies, such as laser therapy and 3D printing, are making it possible for podiatrists to treat foot and ankle conditions more effectively and efficiently. These advancements are also leading to the development of new podiatric procedures and treatments
- Stem-Cell Research
- Robotics
- 3D Printing
 - This technology has been used to more readily comprehend foot designs and functions and has emerged as an innovative technique in influencing podiatric management and of common diseases and orders
- Artificial Intelligence

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New Knowledge and Technology

- Wearable Devices
 - Wearable technology combines with routine practice allows for continuous monitoring, real-time data, and responsive clinical interventions
 - Devices allow for measurement of foot biomechanics, pressure distribution, and activity levels
 - Enables early detection of foot and skin barrier complications contributing to preventative healthcare and better long term outcomes

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New Knowledge and Technology

- Artificial Intelligence
 - Combining basic data and writing correspondence to other physicians or insurers (the physician would still need to proofread the results for accuracy)
 - Translating medical jargon for patients,
 - Machine learning algorithms for diagnostic and prognostic applications
 - Drafting conversational scripts for collecting information from patients
 - Assisting with appointment scheduling
 - Providing medicine dosage and prescriptions

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- Creating a Healthier Population
 - Lifestyle change approach
 - Population health focus
 - Quadruple Aim
 - Improve patient experience
 - Improve the health of populations
 - Reduce the per capita costs of healthcare
 - Lower costs



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- Income Disparities
 - U.S. is the only high-income country without universal health coverage
 - Adults in the U.S. with lower or average incomes are more likely to skip needed medical and dental care, while also having problems paying medical bills
 - Adults in the United States face wider income-related disparities in health care affordability compared to adults in other high-income countries

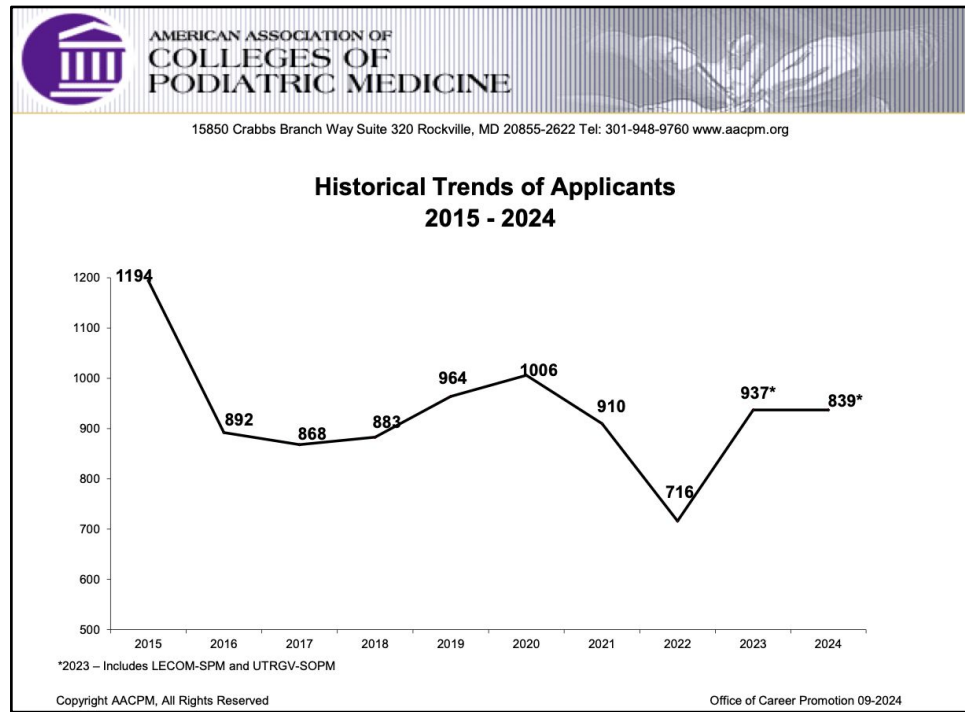
US Healthcare and its Changes Affecting the Health System

