



AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR CYTOTECHNOLOGY

2008 Cytotechnology Wage and Employment Survey

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The American Society for Cytotechnology is pleased to release the results of our 25th annual Cytotechnology Wage and Vacancy Survey. Each year since 1983, the ASCT has surveyed individual cytotechnologists to monitor employment trends in our profession. This year, the survey questions were expanded to reflect the current professional landscape.

Background

The current evolution of our profession and the healthcare marketplace has caused many cytotechnologists to experience changes in their work environment. In 2008, ASCT leadership evaluated this survey to determine how it could best support cytotechnologists in the workforce. This evaluation process drew attention to two overriding themes; first, that cytotechnologists want their professional organizations to work together, and second, cytotechnologists want better data to highlight current and future workforce issues.

In August 2008, ASCT President Lynnette Savaloja met with Blair Holladay, PhD, Vice President and Executive Director of the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Board of Registry, and Nancie Noie Thompson, ASCP Director of Membership and Communications, to discuss how the ASCT and the ASCP could adapt each of these organizations' Wage and Vacancy Surveys and conduct them to better serve our organizations and our members. Some changes in this survey were made as a result of this discussion.

Method

The ASCT conducted this survey using SurveyMonkey, an internet-based survey tool. The 17-question survey was open for responses from September 23, 2008 through October 31, 2008. Invitations to participate in the survey were sent via e-mail notification to all ASCT members. In addition, permission was granted by the American Society of Cytopathology to post an invitation on that organization's listserv. A link was also added to the end of the survey to direct ASCT survey participants to the 2007 ASCP Wage and Vacancy Survey. Each survey participant did not answer every question. The ASCT Membership Regions, illustrated in **Figure 1**, are used to organize some of the survey findings.

Survey Response Demographics

435 responses were received during the survey period. Of these, 78% of respondents were female and 22% were male (**Figure 2**). **Table 1** shows the number of responses by ASCT region and state. Region 2 had the largest number of survey responses, while

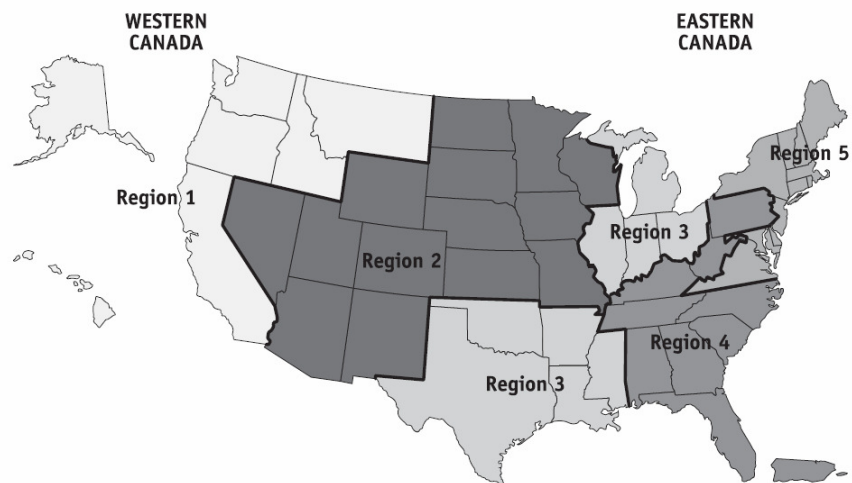


Figure 1: ASCT Membership Regions

Minnesota had the largest total number of survey responses from a single state, comprising 6% of all survey responses received (**Figure 3**). States that did not respond to this survey include Alaska, Montana and Wyoming, in addition to the District of Columbia. Two responses were received from Canada, and are included as part of Region 4. One response was received from outside of the United States without a specific location identified.

