

APTA Specialist Certification

Governed by **ABPTS**

Aggregate Program Data

2025 APTA Specialist Certification Program Fact Sheet





Aggregate Program Data

Introduction

This fact sheet is designed to provide the education community with current and historical information about the specialist certification program of the American Physical Therapy Association, governed by the American Board of Physical Therapy Specialties. The data included in this fact sheet is taken from application submissions from initial certification and recertification candidates. All data presented reflect program data as of December 31, 2025.

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Glossary

The following terms are provided to support interpretation of data presented in this report. For additional definitions, refer to the [APTA Master Glossary of Terms Related to Certification and Assessment](#).

Aggregate Data

Data compiled from multiple candidates, specialties, or reporting periods and presented in summary form.

Application (Total Applications)

The number of submitted applications for specialist certification within a given exam year; may exceed the number of unique applicants.

Eligibility Assessment Pathways

The routes through which candidates qualify to sit for a specialist certification exam:

- **Option A – Direct Patient Care Hours:** Qualification based on completion of required hours of direct patient care in a specialty area.
- **Option B – Residency Completion:** Qualification based on successful completion of an accredited ABPTRFE residency program.

Exam Year

The designated year in which the certification examination is administered, which may differ from the calendar year of application submission or data reporting.

First-Time Examinee

An individual taking a specific specialist certification examination for the first time.

Maintenance of Specialist Certification (MOSC)

The process by which board-certified specialists maintain their certification through ongoing professional development and periodic assessment.

MOSC Learning Plan

A structured plan submitted by certified specialists outlining professional development activities completed in a three-year cycle, as part of the MOSC process.

Newly Certified Specialist

An individual who has successfully passed a specialist certification examination and earned board certification during the exam year.

Passing Rate

The percentage of examinees who achieve a passing score on a certification or recertification assessment; may be reported for specific subgroups (e.g., first-time examinees, residency-trained candidates).

Residency Examinee / Non-Residency Examinee

Categories used to distinguish candidates based on whether eligibility was achieved through completion of a residency program or through direct patient care experience.

Unknown (Data Category)

A designation used in demographic or employment tables when information is not reported or unavailable for a given respondent.

Year 10 Knowledge Review

A recertification assessment completed by specialists at the end of their certification cycle to demonstrate continued competence in their specialty area.

