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## **Critical Shortage of Medical Technologists**

While many pathology groups are finding it more and more difficult to recruit pathologists into their practices, laboratories are facing a critical shortage of medical laboratory professionals. Per a recent article in Forbes, the US is facing a shortage of between 20-25,000 medical technicians. The American Society for Clinical Pathology states 85.3% of lab professionals reported burnout, 36.5% complained of inadequate staffing and almost as many cited that the workload was too heavy. Lack of recognition was cited by 14.9%. This has caused a huge problem with staff retention.

Forbes reports that medical technicians performed an estimated 13 billion laboratory tests in the US every year before the pandemic. Since the pandemic began, there has been an additional 997 million diagnostic tests for Covid-19. Many of the older medical technologists retired during the pandemic to avoid exposure, or were just burned out due to extraordinary overtime demands. Additionally, during the pandemic the pipeline of new medical technologists was disrupted as many labs temporarily shut down their clinical training rotations.

A recent article in Laboratory Economics pointed to the ways some laboratories are offering salaries and sign on bonuses that have never been seen before. The San Francisco Bay Area as well as San Diego are paying salaries as high as \$150,000 and \$180,000 to attract medical technologists. Even with these salaries, they often add a sign on bonus up to an additional \$25,000. The salaries for medical technologists have doubled in some markets since the start of the pandemic. It is not just California, salaries in Dallas are coming in at \$135,000 with sign on bonus of \$25,000 and even Toledo, Ohio reported salaries in the range of \$80,000 to \$90,000 with sign on bonus between \$20,000 and \$30,000. It seems as if this is the new normal and experts do not see these salaries ever reverting back to pre-pandemic levels.

APS looks to provide ongoing support and information to our clients. Please do not hesitate to contact your APS Practice Manager should you have any questions.