Table 1: Survey Responses by ASCT Region and State*									
1		2		3		4		5	
TOTAL 46		TOTAL 130		TOTAL 87		TOTAL 79		TOTAL 92	
AK	0	AZ	11	AR	2	AL	7	CT	7
CA	24	CO	9	IL	17	FL	12	DC	0
HI	1	IA	15	IN	11	GA	7	DE	1
ID	3	KS	8	LA	1	KY	1	MA	17
MT	0	MN	28	MI	20	NC	15	MD	3
OR	5	MO	11	MS	1	PA	18	ME	5
WA	13	ND	3	OH	10	SC	3	NH	3
		NE	6	OK	1	TN	11	NJ	8
		NM	4	TX	24	WV	3	NY	25
		NV	2			CAN	2	RI	7
		SD	1					VA	10
		UT	6					VT	6
		WI	26						
		WY	0						

*One response received with location outside the US not indicated

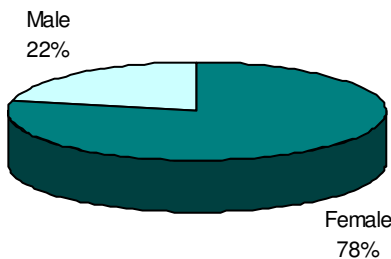


Figure 2: Responses By Gender

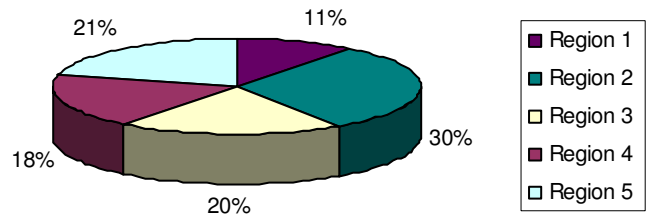


Figure 3: Responses by Region

Employment Status

The majority (89%) of all respondents indicated that they are employed full-time, while the remaining 11% work part-time or on call/casual (**Figure 4**). Eight percent of all respondents work more than one job, as illustrated in **Figure 5**. Of those working more than one job, 81% have full-time positions. These survey participants work an average of 6 hours a week at their second job. However, several respondents work from 10-20 hours a week at their second place of employment. Two respondents indicated that their part-time jobs were not in cytology.

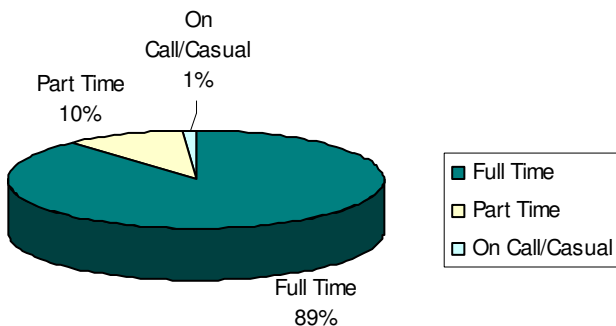


Figure 4: Employment Status

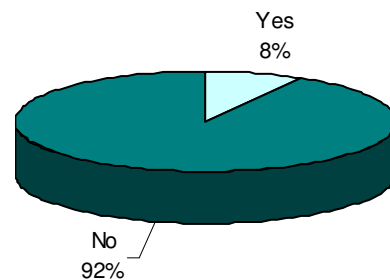


Figure 5: Respondents with More Than One Employer

Position Categories and Wages

The position categories reported by our survey respondents are listed in **Figure 6**. The majority of our survey respondents (39%) hold a staff level position, followed by supervisory cytotechnologists (27%) and lead/chief/senior cytotechnologists (23%).

A new category that was added to the survey this year is Anatomic Pathology (AP) Manager. This position is held by 4.5% of those who participated in our survey. The category of Cytology/Cytopathology manager was not included in our survey as a category choice, but is held by 1% of our survey participants. In addition, 4% of survey respondents indicated they held a job category that is listed as “Other” in Figure 6. A list of these reported categories are found in **Table 2**.