Initial Certification Program Data

Application Numbers

Figure 1. Number of Applications by Exam Year Across All Ten Specialties

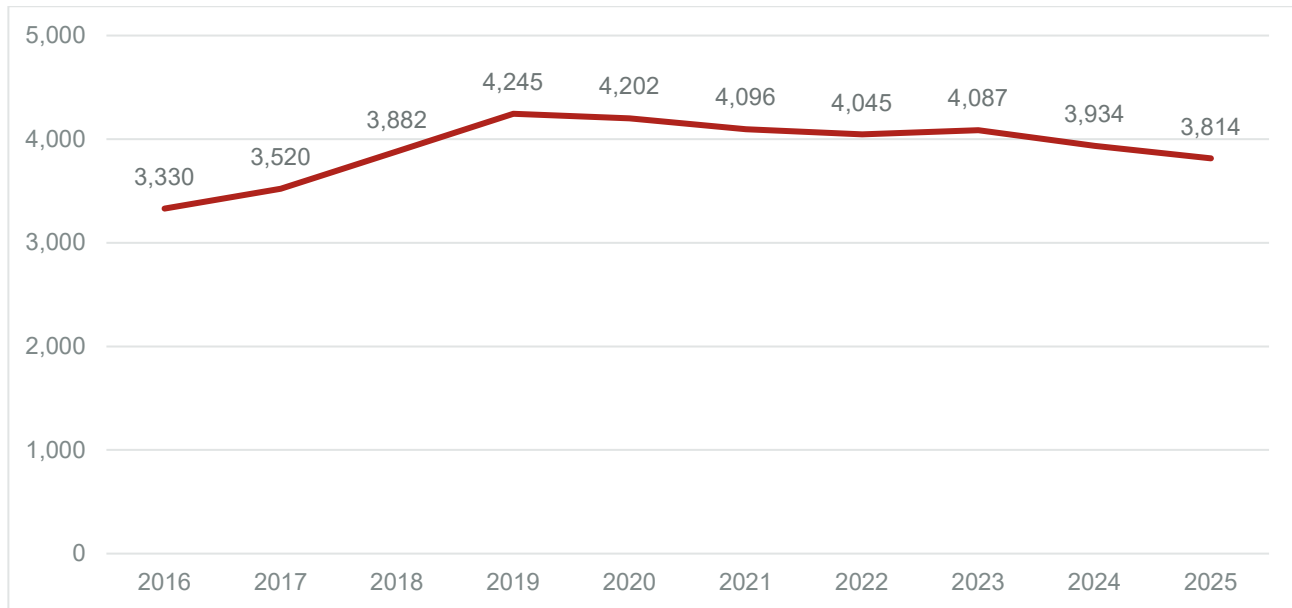


Figure 2. Eligibility Assessment Path by Exam Year Across All Ten Specialties

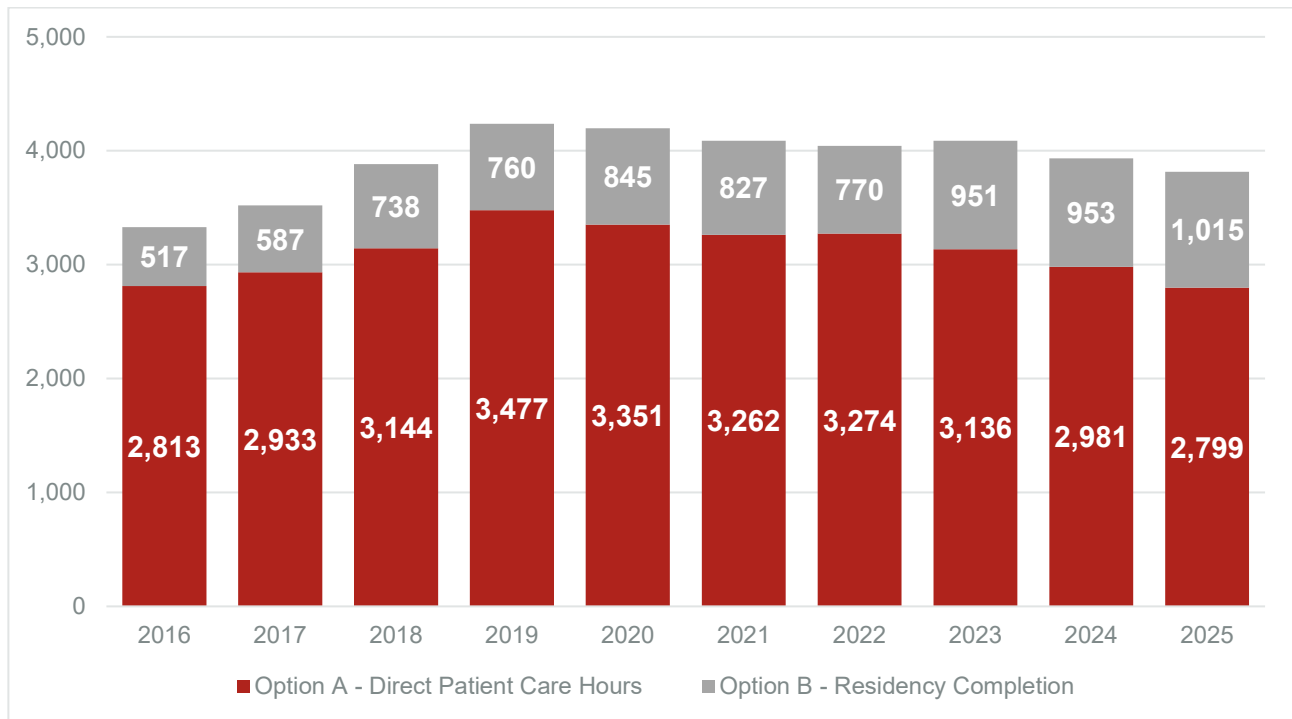


Figure 3. Number of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Specialty Applications by Exam Year

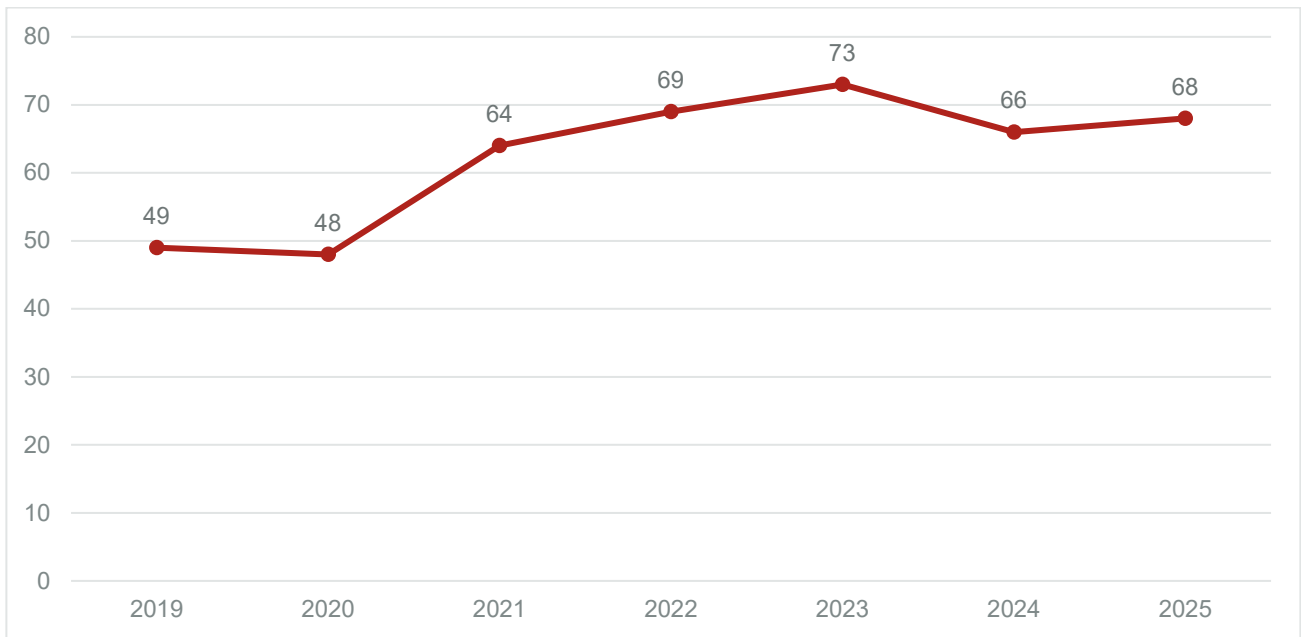


Figure 4. Number of Clinical Electrophysiology Specialty Applications by Exam Year