- Disruptive Innovation
 - Rapid spread of urgent care centers
 - Opportunities to gain “market share” from emergency departments and private practices
 - Creating access to providers by email or telehealth tools
 - Encouraging the use of apps to help people manage their chronic conditions
 - May erode podiatry volumes

US Healthcare and its Changes Affecting the Health System

- 10% of our population was over 65 in 1970
- An Aging Population
 - By 2030, more than 20% will be over 65
 - Aging can affect the feet
 - Neuropathy – can reduce feeling in the feet and can hide many life-threatening medical conditions.
 - Reduced flexibility – prevents the ability of proper toenail trimming, and foot cleaning. If left untreated, it may lead to further medical issues.
 - Foot sores – amongst the older population can be serious before they are discovered. Some of the problematic conditions they may face are:
 - Gouging toenails affecting nearby toe
 - Shoes that don't fit properly
 - Pressure sores
 - Loss of circulation in legs & feet
 - Edema & swelling of feet and ankles
 - Incidence of Diabetes

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According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, the occupational outlook for podiatrists is the following:

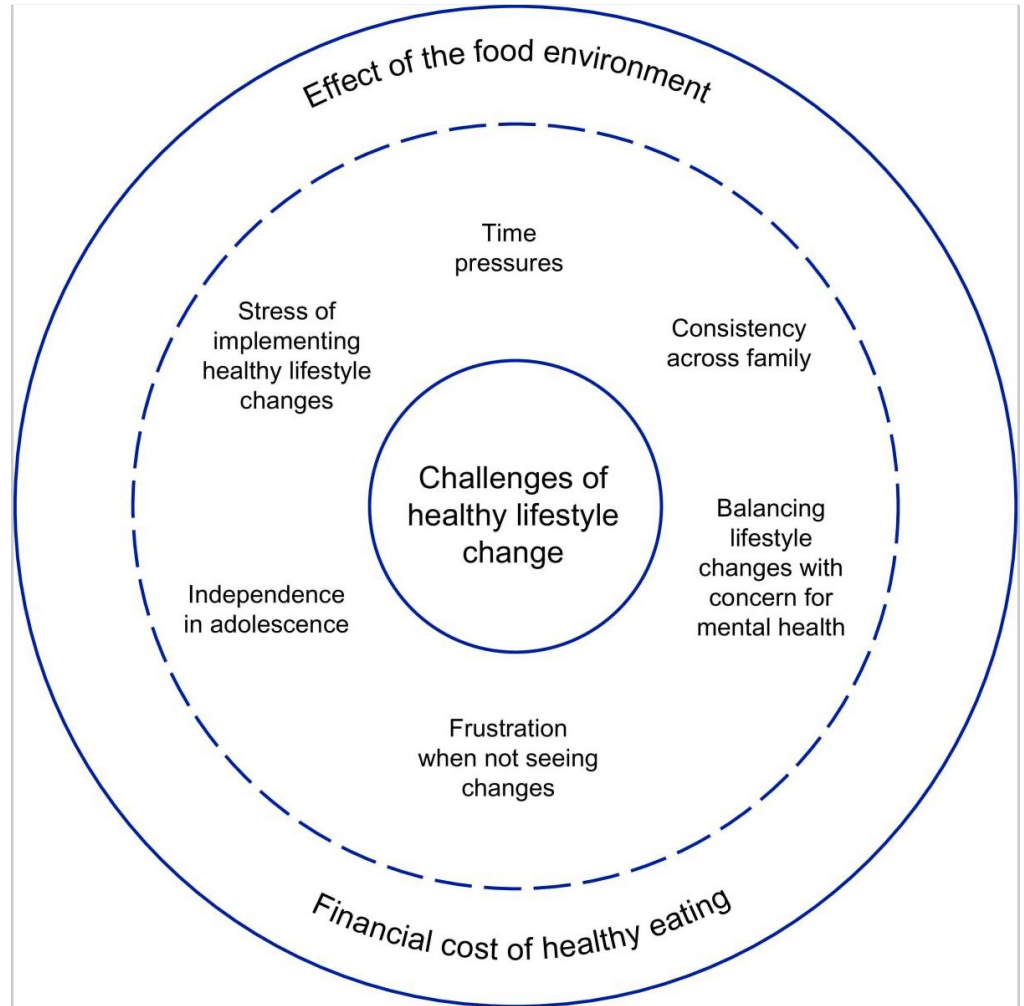
Number of Jobs, 2023 ?	9,700
Job Outlook, 2023-33 ?	1% (Slower than average)
Employment Change, 2023-33 ?	100