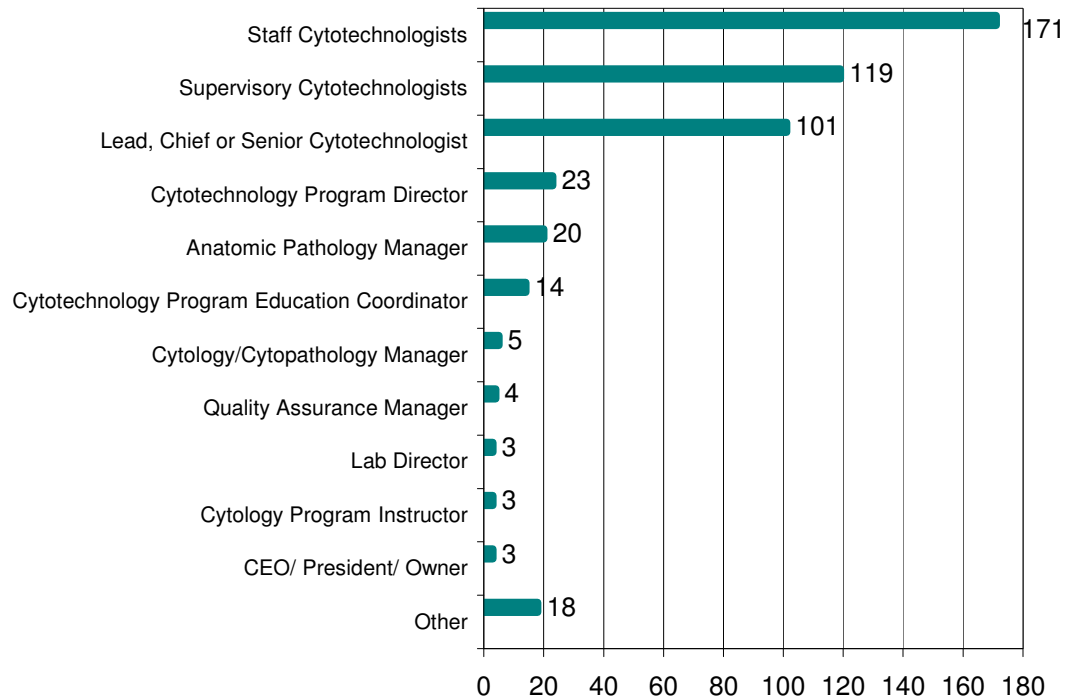


Figure 6: Respondents by Job Category

Nine percent (9%) of our respondents indicated they held more than one position, with over a quarter of those (27%) being Cytology Program Directors. For wage comparison calculations, the highest-level position category is used. One pathologist answered our survey, and a lead histotechnologist also responded but did not include a cytology position category in his/her response; these participants’ salary information is excluded from our wage data.

Table 2: Other Position Category Responses

Anatomic Pathology Supervisor	Lead Histotechnologist
Compliance Coordinator	Manager Cytopathology
Consultant Cytotechnologist	Medical Laboratory Supervisor
Cytology Clinical Instructor	Pathologist
Cytology Director	Pathologist Assistant
Department Chair	Pathology Safety Officer
Government Scientist	Pathology Supervisor
Lab Manager	Quality Assurance Specialist
Lab Tech	Residency/Fellowship Instructor

Table 3 displays the salary ranges for the seven position categories that received the highest number of survey responses. For wage comparisons, hourly/annual ranges are based on full-time employment at 2080 hours per year. All Cytology/Cytopathology Managers reported their income as salary; therefore no hourly wage was calculated for this position category.

Fourteen respondents chose not to provide wage information for our survey. **Figure 7** illustrates the wage comparison for the three most common position categories by ASCT Region.