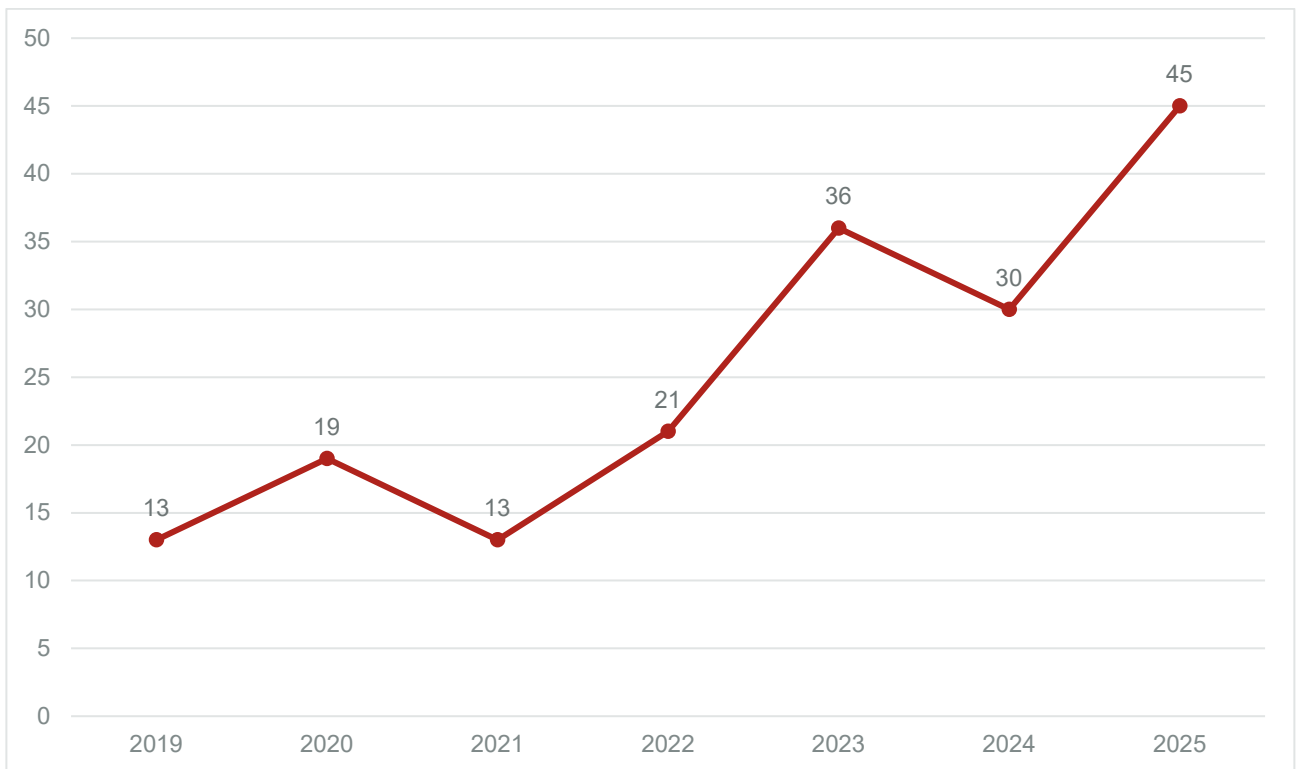


Figure 5. Number of Geriatrics Specialty Applications by Exam Year

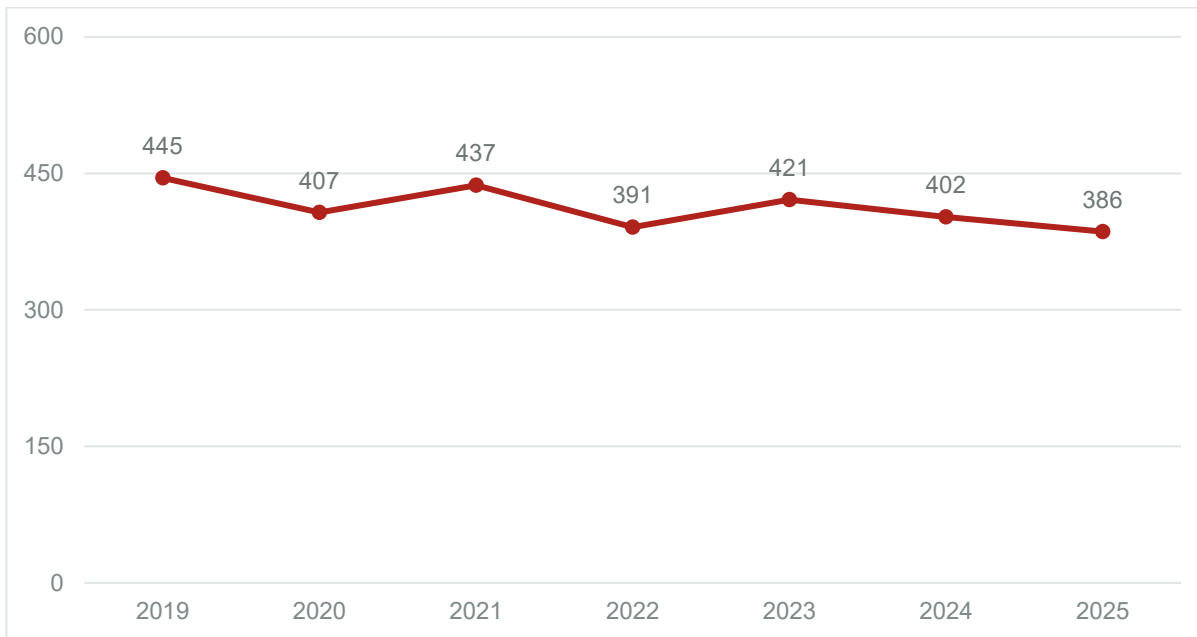


Figure 6. Number of Neurology Specialty Applications by Exam Year

