

# Graying of physician population to impact area



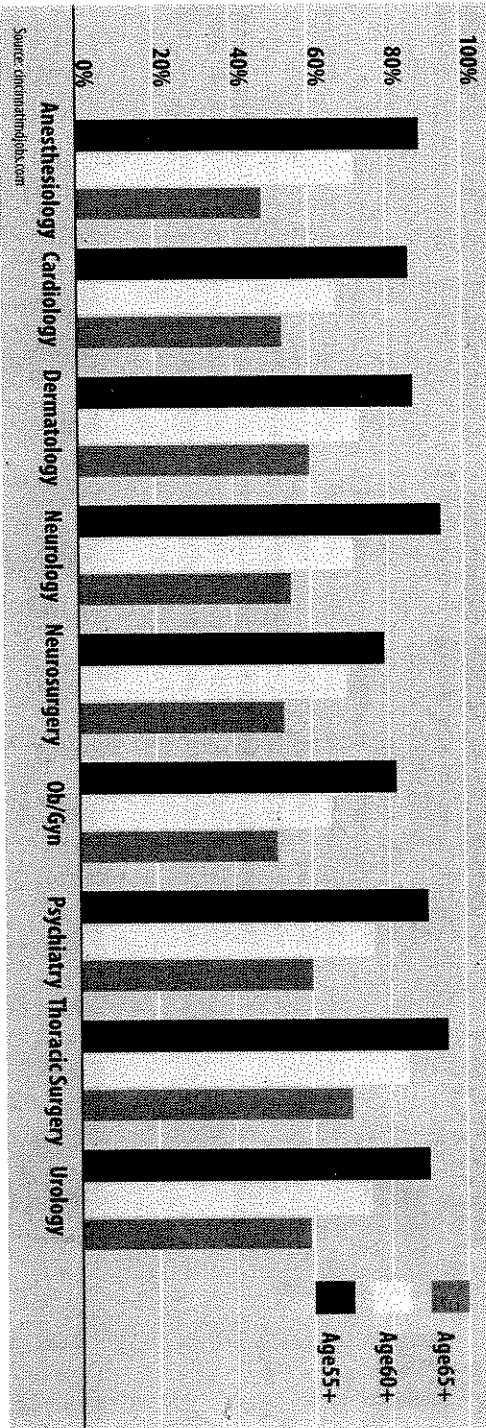
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AND  
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Greater Cincinnati could face a physician supply crunch in coming years because many of the doctors practicing now will soon retire. Some of the specialties in which the need is already greatest will be hardest hit. For example, 15 years from now, **70 percent** of the area's thoracic surgeons will have turned 65, according to the Cincinnati MD Resource Center. Sixty percent of dermatologists will have hit traditional retirement age.

Compounding the problem is that many doctors retire early. Financially they're often in a position to do so. And as they increasingly have to balance patient care with administrative and reimbursement concerns, many feel compelled to take the opportunity. That may be reason for concern. In many specialties, more than **80 percent** of providers will turn 55 in the next 15 years. And many experts doubt there will be enough new graduates to fill the jobs they leave behind.

## AGING SPECIALISTS

By 2022, more than 80 percent of local doctors in some specialties will be age 55 or older, according to research by the Cincinnati MD Resource Center.



## TIME TO GO?

Three Greater Cincinnati specialists offer their views on why they, or their colleagues, have chosen to retire.



Thomas

**Dr. Renate Thomas**, internal medicine, Group Health Associates, retired, December 2006. **I retired** at age 51 simply because I was able to. Years ago, it would have been unheard of for a physician to retire this early; most doctors practiced almost until they died. (But) the stresses of trying to keep tabs on an exponentially expanding body of knowledge kept me awake nights. If all I had to do was worry about my patients, it would have been bearable.



Andrews

**Dr. Michelle Andrews**, orthopedic surgeon at Jewish Hospital and Cincinnati Sports-Medicine and Orthopaedic Center. **I think** that retirement for most physicians is put off for as long as the job is enjoyable. If the job is becoming more of a burden with legal problems, paperwork, being on-call, retirement comes more quickly. The reason I continue to practice orthopedic surgery is the relationships I have made with the patients, their families and the community.



Bridenbaugh

**Dr. Phillip Bridenbaugh**, anesthesiologist, UC Physicians, retired as of Dec. 31. **Basically, it's** time. It's been a very satisfying career, but at age 75, it's time to let somebody else take over, especially in a teaching center where we focus on new things technically and in terms of practice. I will continue working with some overseas teaching programs in Africa. I'll be an emeritus professor, and I'll still be in and out of my office.

Thank you to our