Table 3: Hourly/Annual Salary Range by Position Title (Dollars)			
Position Category	MIN	AVG	MAX
Staff Cytotechnologist	15.38	28.96	51.49
	32,000	60,245	107,099
Lead/Chief/Senior CT	22.30	31.91	46.59
	52,000	66,374	89,983
Supervisory CT	22.12	36.14	70.00
	46,000	75,174	145,600
Cytology/Cytopathology Manager	N/A	N/A	N/A
	82,000	86,658	100,000
Anatomic Pathology Manager	28.65	40.16	65.38
	59,600	83,525	136,000
Cytotechnology Program Education Coordinator	20.67	28.22	38.46
	43,000	58,699	80,000
Cytotechnology Program Education Director	28.85	37.78	50.23
	60,000	78,575	104,478

Employment and Professional Demographics

The employment facilities reported by our survey participants are illustrated in **Figure 8**. Over three fourths (79%) of survey respondents work in either a private or hospital-based laboratory. Ten percent of full-time employees report working at more than one facility, with over half of those working in both a Hospital and a University setting. Two employment facility categories, Public Health Facility and Veterans' Affairs (VA) facilities, were not offered in our survey as category choices, but were listed by our survey participants and are included in figure 8. Another facility of interest is a Veterinary Clinic, where one of our survey participants is employed. **Figure 9** illustrates cytotechnologist wages for the top three position categories by the three most common employment facilities.

The average hourly wage of staff cytotechnologists for these three categories is \$29.13. While not included in the graph, staff cytotechnologists in clinic facilities reported an average wage significantly lower than these three facility categories, at \$27.16