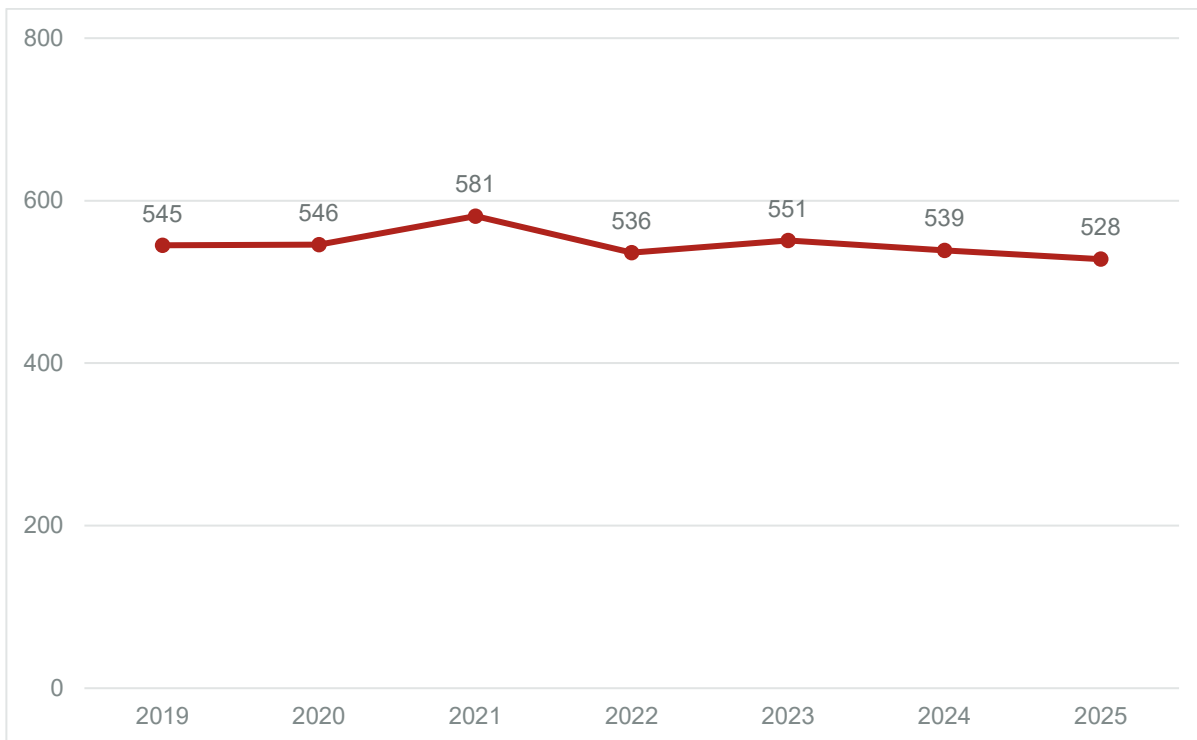
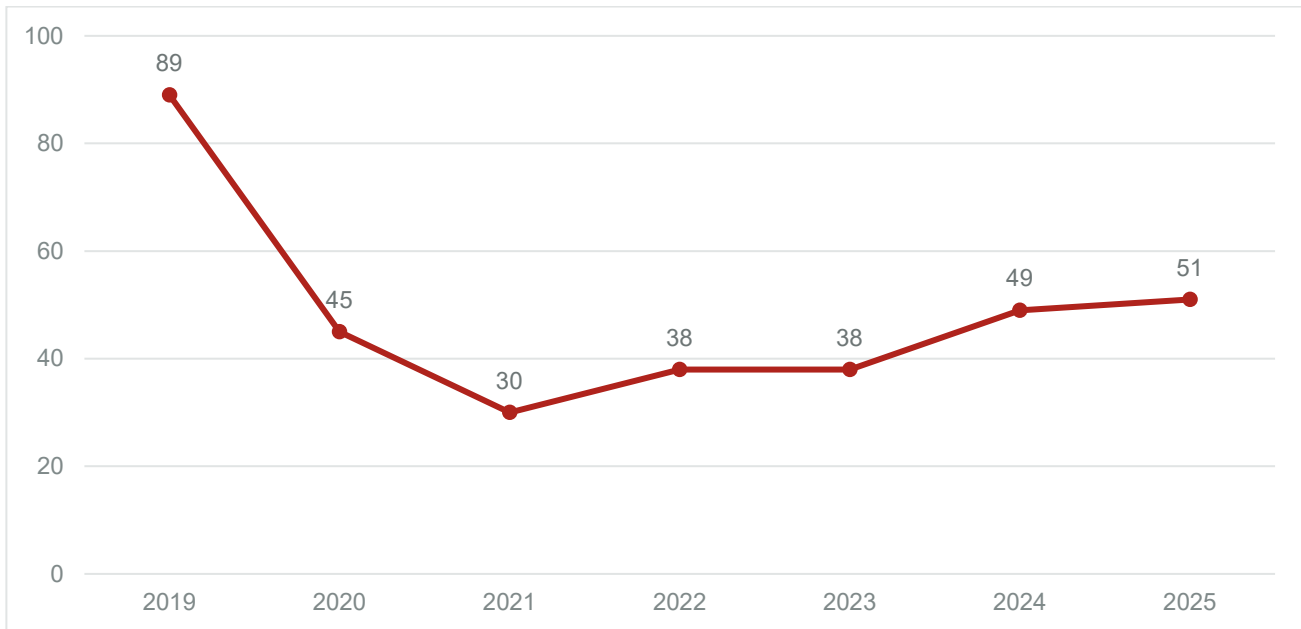


Figure 7. Number of Oncology Specialty Applications by Exam Year



Note: Certification began in 2019.

