

Dispersing doctors

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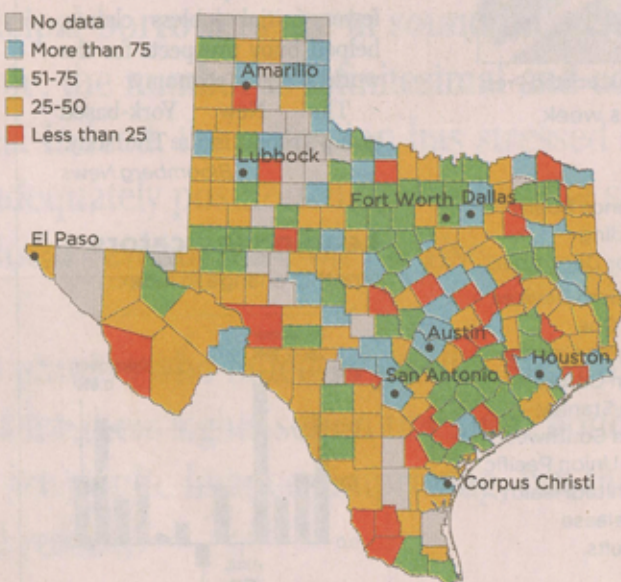
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Most of the family physicians in Texas are concentrated in big cities — Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and Austin. Doctors in those cities are being integrated to meet the goals of health care reform. Hospitals and physicians are tinkering with creative payment models and actively sharing quality-improving technology. But there's a dearth of family physicians in rural counties. How will residents in those areas fit into a revamped health care system?

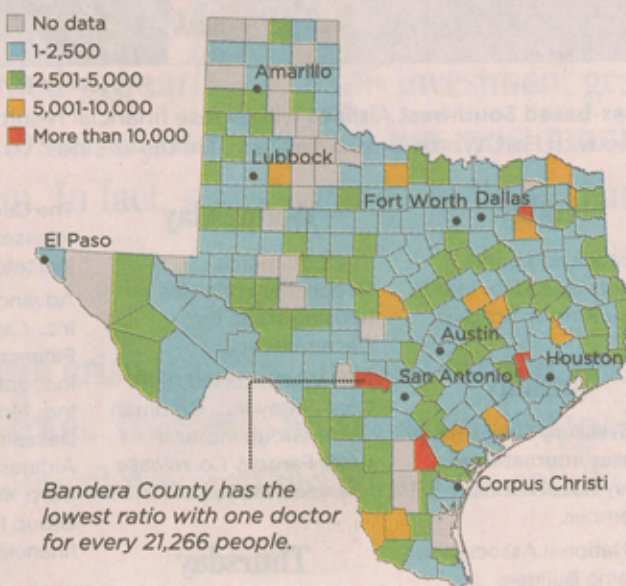
Texas doctors like big cities

Family physicians, who studies show are essential to controlling health care costs, are heavily grouped in the largest counties — Harris, Dallas, Bexar, Tarrant and Travis. The graph includes active primary-care physicians with Texas practice addresses. Primary-care physicians are physicians who indicate a primary specialty of: family practice/medicine, general practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and/or gynecology or geriatrics.

Primary-care physicians per 100,000 people



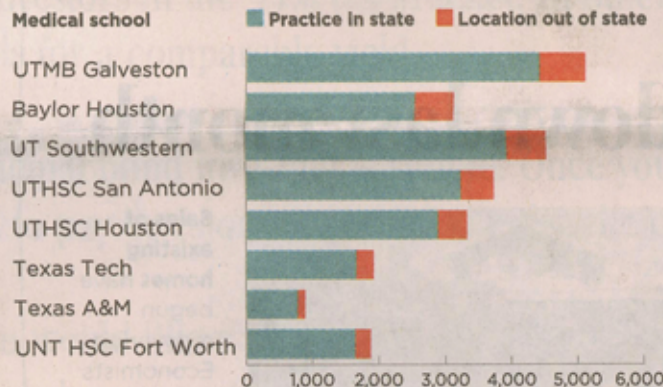
Number of people per primary-care physician



NOTE: Population estimates are for 2010.

Doctor drain?

Some medical students who train in Texas take their talents elsewhere after graduation. The chart below is of Texas medical school graduation statistics from September. It reflects a trend.



Following the money

Another reason for the lack of primary-care physicians is they earn less.