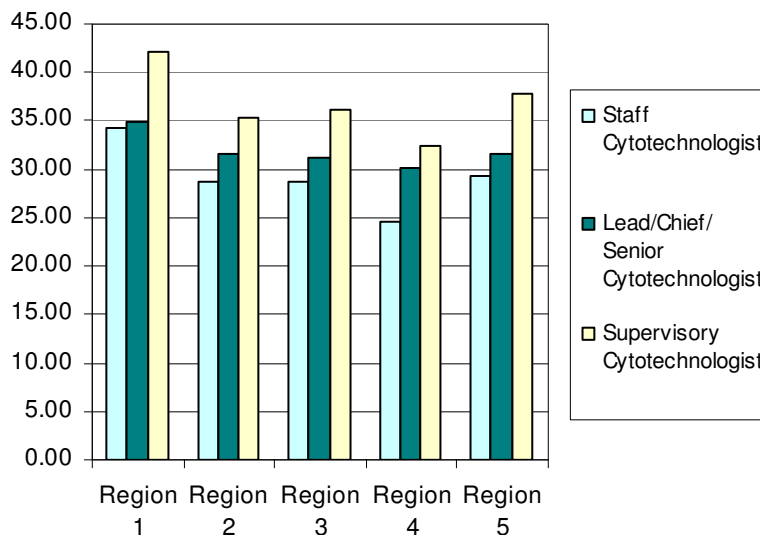


Figure 7: Cytotechnologist Wages by Region

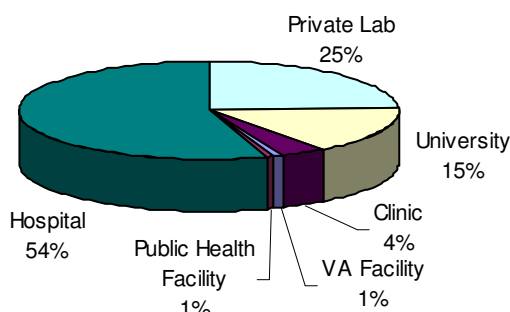


Figure 8: Responses by Employment Facility

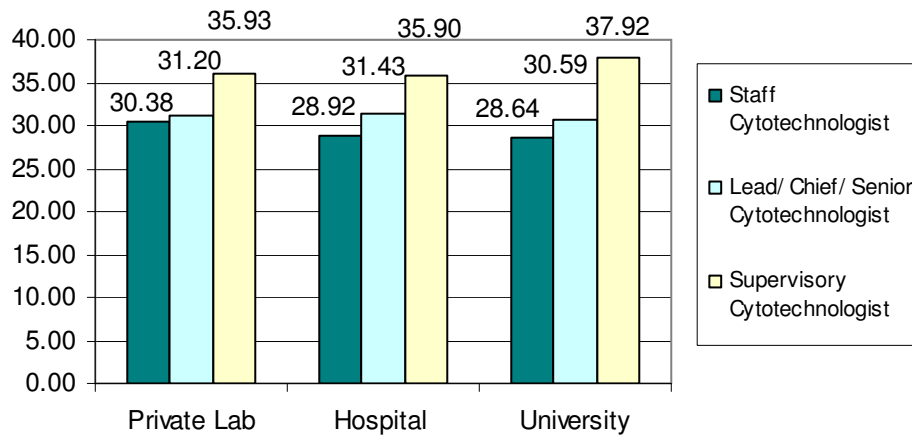


Figure 9: Cytotechnologist Wages by Facility

per hour.

Over half (53%) of respondents have worked in the field for over 20 years, with the largest number of respondents in the 26-30 year category (**Figure 10**). Almost one-third (31%) of all respondents have worked at their current facility for over 15 years. Seventy-five percent of respondents have worked in their current positions for less than 15 years, with over half of

those working in their positions for less than five years. These findings are illustrated in **Figures 11 and 12**. As might be expected, salaries for survey respondents increased with their years of experience, as indicated in **Figure 13**.

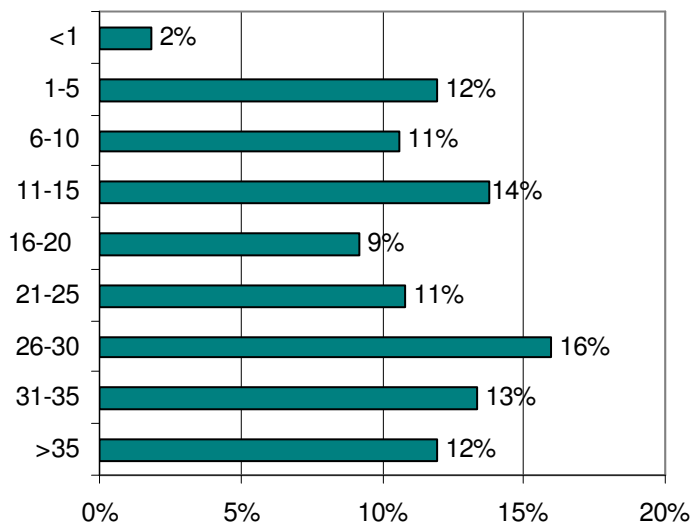


Figure 10: Percent of Respondents by Years in the Field

Our survey respondents were asked when they anticipated leaving the field. Over half (57%) of survey participants indicated they might leave the field in ten years or less (**Figure 14**). A closer assessment of the data revealed an interesting statistic: almost one-fourth (24%) of these respondents have been in the field less than 10 years, as seen in **Figure 15**. A comparison of the estimated time of retirement for all respondents by their years of experience can be seen in **Figure 16**.

Of the survey participants who responded to this question, the majority (58%) indicated they were leaving the field for retirement. However, over a third (34%) stated they were leaving for a new career, as illustrated in **Figure 17**.