Figure 8. Number of Orthopaedics Specialty Applications by Exam Year

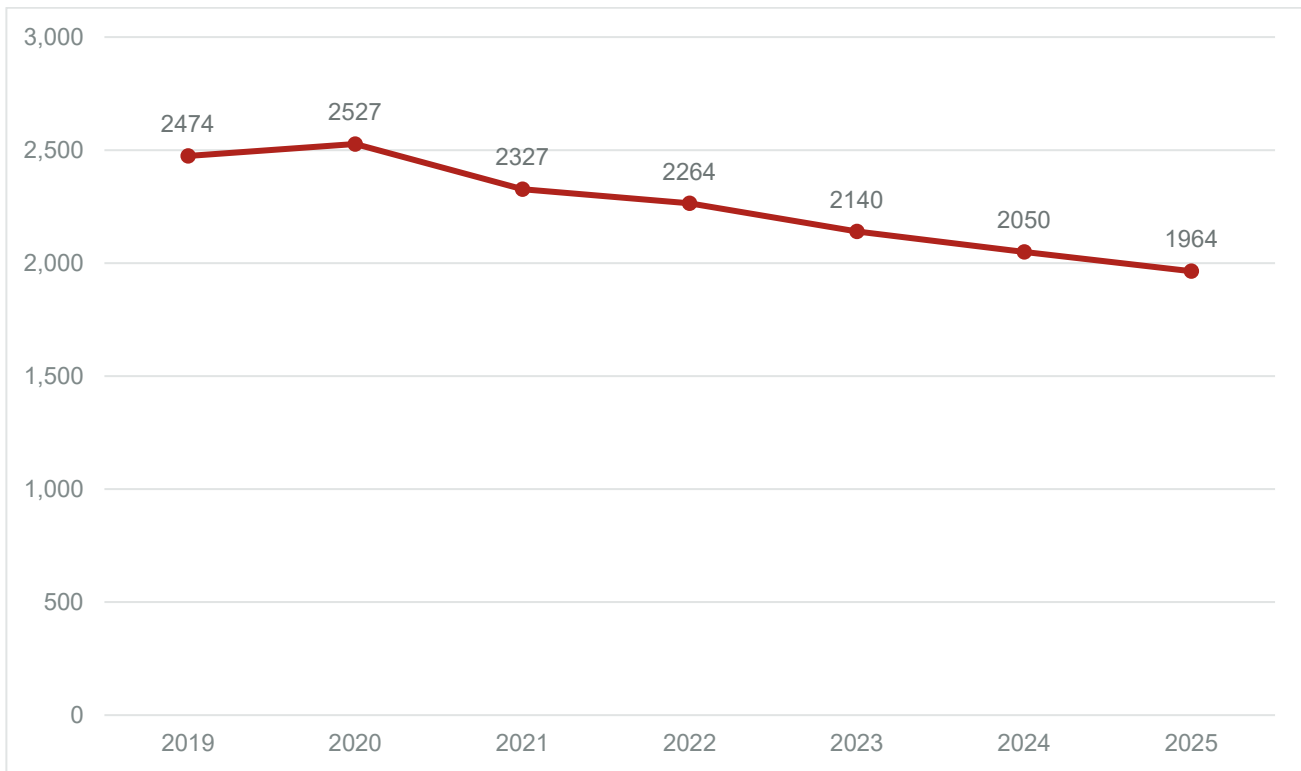


Figure 9. Number of Pediatrics Specialty Applications by Exam Year

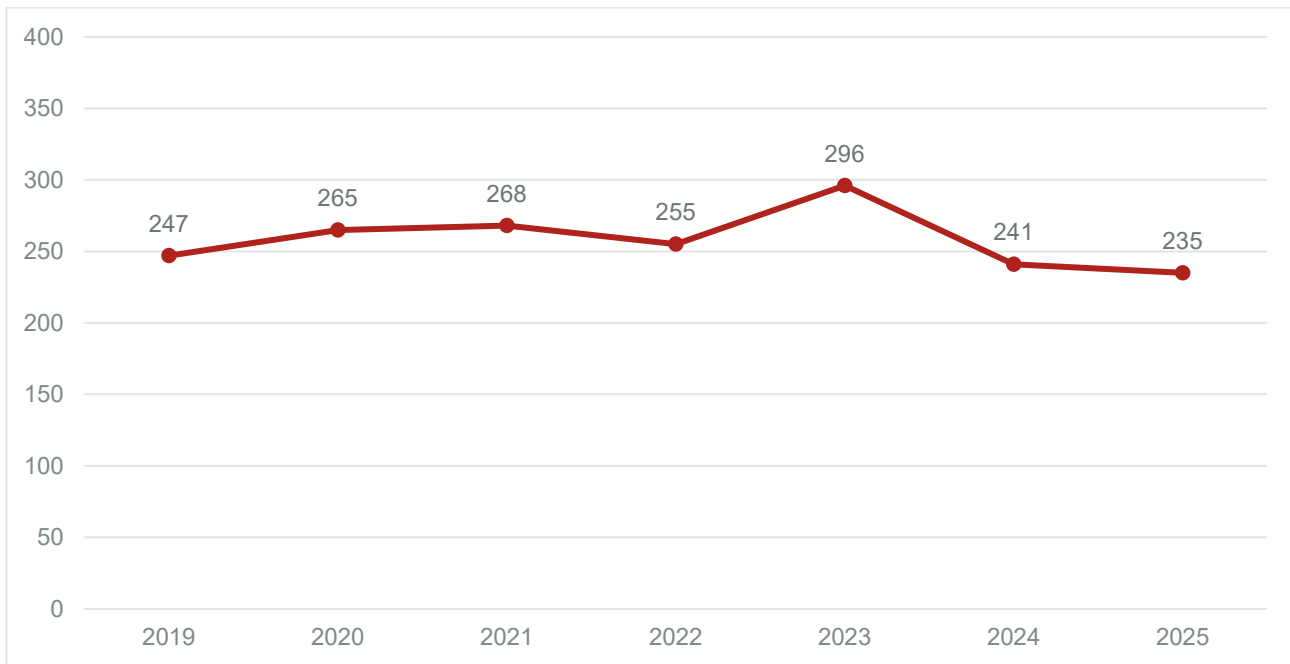
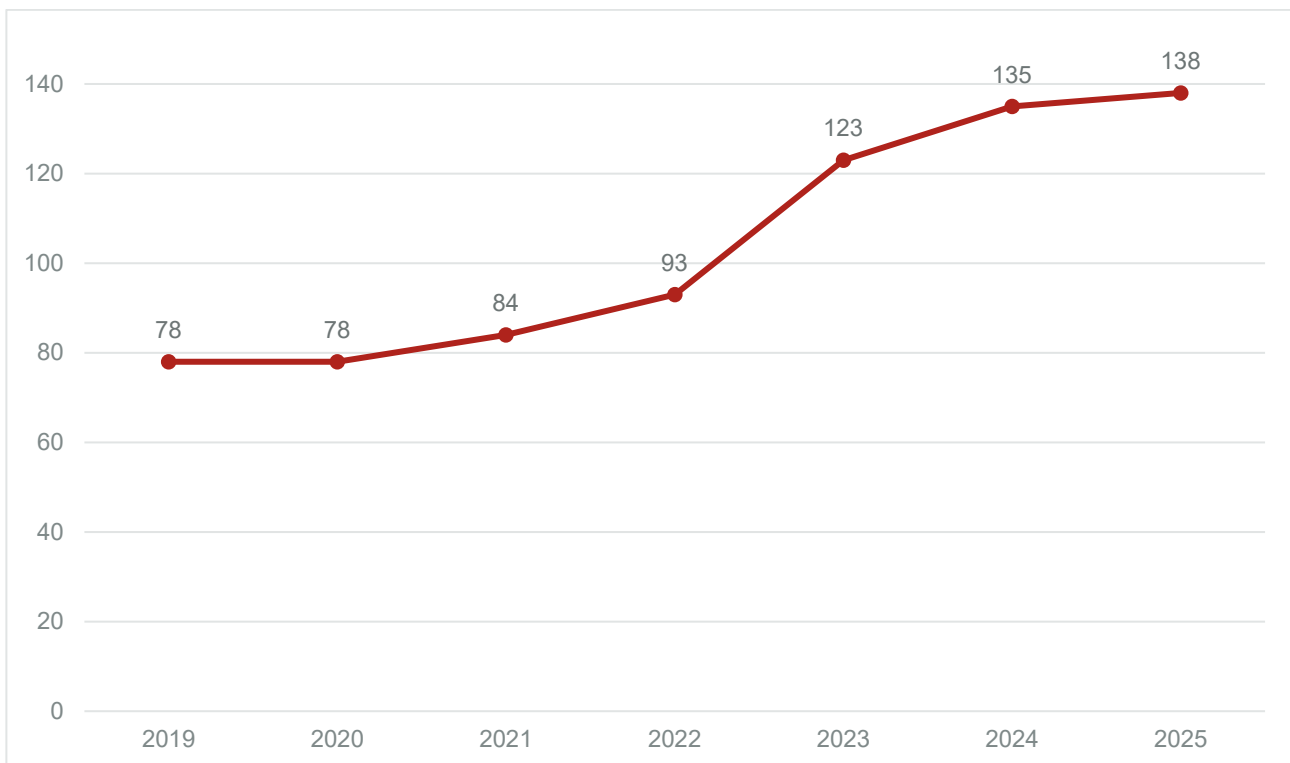


Figure 10. Number of Pelvic and Women’s Health Specialty Applications by Exam Year



Note: The name for this specialty changed from “Women’s Health” to “Pelvic and Women’s Health” in 2025.