Key Challenges

- Helping people lead healthier lives
 - Challenges
 - Lack of evidence based policies or interventions that result in people making better and consistent choices (e.g., healthy eating, physical activity)
 - Finding funds to pay for interventions that would transform population health
 - Integration, consolidation, and other changes in how care delivery is organized
 - Improving the financing and insurance system
 - Improving quality, outcomes, and the patient experience when receiving care
 - Incidence of Diabetes
 - An increasing rate of diabetes calls for greater need for proper foot care
 - Associated complications include diabetic foot ulcers

Key Challenges

- Helping people lead healthier lives
 - Challenges of Healthy Lifestyle Change
 - Need multidisciplinary interventions that are accessible and acceptable to the community



Key Challenges

- **Integration, consolidation, and other changes in how care delivery is organized**
 - Will the efforts to form integrated networks improve patient outcomes?
 - Will consolidation weaken competition across providers, leading to price increases even if these networks are more efficient and effective?
 - Centers of excellence may begin to draw patients from wider geographical areas.

Key Challenges

- **Improving the financing and insurance system**
 - Systems are still not working to ensure access to care for all Americans
 - Systems are not yet encouraging efficient, value-oriented health care delivery in most communities
 - More and more employers do not provide insurance coverage
 - Price of insurance is often unaffordable for many working Americans
 - Opinions differ about the role of government in healthcare and about the redistribution of resources

Key Challenges

- **Improving quality, outcomes, and the patient experience when receiving care**
 - Use electronic health records to drive quality
 - Use big data to develop more evidence-based approaches to delivering care and managing the delivery of care
 - Providers too often see insurers as their customers, rather than patients
 - Demands for more patient-centered care will increase

Potential Threats to Podiatry

What is the biggest existential threat to podiatry?

[There are 1119 responses]

