



Public Perception of the Value of
License Renewal/Recertification
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535 Wellington Way – Suite 280

Lexington, KY 40503

Tel 859.971.7301 Fax 859.919.2242

www.elementmr.com

STUDY OVERVIEW

Background

- HRRRI protects the public through regulatory research and collaborative exchange with strategic partners to promote evidence-based healthcare regulation.
- The organization has identified a need for information and intelligence related to the public's understanding of and perceptions towards license renewal and recertification of healthcare practitioners. HRRRI asked Element to conduct a research study of the general public.

Objectives

- Gauge the extent to which the public is familiar with practitioner recertifications and relicensing.
- Understand how much the public knows about how recertifications and license renewals are done and what the process is for practitioners.
- Determine the extent to which patients believe the provider recertification process is particularly arduous and perhaps unnecessary.
- Understand how important recertifications and license renewals of practitioners is to patients and how often they believe they should be done now for various types of practitioners.
- Gauge the extent to which the general public would stop seeing a provider who had not been recertified recently if recertifications were optional.
- Profile respondents by demographic characteristics and use that information in subgroup analysis.

Methodology

- Online survey consisted of 30 questions with a mix of closed and open-ended questions. To qualify respondents had to:
 - Be U.S. residents ages 18 or older
 - Have seen one or more of the healthcare and counseling provider types below as a patient within the last two years:

Dentist	Physician Assistant
Nurse or Nurse practitioner	Physical therapist
Occupational therapist	Physician
Pharmacist	Social worker
Psychologist	
- 1,001 surveys completed from August 22 and August 28, 2024.



KEY FINDINGS

Most patients are aware that practitioners need to renew their licenses periodically, but their familiarity with the process or what it entails is limited.

- Three-quarters (75%) say they are aware that healthcare practitioners and counselors must renew their licenses periodically, but only a third (32%) indicate being familiar with the process.
- Asked what they know about license renewal open-ended, the largest percentage mention education and training (48%), with 28% citing exams or testing, and 27% mentioning some timeframe involved, in general or specific.
- About half of those who are aware of license renewal think the process is easy for practitioners (52%) with about a fifth believing it is difficult (18% "somewhat" / 2% "very").

Though not quite as many as for renewal, a majority of respondents say they are aware that healthcare practitioners and counselors can get recertified periodically but less than a quarter say they are familiar with the recertification process.

- Just over half say they are aware that healthcare practitioners and counselors can get recertified (56%); less than a quarter of all respondents say they are familiar with the process (16% "somewhat" / 6% "very").
- Asked what they know about recertification, in their own words, the largest number mention continuing education and training (50%) and half as many mention testing (25%).
- Similar to license renewal, about half of those who are aware of recertification think the process is easy for practitioners (52%) with, a fifth, believing it is difficult (18% "somewhat" / 2% "very").



After reading a brief description of recertification and license renewal, almost all respondents believe that practitioners, in general, should be required to renew their licenses and be recertified, and they want them to be as up-to-date as possible with current medical innovations and practices.

- Of six statements, very large majorities agree with each about the importance of license renewal and recertification. The largest number, fully 84%, would like their practitioners to be as up-to-date as possible about medical innovations and practices.
- The statement that has the fewest number agreeing with it, but still 74%, is *"it is more important for healthcare and counseling practitioners to be required to renew their licenses periodically than it is for people working in most other service industries."* This is more likely a commentary that the public wants all workers who provide services to them to be accredited and knowledgeable in current practices, rather than placing any relative lack of importance for healthcare and counseling providers to go through license renewal.

Across a number of metrics, large majorities of patients say it is important that the specific practitioners they see renew their licenses and get recertified and express concern if their practitioners don't take the appropriate steps to stay up-to-date.

- Very large majorities feel it is important for each of the practitioner types to renew their licenses periodically, with nearly all feeling their physicians (98%) should do so.
- Most also say they would be concerned about the quality of care they would receive from each of the practitioner types if they decided not to get recertified. The percentage expressing concern is again highest for physicians (91% concerned).
- For both license renewal and recertification, respondents place less importance and concern regarding the actions of therapists but even then, 87%+ say it is important or they would be concerned about quality of care due to lack of recertification.
- While most say they would stop seeing their primary practitioners if they decided not to get their licenses renewed, sizable numbers still would, confirming the strong relationships they have with their HCPs and counselors.



- The largest percentages who say they would still see their practitioners if they chose not to get their licenses renewed are for their therapists, psychologists, and social workers (approximately 40% each).
- Majorities of respondents say the perceptions of their practitioners would be affected negatively if they decided never to get recertified, with 73% for physicians being the highest among the nine practitioner types.
 - The negative effect on therapists (50% occupational / 60% physical) and psychologists (57%) / social workers (50%) is slightly lower than for other provider types.

Most expect that their practitioners would get recertified at least every two years, though very large numbers admit that they don't know when this last occurred for their practitioners and the majority say they are not sure how they would find out.

- Approximately 60% feel that each of the practitioner types should get recertified at least once every two years.
- Despite the importance of recertification and license renewal to them, most respondents do not know when this last occurred for their practitioners and a majority (60%+ in most cases) say they are not sure how they would find out.

Key themes emerge when inspecting the results among key demographic groups:

- Older men and those who are less educated are less likely to be aware of and familiar with both license renewal and recertification for practitioners.
- Older men are less likely than other groups to feel that practitioners should get recertified at least yearly.
- Older respondents and those who are more educated are more likely to say they are aware of continuing education and training when asked to describe the license renewal and recertification processes.