Figure 11. Number of Sports Specialty Applications by Exam Year

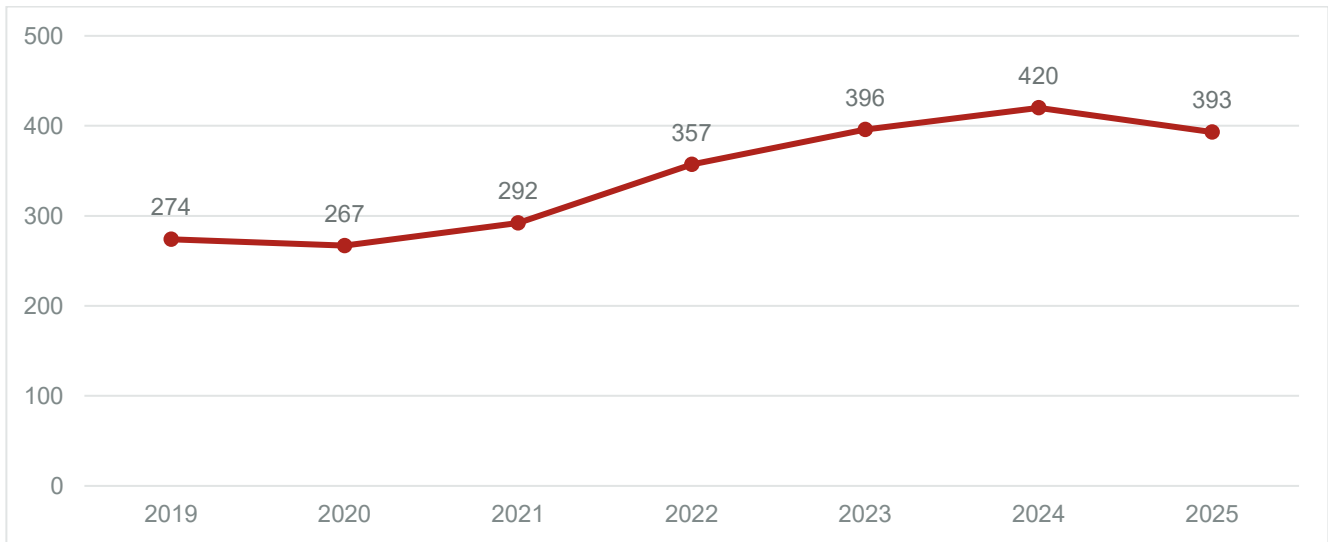
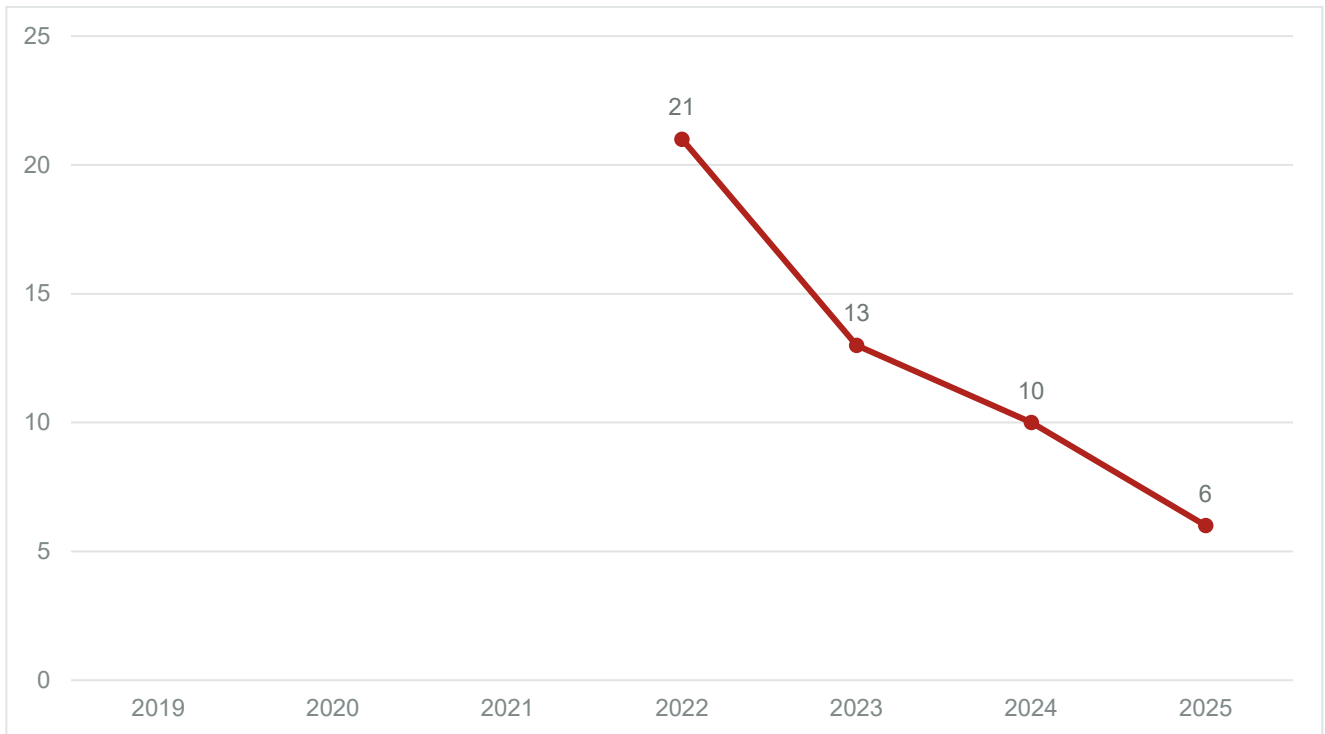


Figure 12. Number of Wound Management Specialty Applications by Exam Year



Note: Certification began in 2022.

2025 Exam Applicant Demographic Profile

Figure 13. Gender (N=3,813)