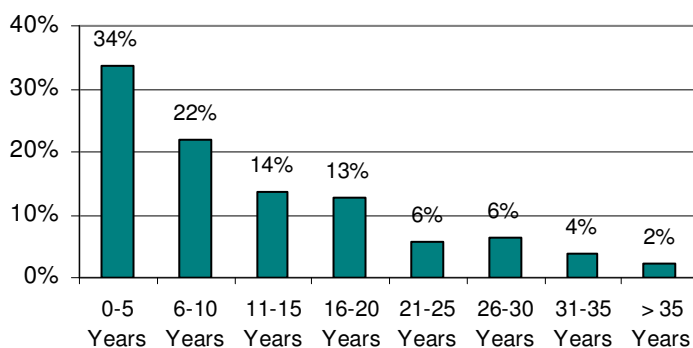


Figure 11: Percent of Respondents by Years at Current Facility

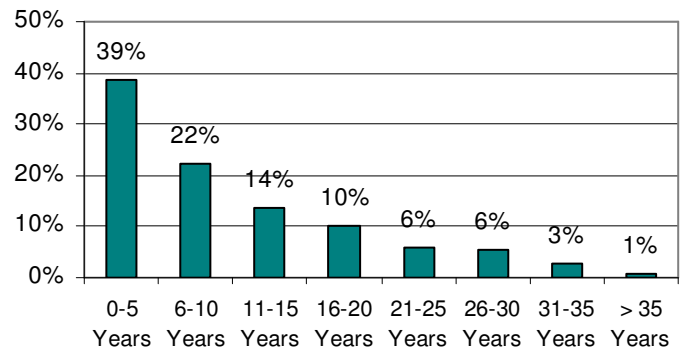


Figure 12: Percent of Respondents by Years in Current Position

Sixty-eight survey participants who responded they might leave the field chose to indicate which career they would peruse if they leave cytology. The most common career field mentioned was Education, followed by Public Health/Health Care Administration. The most common careers mentioned are listed in **Table 4**.

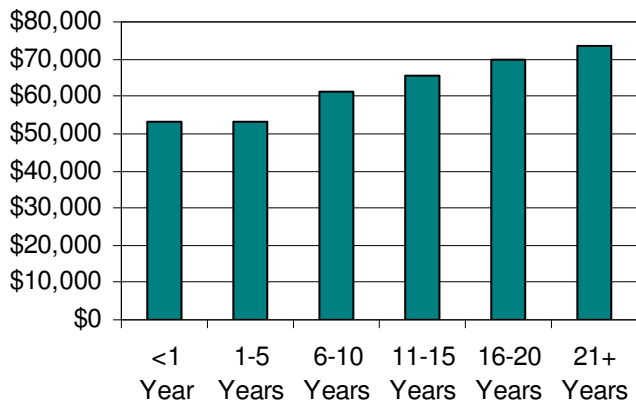


Figure 13: Average Salary by Years of Experience

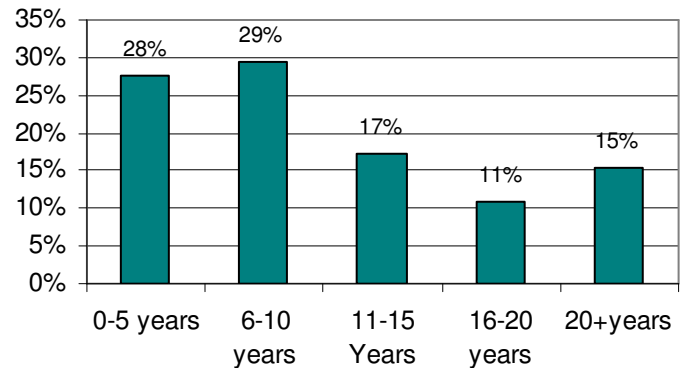


Figure 14: Percent of All Respondents by Estimated Time Remaining in Field

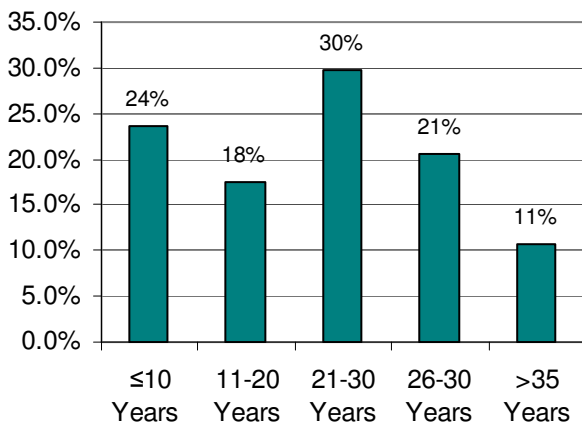


Figure 15: Percent of Respondents Leaving the Field Within Ten Years By Years of Experience