- Older respondents and women tend to be more likely to place importance on license renewal and certification across the various metrics, including:
 - Importance that their practitioners renew their licenses
 - Concern about quality of care if their practitioners decided not to get recertified
 - Not continuing to see practitioners who choose not to renew their licenses
 - Having a negative perception of practitioners who choose never to get recertified



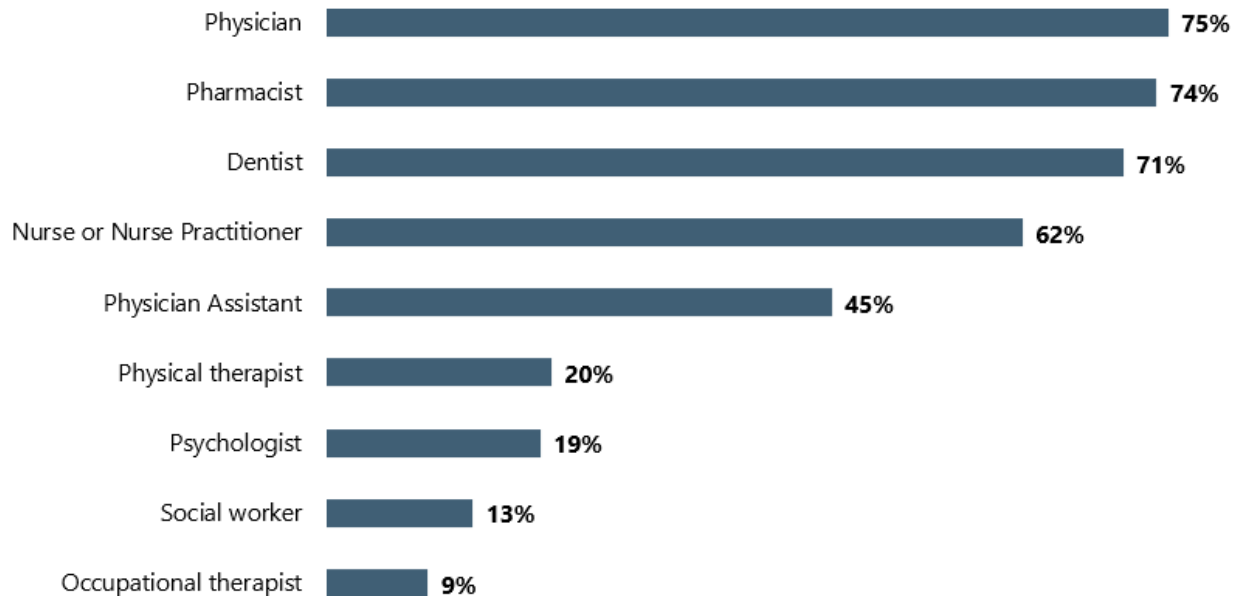
RESPONDENT PROFILE

The characteristics of the general public surveyed are shown below.

Age		Gender		Children Under 18		Race / Ethnicity		Education		Employment Status		Household Income		Region	
18 to 34	32%	Male	49.8%	Yes	30%	White / Caucasian	76%	High school grad or less	40%	Employed full-time	42%	Less than \$40,000	34%	Northeast	21%
35 to 54	35%	Female	50.0%	No	70%	Black / African American	14%	Associate or two-year degree	19%	Employed part-time	10%	\$40,000 to \$69,999	28%	South	38%
55+	34%	Other gender /non-binary	0.3%			Asian / Asian American	7%	Bachelor's degree	27%	Retired	22%	\$70,000 to \$99,999	16%	Midwest	22%
Average	47					Other	5%	Advanced degree	13%	Stay at home parent	6%	\$100,000+	20%	West	19%
										Student	3%	Prefer not to answer	3%		
						Hispanic*	11%			Unemployed	10%	Average	\$70,800		
										Unable to work due to a disability or medical condition	6%				