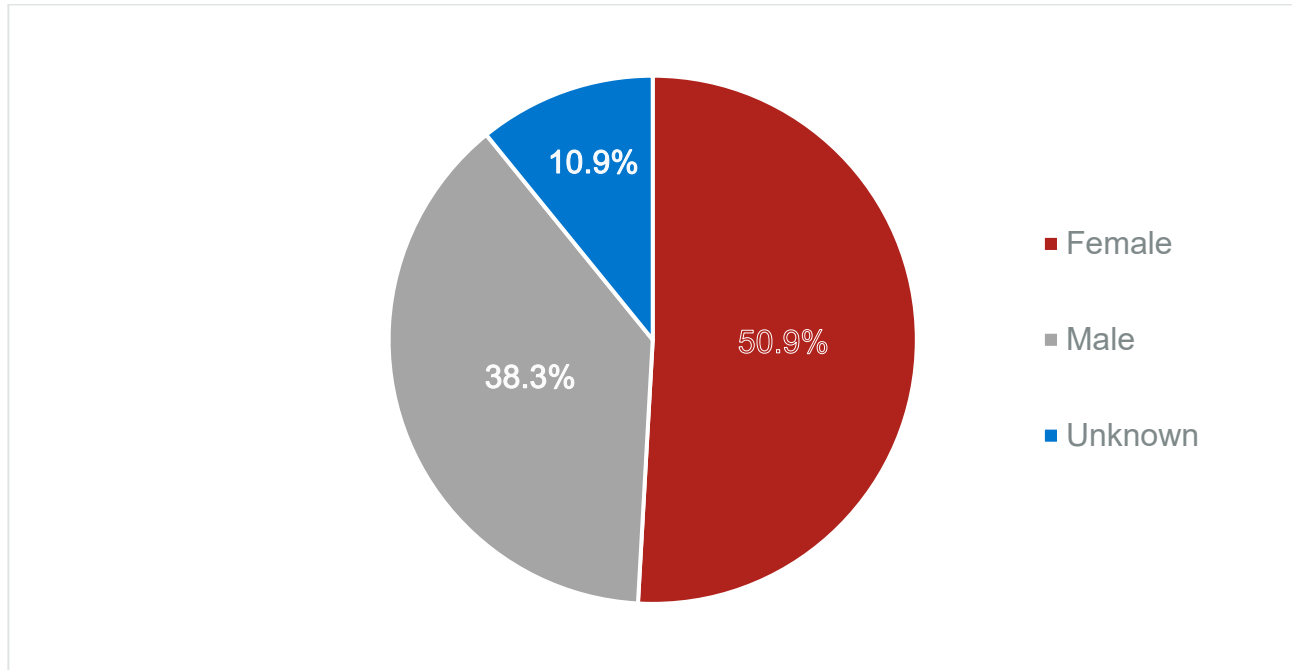


Table 1. Race/Ethnicity (N=3,813)

Race/Ethnicity	Number (Percentage)
American Indian/Alaska Native	15 (0.4%)
Asian	533 (14.0%)
Black or African American	161 (4.2%)
Hispanic/Latino	238 (6.2%)
Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	20 (0.5%)
White	2,163 (56.7%)
Other	105 (2.8%)
Unknown	579 (15.2%)

Table 2. Generation (N=3,813)

Generation	Number (Percentage)
Baby boomers (1946-1964)	43 (1.1%)
Gen Xers (1965-1981)	534 (14.0%)
Millennials (1982-2000)	3,232 (84.8%)
Unknown	5 (0.1%)

Table 3. APTA Member Status (N=3,813)

Member Status	Number (Percentage)
Members	3,027 (79.4%)
Nonmembers	786 (20.6%)

Table 4. Employment Status (N=3,813)

Employment Status	Number (Percentage)
Full-time hourly	681 (17.9%)
Part-time hourly	49 (1.3%)
Full-time salaried	2,175 (57%)
Part-time salaried	52 (1.4%)
Full-time self-employed	98 (2.6%)
Part-time self-employed	16 (0.4%)
Unemployed/not seeking work	5 (0.1%)
Unemployed/seeking full-time employment	11 (0.3%)
Unemployed/seeking part-time employment	5 (0.1%)
Unknown	721 (18.9%)

Table 5. Employment Setting (N=3,813)

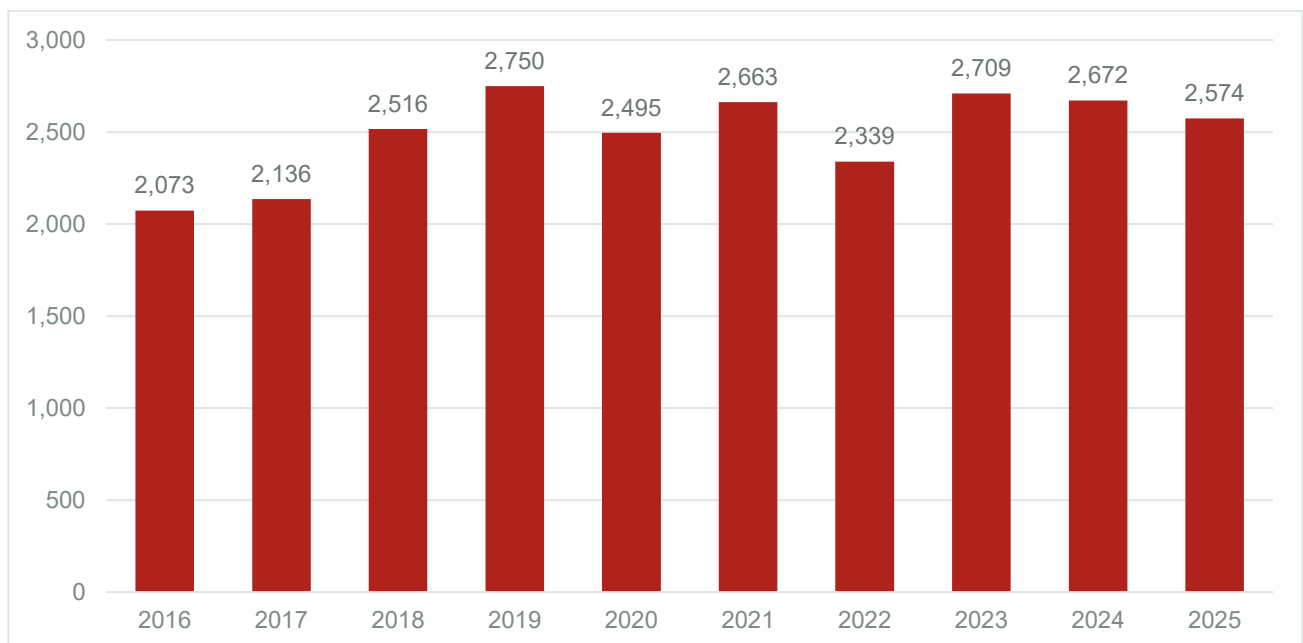
Employment Setting	Number (Percentage)
Acute care hospital	265 (6.9%)
Industry	12 (0.3%)
Inpatient rehab facility	180 (4.7%)
Hospital-based outpatient facility or clinic	1,014 (26.6%)
Private outpatient office or group practice	1,235 (32.4%)
Skilled nursing facility/long-term care	64 (1.7%)
Patient's home/home care	101 (2.6%)
School system (preschool/primary/secondary)	41 (1.1%)
Academic institution (postsecondary)	81 (2.1%)
Research center	1 (0.1%)
Health and wellness facility	18 (.5%)
Other	162 (4.2%)
Unknown	639 (16.8%)

