

Studies on Fees and Salaries of Marriage and Family Therapists

Fees

Based on the findings of a recent national survey of marriage and family therapists regarding their fees and average length of treatment, the average case treated by a marriage and family therapist involves 12 sessions at \$65-80 per session, for a total cost of \$780-\$960. The higher figure reflects the general maximum fees and the lower figure reflects the actual case charge. Table 12 provides details on hourly rates. (Source: Doherty, W.J. and Simmons, D.S. (1996). Clinical practice patterns of marriage and family therapists: A national survey of therapists and their clients. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 22, 9-25.)

Table 12
Therapists' Fees

	Mean	Median	Range
Hourly rate (general)*			
Individual	\$79	\$80	\$0-225
Couple	\$81	\$80	\$0-225
Family	\$81	\$80	\$0-300
Hourly rate (cases)**	\$63	\$65	\$0-170
Therapists who reduce fees*			
Private practice		68.8%	
Agency-based practice		29.4%	
% of clients who receive reduced fees*			
Private practice		25.0%	
Agency-based practice		60.0%	
Average reduced fee*			
Private practice		\$50	
Agency-based practice		\$30	
Therapists who offer pro bono services*		55.5%	

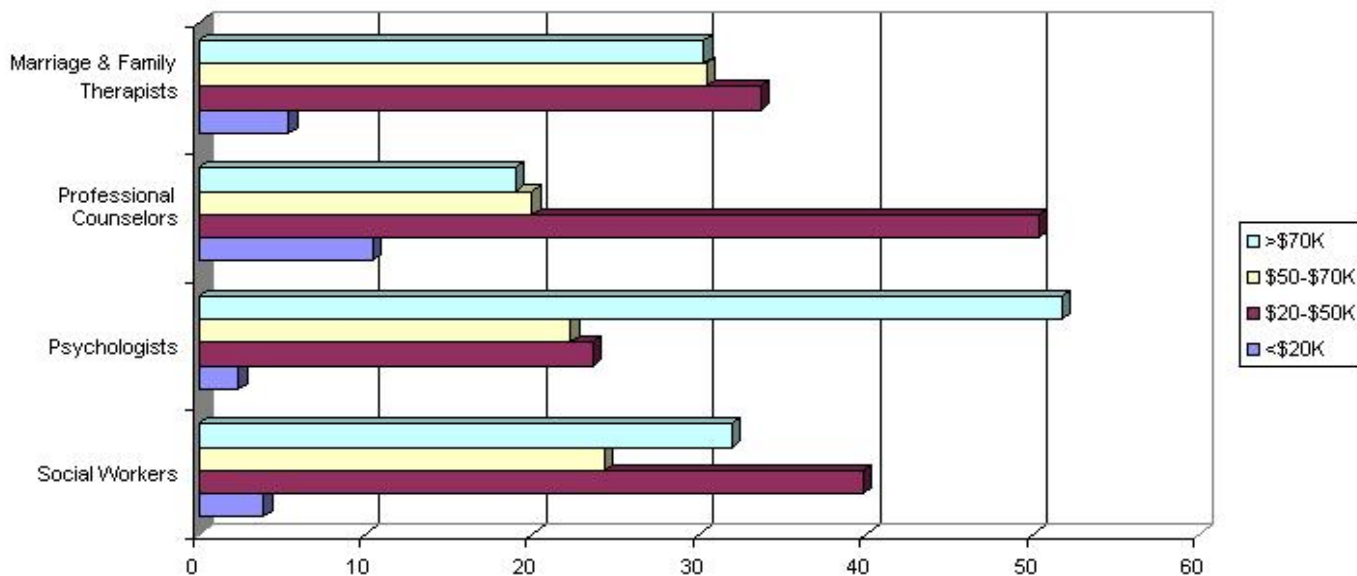
*Based on Part I data.

**Based on Part II data.

Salary

According to a recent survey of therapists in private practice, 67 percent of all therapists earn \$50,000 or less in private practice. Of marriage and family therapists, 58 percent earn \$50,000 or less in private practice. (Source: Private practice: fees, incomes and trends. *Practice Strategies*, Vol. 2, December 1996.)

Private Practice Incomes of Therapists



MFT Incomes Continue to Rise According to Psychotherapy Finances

MFT incomes climb in the latest survey of mental health professionals. According to a survey in Psychotherapy Finances (October, 2000), MFT total professional income, which had represented the only increase among all psychotherapy providers in 1997, rose again by four percent. MFTs demonstrated an 8% increase in private practice income, but the total was offset by decreases in managed care fees. Although the total income rose, like most of the professions, it unfortunately did not even track with the rate of inflation. The new MFT median professional income is \$59,405; by comparison, social workers now show a total income of \$61,164, Professional Counselors dropped by 1.4 percent to \$47,350, and Psychologists incomes dropped by 0.7 percent to \$80,000. Psychiatrists' incomes have increased by 13.7 percent - mainly by avoiding managed care - but PF did not include their total income.

According to PF, MFTs receive 55% of their income from self-pay, 24% from managed care, 10% from indemnity insurance, 5% from other third parties, and another 3.5% from other practice income. Managed care reimbursement was down across the board and was a major drain on each profession's income. Fortunately, MFTs were less affected by this decrease because they receive a relatively smaller percentage of their income from Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). This was the reason that MFTs were able to increase their incomes when the incomes of several of the other profession's declined.

The survey also reports that the median fees (based on therapists' reported payments) increased slightly for all the professions since 1997. Direct payment for individual therapy by MFTs and social workers is reported as \$80 per hour, \$79 for counselors, \$100 for psychologists, and \$132 for psychiatrists.

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