Profile of Healthcare and Counseling Providers Seen in Past Two Years

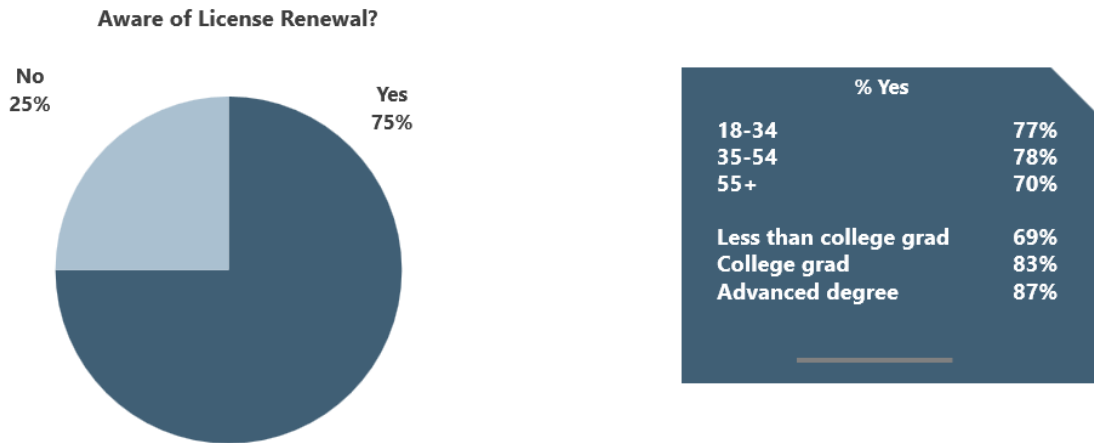
Professions Listed by Volume



AWARENESS OF LICENSE RENEWAL AND RECERTIFICATION

Awareness of License Renewal for Healthcare Practitioners

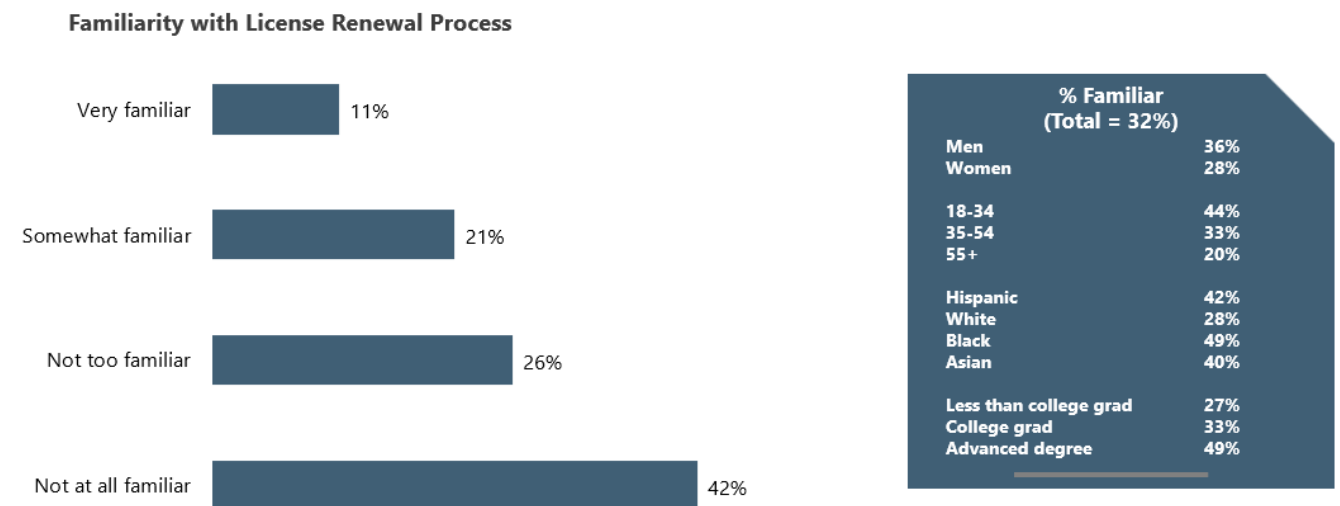
Three-quarters say they are aware that healthcare practitioners and counselors must go through license renewal.



- Older respondents—particularly older men—and those who are less educated tend to be less aware of license renewal for practitioners.

Familiarity with License Renewal Process

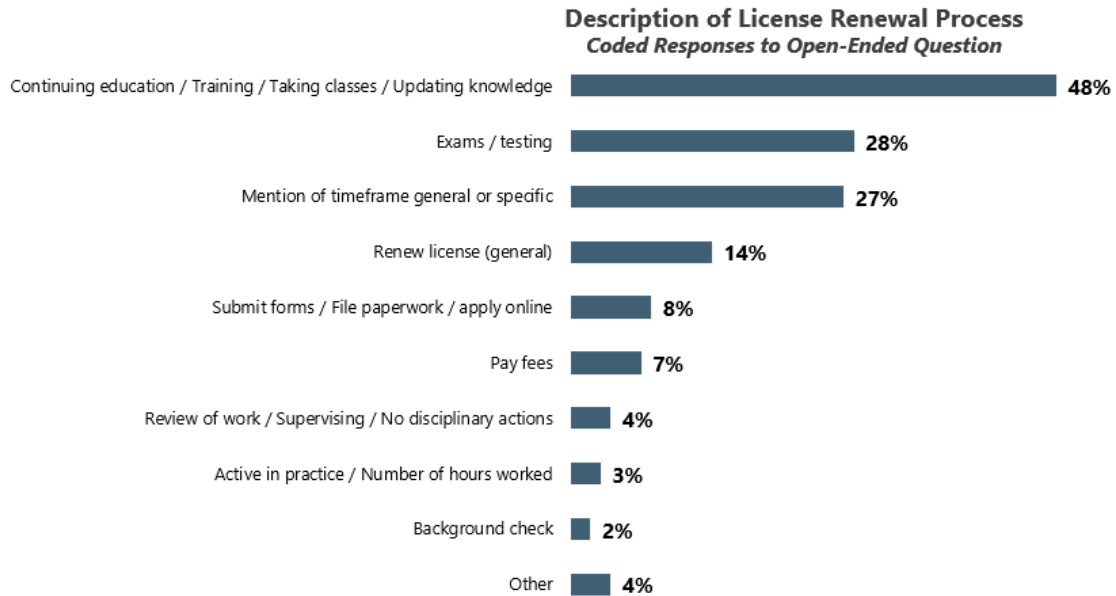
Only a third of respondents indicate being familiar with the license renewal process and just 11% say they are “very familiar.”



- Overall, men tend to be more familiar than women license renewal, however, older men are the least likely group to be familiar. White respondents and those with less education tend to indicate being less familiar.



Asked what they know about license renewal open-ended, the largest numbers who answered the question mention education and training.

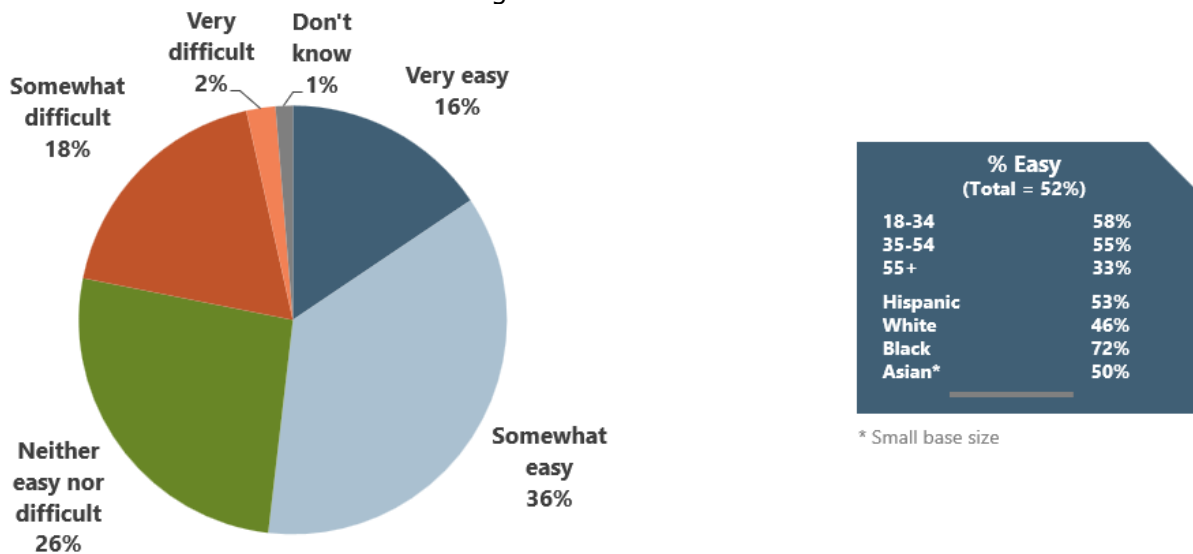


Base: Those indicating they were aware of license renewal and responded (n=202)

- Older respondents and those with more education are more likely to mention education and training.