2025 Certification Exam Results

Table 6. First-Time Examinee Passing Rates

Specialty Area	All Examinees	Non-residency Examinees	Residency Examinees
Cardiovascular and Pulmonary	81%	79%	100%
Clinical Electrophysiology	74%	88%	70%
Geriatrics	68%	66%	95%
Neurology	91%	89%	100%
Oncology	88%	86%	100%
Orthopaedics	87%	84%	93%
Pediatrics	79%	79%	82%
Pelvic and Women's Health	78%	73%	90%
Sports	95%	92%	99%
Wound Management	100%	100%	100%
Total	86%	82%	94%

Figure 14. Newly Certified Specialists by Exam Year Across All Specialties



Recertification/Maintenance of Specialist Certification Program Data

Maintenance of Specialist Certification Learning Plan Numbers

Table 7. Maintenance of Specialist Certification Learning Plans Submitted in 2025

Specialty Area	Submission Total
Cardiovascular and Pulmonary	91
Clinical Electrophysiology	33
Geriatrics	414
Neurology	921
Oncology	61
Orthopaedics	3,109
Pediatrics	488
Pelvic and Women’s Health	177
Sports	590
Wound Management	8
Total	5,892

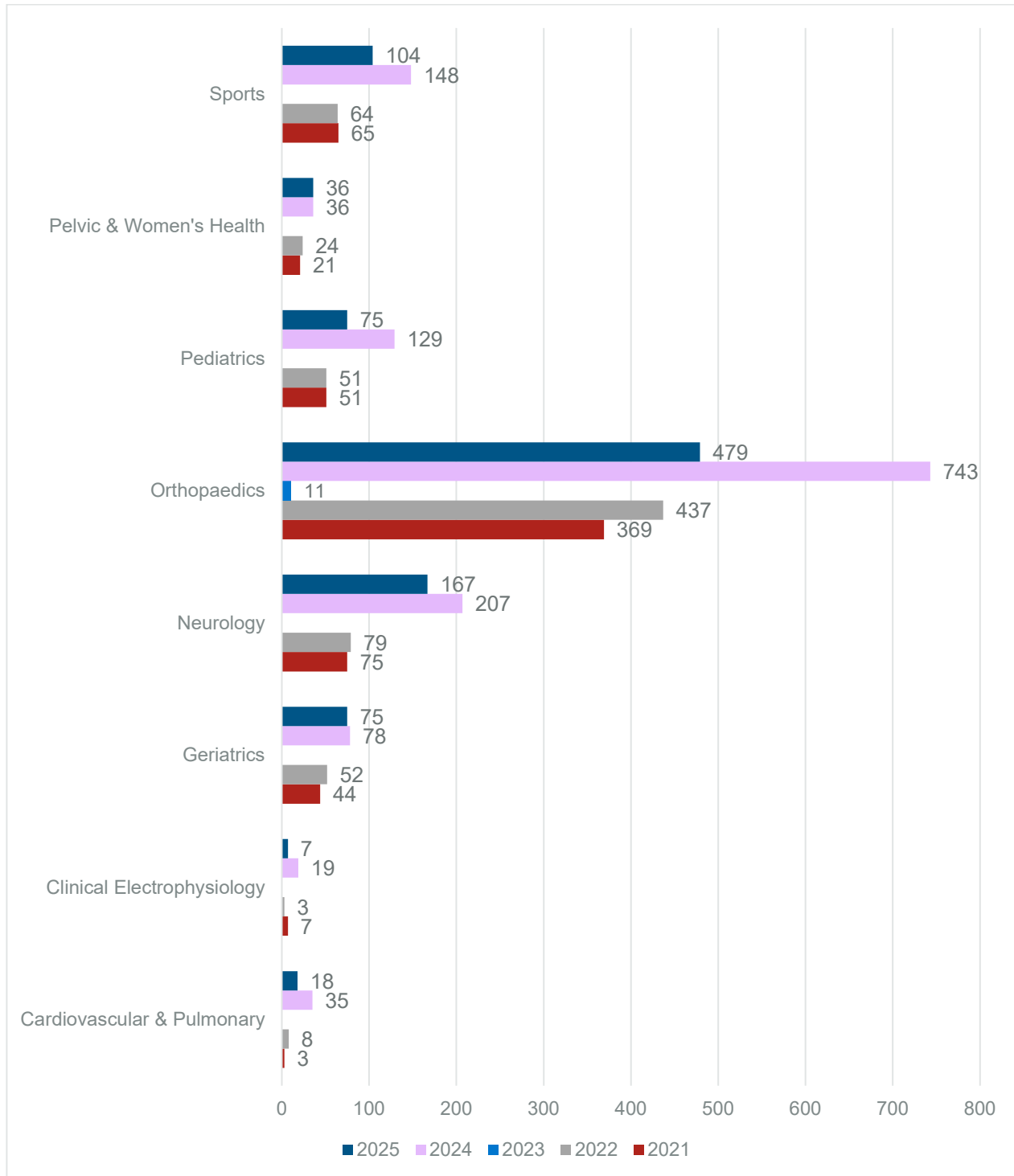
2025 Recertification Results

Table 8. Year 10 Maintenance of Specialist Certification Knowledge Review Pass Rates

Specialty Area	Test Takers	Passed	Pass Rate
Cardiovascular and Pulmonary	18	18	100%
Clinical Electrophysiology	7	7	100%
Geriatrics	76	75	99%
Neurology	182	167	92%
Orthopaedics	502	479	95%
Pediatrics	79	75	95%
Pelvic and Women’s Health	36	36	100%
Sports	110	104	95%
Overall	1,010	961	95%

Note: Includes both first-time and repeat Knowledge Review assessment takers.

Figure 14. Number of Recertified Specialists by Specialty Area



Note: Excludes oncology and wound management specialists, as none have yet been eligible to recertify after a 10-year period.

Table 9. Total Number of Current Specialists by Specialty Area

Specialty Area	Number
Cardiovascular and Pulmonary	493
Clinical Electrophysiology	198
Geriatrics	3,228
Neurology	4,610
Oncology	255
Orthopaedics	18,254
Pediatrics	2,267
Pelvic and Women’s Health	866
Sports	2,946
Wound Management	36
Total	33,153

Note: Figures include those who have been granted Emeritus status.

Table 10. Total Number of Current Emeritus Specialists by Specialty Area

Specialty Area	Number
Cardiovascular and Pulmonary	12
Clinical Electrophysiology	5
Geriatrics	80
Neurology	65
Orthopaedics	142
Pediatrics	48
Pelvic and Women’s Health	10
Sports	47
Total	409

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