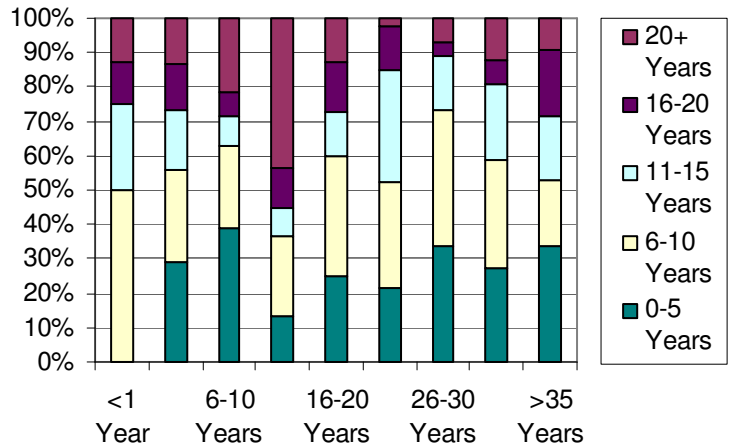


Figure 16: Percent of Respondents by Estimated Time Remaining in Field and Years of Experience

Vacancy Data

Although questions on vacancy were asked in our survey, we have chosen not to include these responses in this summary. Because our survey is based on individual responses and not institution-based participation (as compared to the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Wage and Vacancy Survey) it would be challenging for us to validate this information without asking participants to disclose their place of employment. In an effort to respect our survey participants'

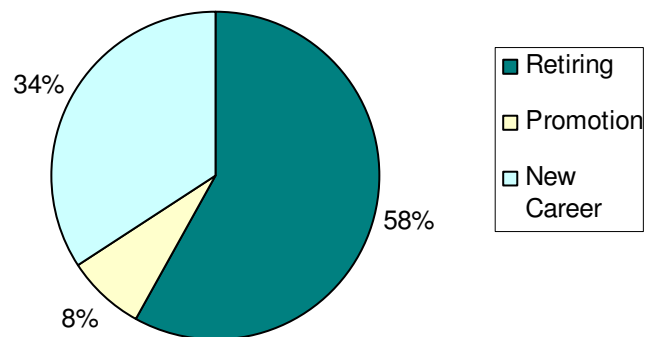


Figure 17: Reason For Leaving Field

desire to keep responses anonymous, we choose not to collect this information. As such, we have chosen not to report vacancy data for the reasons given above. Current vacancy data can be found in the 2007 ASCP Wage and Vacancy Survey, which is available at www.ascp.org.

Survey Comments

All survey comments were reviewed for commonality and trends. Several themes were identified that warrant mention in this summary.

Survey participants commented that they would like more information regarding what “non-traditional” roles and duties other cytotechnologists perform, given the recent changes in our profession. Many respondents indicate they enjoy the profession of cytology, but believe that molecular techniques and image-guided screening may decrease the need for cytotechnologists in the future. Finally, expansion of the roles of cytotechnologists to broaden the opportunity for advancement is desired.

Accounting	Other Supervisor/Management
Administration	Medical School
Business	Medical Technology
Chief Operating Officer	Ministry
Clinical Research Support	Molecular Biology
Cytogenetics	Non-Profit Organization
Education	Nursing
Health Care Administration	Other Health Field
Histology	Pathology Assistant
Information Technology	Physician Assistant
Lab Management	Public Health
Lab Safety Officer	Sales

In addition to these comments, there were others that seemed outside of current practice that we are including here for the sake of discussion. Many respondents indicated working 60-80 hours a week between two or more cytology positions, with rare comments indicating payment practices that would be in violation of CLIA regulations.

Summary

The most compelling data in this survey are those surrounding the participants’ responses to their time remaining in the field. These results, which indicate that a third of those leaving the field will do so to find new careers, and that a significant amount of those respondents have been in the field for less than ten years, are compelling. These data, in addition to the respondents’ survey comments, give a strong indication that cytotechnologists are uncertain about the future of our profession.

It is the desire of the ASCT that the data in this survey be used to help examine the current state of our profession, as well as assist in guiding the future professional growth of cytology. It is our intention to adapt and expand this survey in support of this goal.