Perceived Ease of License Renewal Process

About half of those who are aware of license renewal think the process is easy for practitioners with about a fifth believing it is difficult.



Base: Those indicating they were aware of license renewal (n=320)

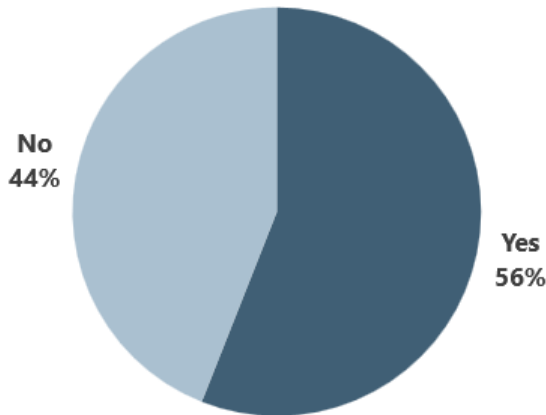
- Younger respondents and Blacks are more likely than average to believe the process is easy.



Awareness of Recertification for Healthcare Practitioners

Just over half say they are aware that healthcare practitioners and counselors can get recertified.

Aware of Recertification?



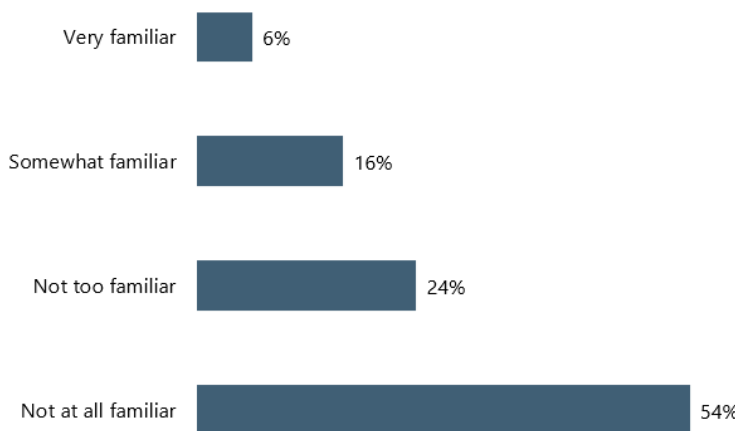
% Yes	
18-34	61%
35-54	58%
55+	70%
Less than college grad	50%
College grad	64%
Advanced degree	66%

- As was seen with license renewal, older respondents (again, especially men) and those who are less educated tend to be less aware of recertifications for practitioners.

Familiarity with License Renewal Process

Less than a quarter of all respondents say they are familiar with the recertification process for practitioners and only six percent say they are “very familiar.”

Familiarity with Recertification Process



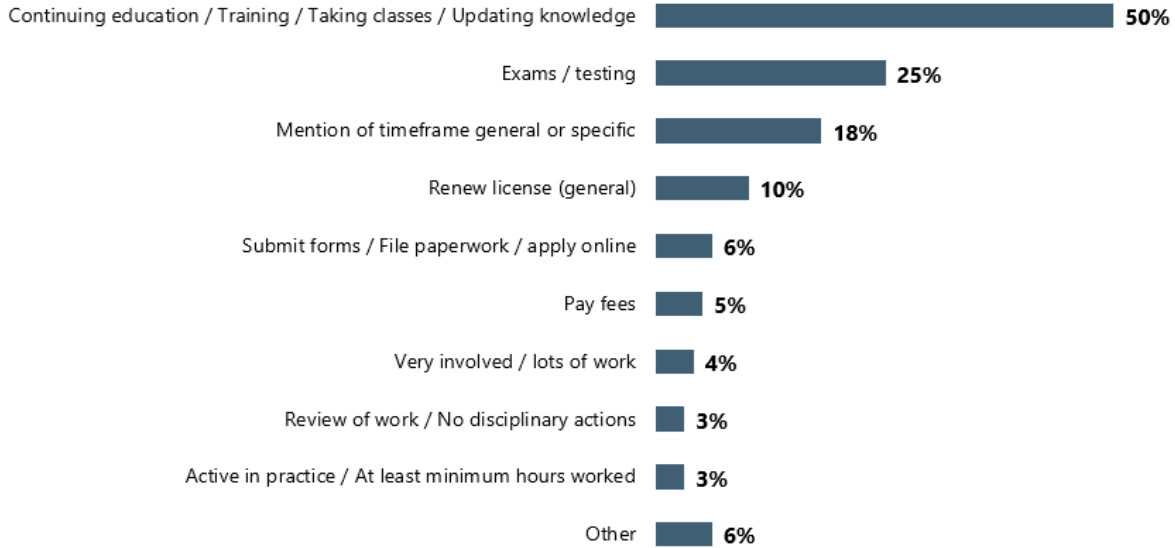
% Familiar (Total = 22%)	
Men	27%
Women	16%
18-34	28%
35-54	25%
55+	12%
Hispanic	31%
White	18%
Black	36%
Asian	25%
Less than college grad	18%
College grad	23%
Advanced degree	34%

- As was seen with license renewal, while men tend to be more familiar than women with recertification, as a group, older men are least likely. White respondents and those with less education tend to indicate being less familiar.



Asked what they know about recertification, the largest number who answered the question mention education and training and about half as many mention testing.