Competition from other providers 10.72%

Decreased student enrollment 25.29%

Diminished insurance reimbursement 51.74%

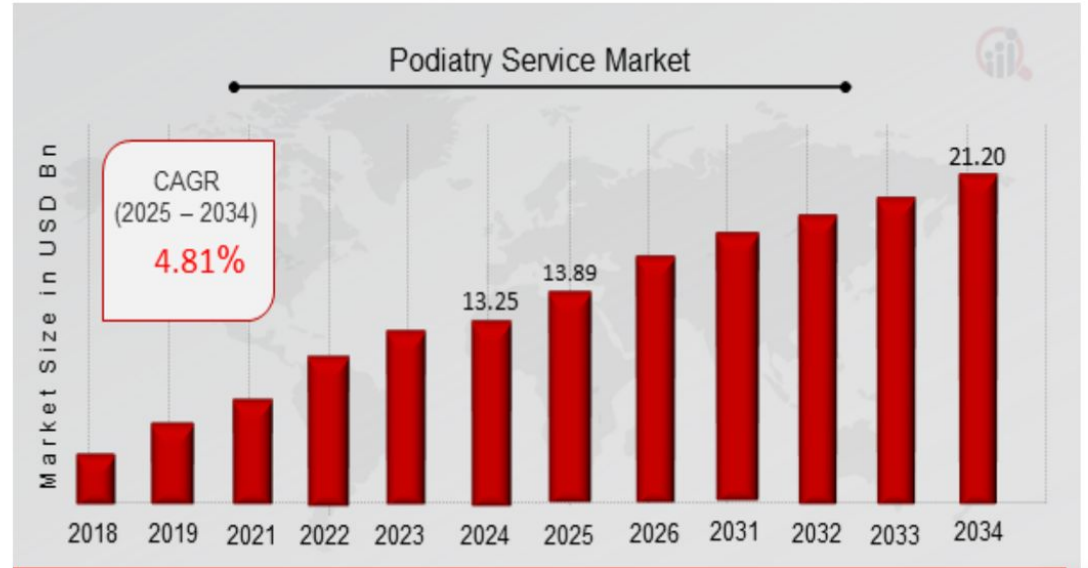
Other 12.24%

Potential Threats to Podiatry

- **Orthopedic Surgeons**
 - While podiatrists focus primarily on the foot and ankle, orthopedic surgeons have a broader scope, treating musculoskeletal issues throughout the body, including the foot and ankle, which can lead to patients seeking their care for more complex foot problems.
- **Primary Care Physicians**
 - For minor foot issues like ingrown toenails or athlete's foot, patients may initially consult their primary care physician before seeking specialized podiatric care.
- **Physical Therapists**
 - While not directly diagnosing or treating foot conditions, physical therapists can offer foot-focused exercises and rehabilitation for issues like plantar fasciitis, which could reduce the need for some podiatric interventions.
- **Urgent Care Centers**
 - Due to their convenient hours, walk-in availability, and lower costs compared to specialized appointments, patients may choose urgent care centers for immediate treatment rather than scheduling a visit with a podiatrist.

Future Prospects for Podiatry

- Rising prevalence of foot and ankle conditions
- Growing awareness of foot health
- Technological advancements in podiatry
- Proactive/ Population Health



<https://www.marketresearchfuture.com/reports/podiatry-service-market-29489>

CAGR= Compound Annual Growth Rate

Future Prospects for Podiatry (cont.)

- Technological advancements in podiatry
 - New technologies, such as laser therapy and 3D printing, are making it possible for podiatrists to treat foot and ankle conditions more effectively and efficiently. These advancements are also leading to the development of new podiatric procedures and treatments. Screenings at a free or lower cost.
- Artificial Intelligence
 - Organizational integration of AI will reshape clinical and operational workflow
 - Possible reactions to AI expansion (i.e. resistance, increased demand)
 - Possible shifts in staffing needs and technology training
 - Increased demand for regulation and oversight
 - Unclear accountability for AI-driven decisions in healthcare

Future Prospects for Podiatry (cont.)

- Growing awareness of foot health
 - This is due in part to the increasing availability of information about foot care and the benefits of podiatric treatment. As people become more aware of the importance of taking care of their feet, they are more likely to seek out podiatric services
- Proactive/ Population Health
 - Screenings at a free or lower cost.
 - Partnering with primary care, orthopedic, rehab, etc.
- Rising prevalence of foot and ankle conditions
 - The increasing incidence of foot and ankle problems, such as plantar fasciitis, heel spurs, bunions, and hammertoes, is a major driver of the Podiatry Service Market Industry

Future Prospects for All Healthcare Providers

- Providers: Podiatrists, MD's/DO's, Hospitals, Nurses and other caregivers
 - Organizational change will change the day-to-day experience of some health care professionals
 - Possible decreased income or slowed income growth
 - Possible reactions to changes in public policy
 - Political activism
 - Seek more market and organizational power
 - Adapt and learn to thrive in changing world

Future Prospects for All Healthcare Providers

- Providers: Podiatrists, MD's/DO's, Hospitals, Nurses and other caregivers
 - Continued evolution of value-based healthcare
 - “Patients over Paperwork”

