

WOMEN AND WOMEN'S HEALTH PROVIDERS: METRO V. NON-METRO

Populations and Providers

The women's health providers included are certified nursing midwives (CNM), direct entry midwives (DEM), nurse practitioners (NP) with a specialty in women's health, obstetricians and gynecologists (OBGYN), and physician assistants (PA) specializing in obstetrics and gynecology.

There are 254 counties in Texas. As of 2019, exactly half (127) have at least one women's health provider, leaving the other half of Texas counties without a single women's health provider.

Figure 1 indicates how many of each type of women's health providers practice in Texas as of 2019. There are 4,624 providers to serve a total of 5,590,891 women between the ages of 15 and 42. 5,084,695 of those women live in 82 metro counties with 4,274 women's health providers, and 506,196 live in 172 non-metro counties with only 350 women's health providers. A total of 376,795 women live in counties without a women's health provider.

Overall, in metro counties, there is an average of 52.5 women's health providers per 100,000 women of childbearing age. For non-metro counties, the average ratio is 48.9 women's health providers per 100,000 women of childbearing age. It is important to consider that, not only do non-metro counties have fewer providers, but women living there often must travel farther distances, crossing into a different county for services. Figure 2 shows the concentration of women's health providers within each county of Texas.

Figure 1. Total Number of Women's Health Providers

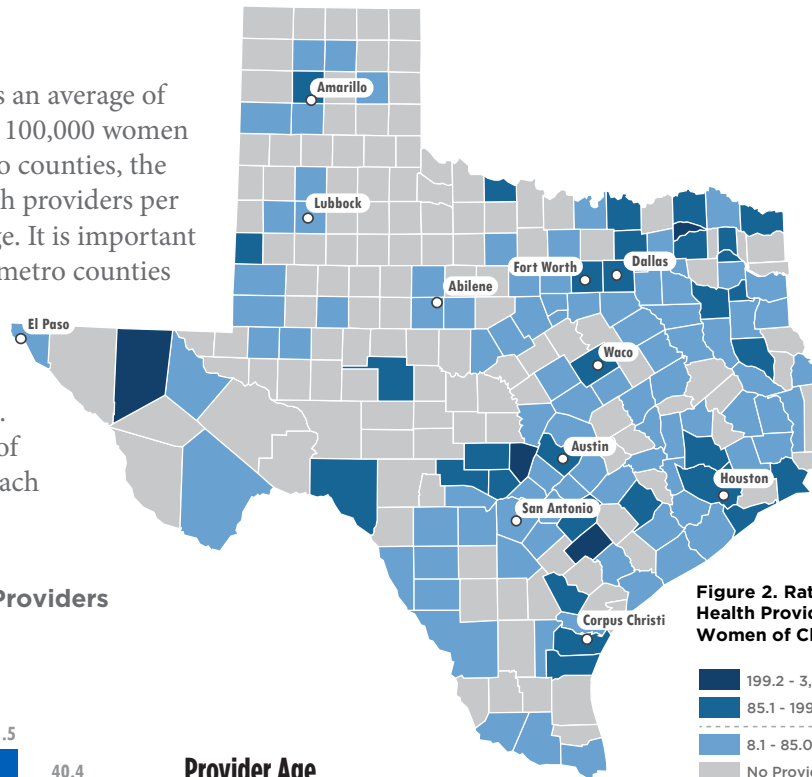
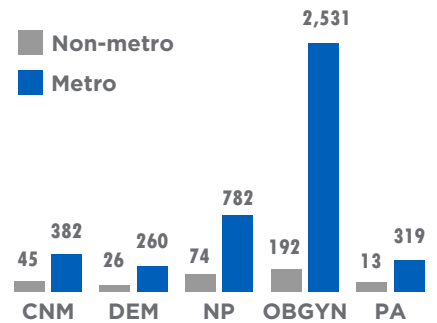


Figure 2. Ratio of Women's Health Providers to 100,000 Women of Childbearing Age

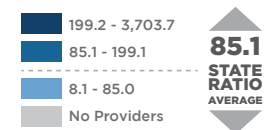
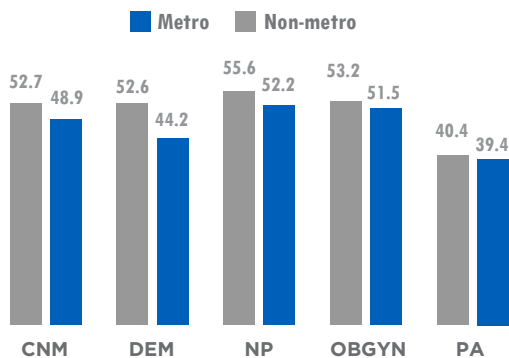


Figure 3. Average Age of Providers



Provider Age

The average age of providers in metro counties is 50.1 and in non-metro counties is 53.0. This difference in age is concerning because it means that those providers working in non-metro counties are closer to retiring, which will increase the supply disparity between metro and non-metro counties.