Description of Recertification Process
Coded Responses to Open-Ended Question

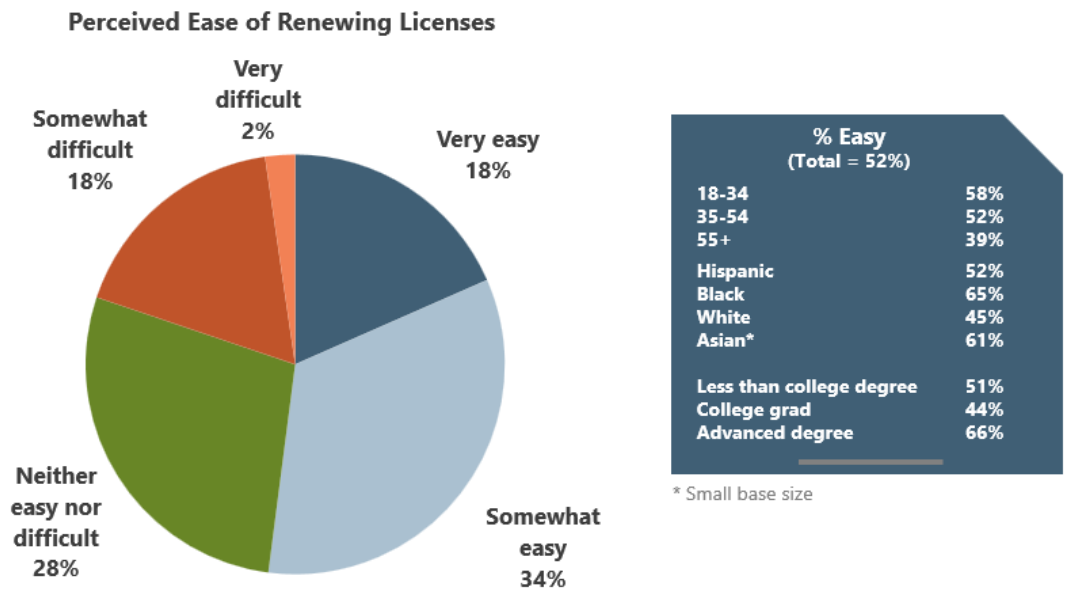


Base: Those indicating they were aware of recertification and responded (n=120)

- As with license renewal, older respondents and those with more education are more likely to mention education and training.

Perceived Ease of License Renewal Process

About half of those who are aware of recertification think the process is easy for practitioners with far fewer, a fifth, believing it is difficult.



Base: Those indicating they were aware of recertification (n=217)



PERCEIVED VALUE OF LICENSE RENEWAL AND RECERTIFICATION

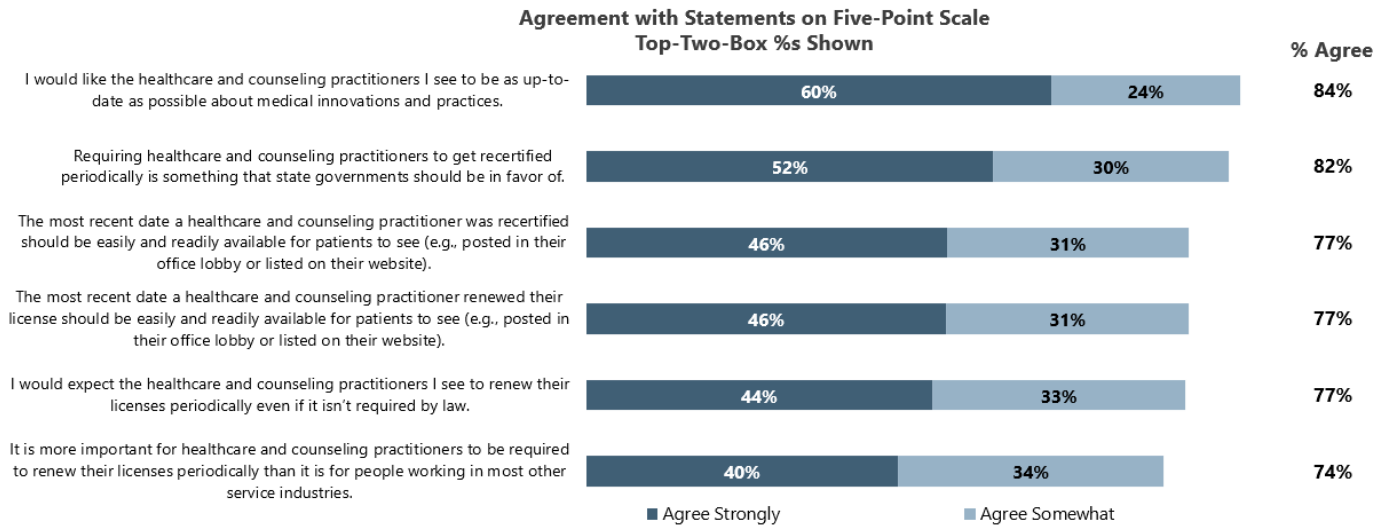
Descriptions Read by Survey Respondents

The rest of the questions on this survey are going to focus on your perception of the value of recertification and license renewal for healthcare and counseling practitioners. Please read the following before answering the remainder of the survey questions.

- Recertification:** Broadly speaking, board certification serves as a validation of expertise, and through recertification, healthcare practitioners and counselors can stay updated about medical and counseling innovations and practices and expand their knowledge base.
- License renewal:** Healthcare license renewal ensures legal authorization to practice healthcare within a jurisdiction. Renewal typically includes continuing competence activities to ensure that healthcare practitioners stay current with industry standards and best practices which can increase public safety and lead to better patient outcomes.

Agreement with Statements About License Renewal/Recertification

Very large majorities agree with each of the statements about the importance of license renewal and recertification. The largest number, fully 84%, would like their practitioners to be as up-to-date as possible about innovations and practices.

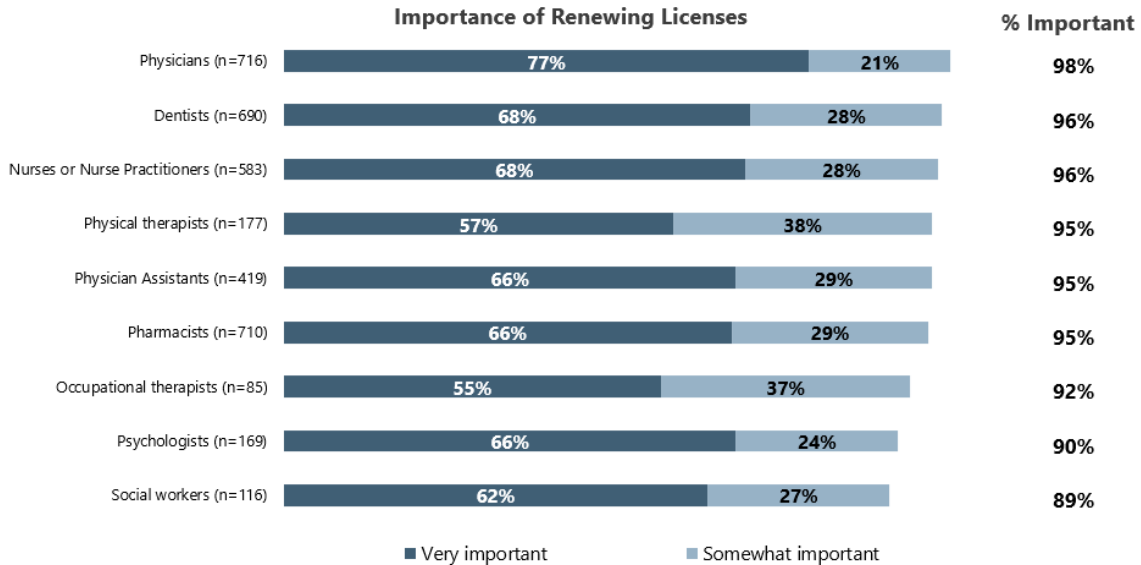


- Older respondents and women tend to be more likely to agree with each of the statements.



Importance of Renewing Licenses

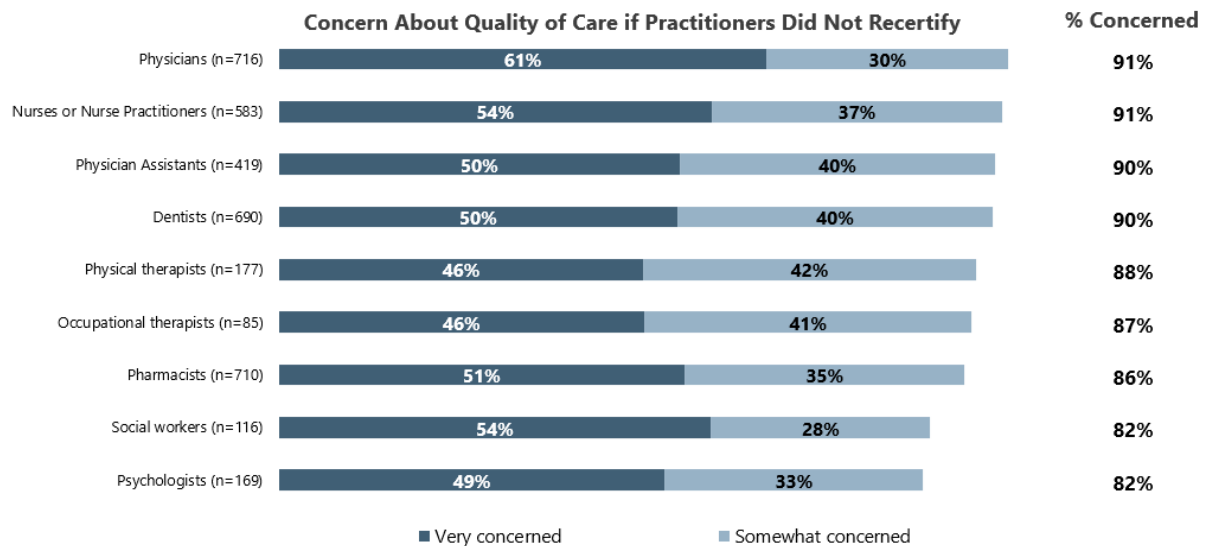
Very large majorities feel it is important for each of the practitioner types to renew their licenses periodically, with nearly all feeling physicians (98%) should do so.



- The percent indicating that they feel it is “very important” for physical and occupational therapists is slightly lower than for other provider types.
- Older respondents and women tend to be more likely to feel it is important for each of the practitioner types to renew their licenses.

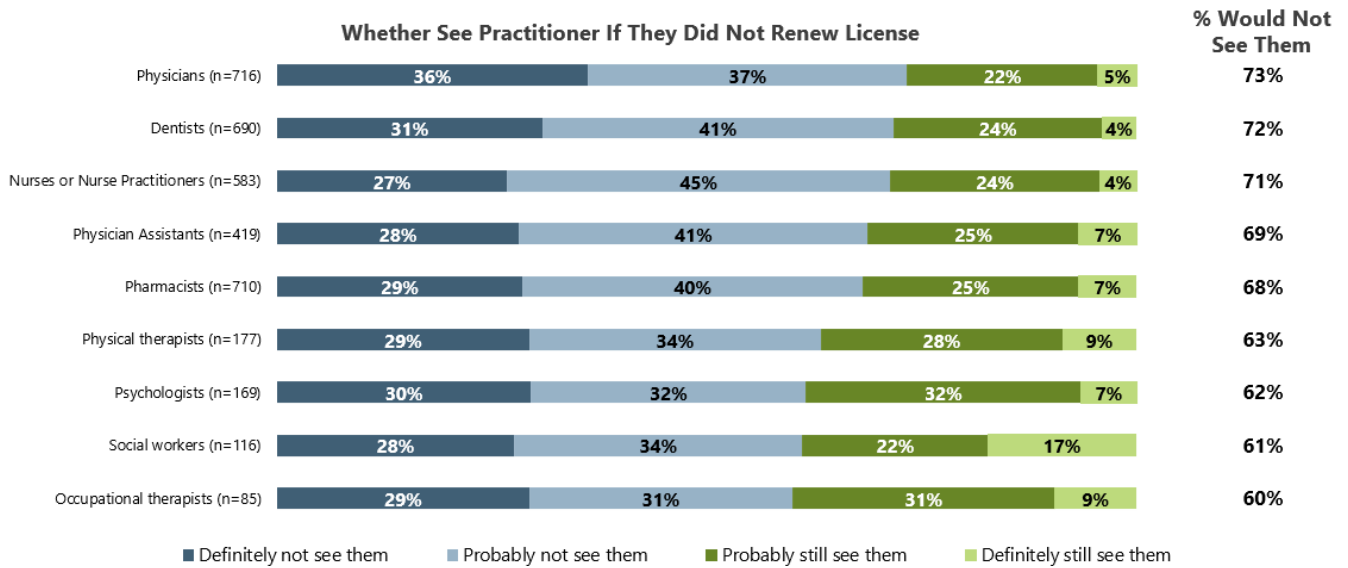
Concerns If Practitioners Did Not Recertify

Most also say they would be concerned about the quality of care they would receive from each of the practitioner types if they decided not to get recertified. Again, the percent indicating they would be “very concerned” regarding physical and occupational therapists is slightly lower than for other provider types.



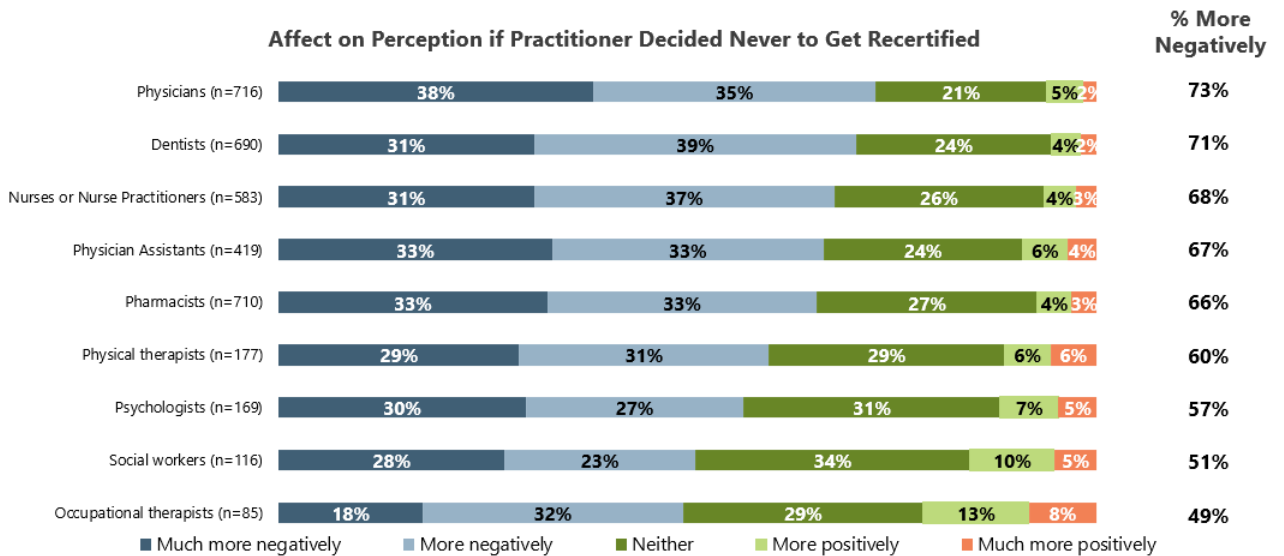
Perceptions of Practitioners if They Chose Not to Renew/Recertify

While most say they would stop seeing their primary practitioners if they decided not to get their licenses renewed, sizable numbers—30% to 40%—still would.



- The percent indicating they would continue to see their practitioners if they did not renew their licenses tends to be higher for therapists, psychologists, and social workers.
- Older respondents and women tend to be less likely to continue seeing their practitioner.

Also, majorities of respondents say their perceptions of their practitioners would be affected negatively if they decided never to get recertified.

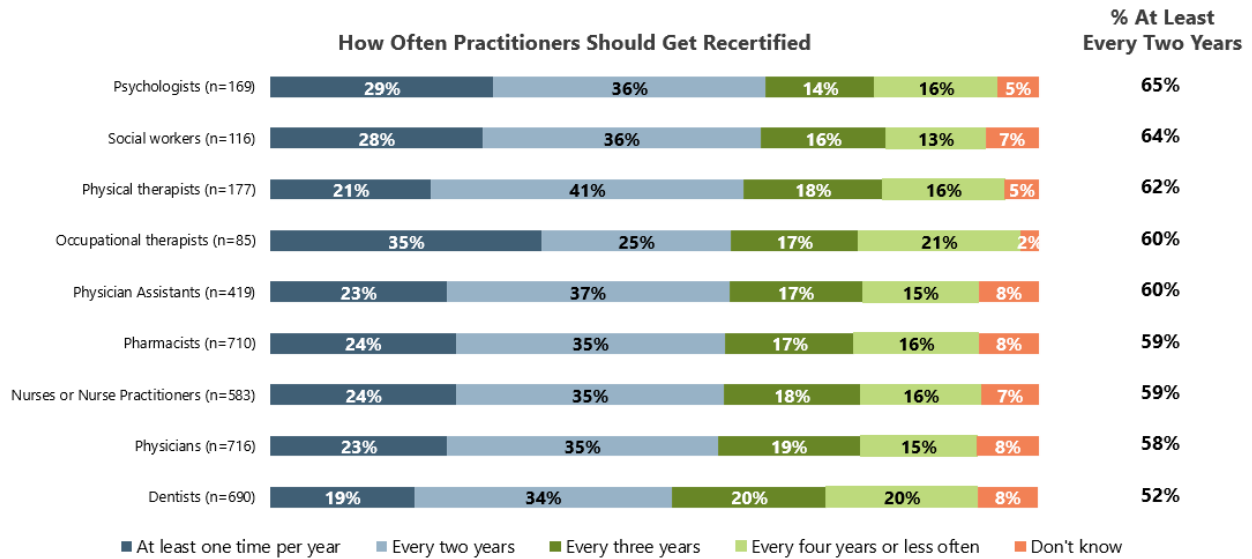


- The negative effect on therapists and psychologist / social workers is slightly lower than for other provider types.
- Older respondents and women tend to be more likely to say they would think of their practitioners more negatively if they chose never to get recertified.



Preferred Frequency of Practitioner Recertification

Approximately 60% feel that each of the practitioner types should get recertified at least once every two years.

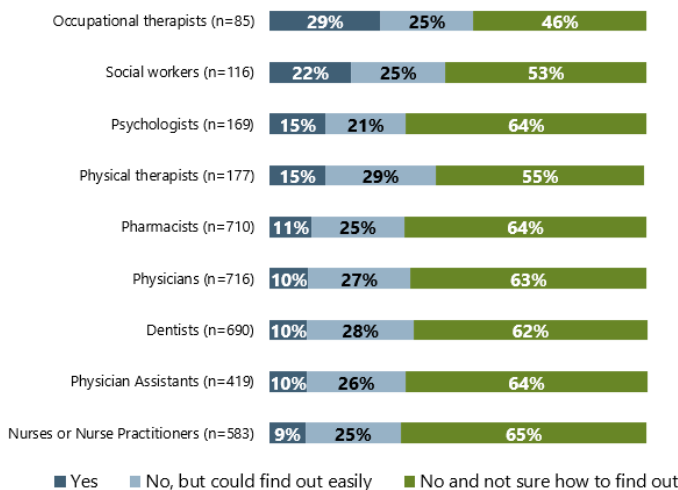


- Older men are less likely than other groups to feel that practitioners should get recertified at least yearly.

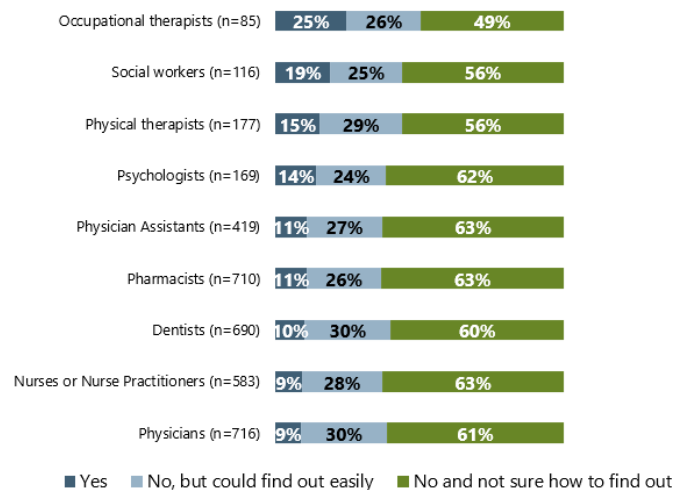
Awareness of When Practitioners Renew Licenses / Recertify

Despite the importance of recertification and license renewal to them, most respondents do not know when this last occurred for their practitioners and a large majority say they are not sure how they would find out.

Know When Practitioner Last Got Recertified?



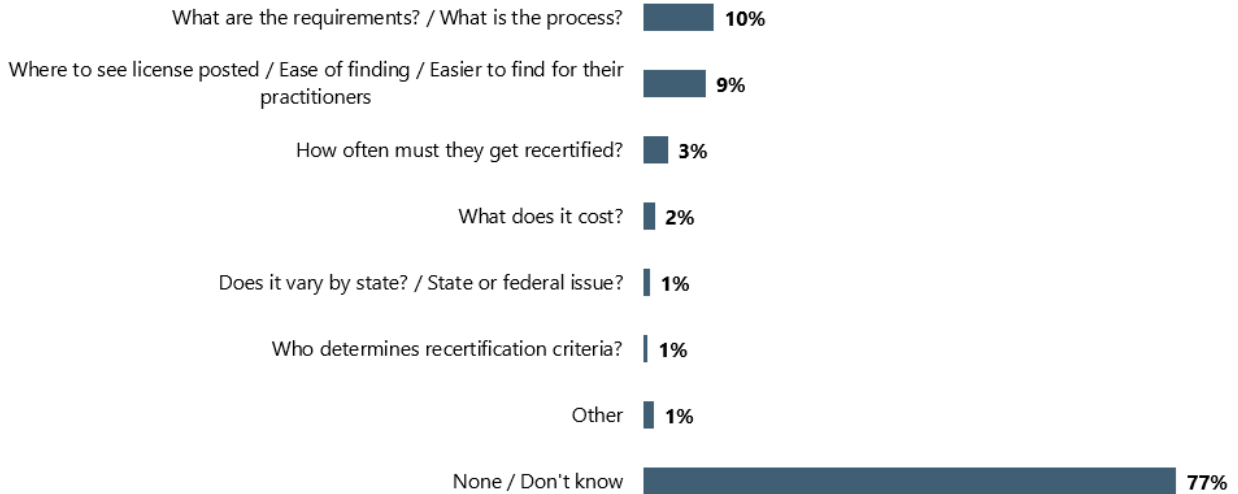
Know When Practitioner Last Got License Renewed?



Awareness of When Practitioners Renew Licenses / Recertify

Among those answering the question about what questions they have about recertification, respondents would be most interested in learning about the requirements or process and how they could find out if their practitioners have been recertified recently.

Respondent Questions About Practitioner Recertification (Coded Responses to Open-Ended Question)



Similarly, among those answering about license renewal, respondents would be most interested in learning about the requirements or process and how they could find out if their practitioners have renewed their licenses recently.

Respondent Questions About Practitioner License Renewal (Coded Responses to Open-Ended Question)

