

# Insights into Physician Informatics Leadership

AMDIS / WittKieffer Physician Informatics Executive Survey  
**RESULTS 2023**

*WittKieffer*

# Executive Summary

The long-standing partnership between WittKieffer and AMDIS has spanned over a decade, during which we have successfully conducted four surveys focused on Chief Medical Information/Informatics Officers (CMIOs) and physician informatics leaders. These surveys took place in 2014, 2018, 2021, and most recently in April-May 2023.

In our latest survey, we sought input from more than 215 physician informatics executives who provided valuable insights regarding the role, scope, and compensation of CMIOs and other medical informatics leaders. Additionally, we explored the challenges these leaders currently encounter in terms of talent and leadership.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### ROLE EVOLUTION

The role of physician informatics leaders is experiencing a shift from operational to strategic, encompassing digital transformation and AI tools — a notable 79% of respondents report an expansion in their scope of responsibilities.

The team size and budget allocation depend, not surprisingly, on the size of the organization.



### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The funding of projects and team expansion is particularly challenging given the financial limitations that many organizations currently face.

Compensation has not improved significantly over time. As such, when transitioning to a new organization, 72% of executives have the opportunity to negotiate a more favorable compensation package.



### TALENT CHALLENGES

Over 50% of the respondents face challenges in recruiting, retaining, and developing their teams.

In seeking talent, their commitment towards DEI remains steadfast.

Only 38% of CMIOs, CHIOs, and Associate CMIOs/CHIOs have either an in-progress or completed succession plan for their own roles.





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# Role Evolution

## SCOPE

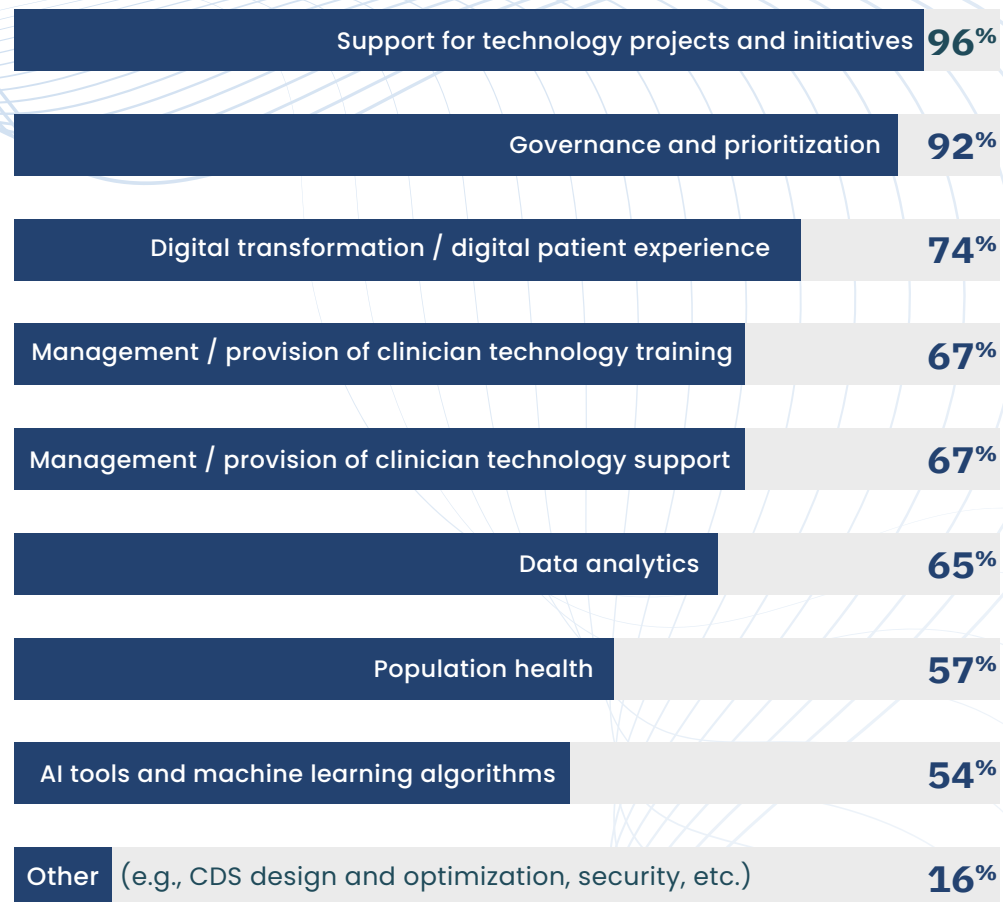
The role CMIOs play within organizations is continuing to expand and change. Previously, their main focus was on implementing electronic health records (EHR). However, in today's digital age, CMIOs have taken on a more diverse range of responsibilities and now hold leadership and strategic positions within health systems.

According to our survey, 79% of respondents reported that their scope of responsibilities has expanded in the last two years. These additional responsibilities mainly revolve around digital transformation and improving patients' experiences through digital channels. CMIOs are now actively utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) tools and machine learning algorithms to enhance patient care and improve outcomes.

# Role Evolution

## SCOPE

What is the current scope of your work?



To what extent has your scope of responsibilities changed over the last two years?

**79%**

INCREASED

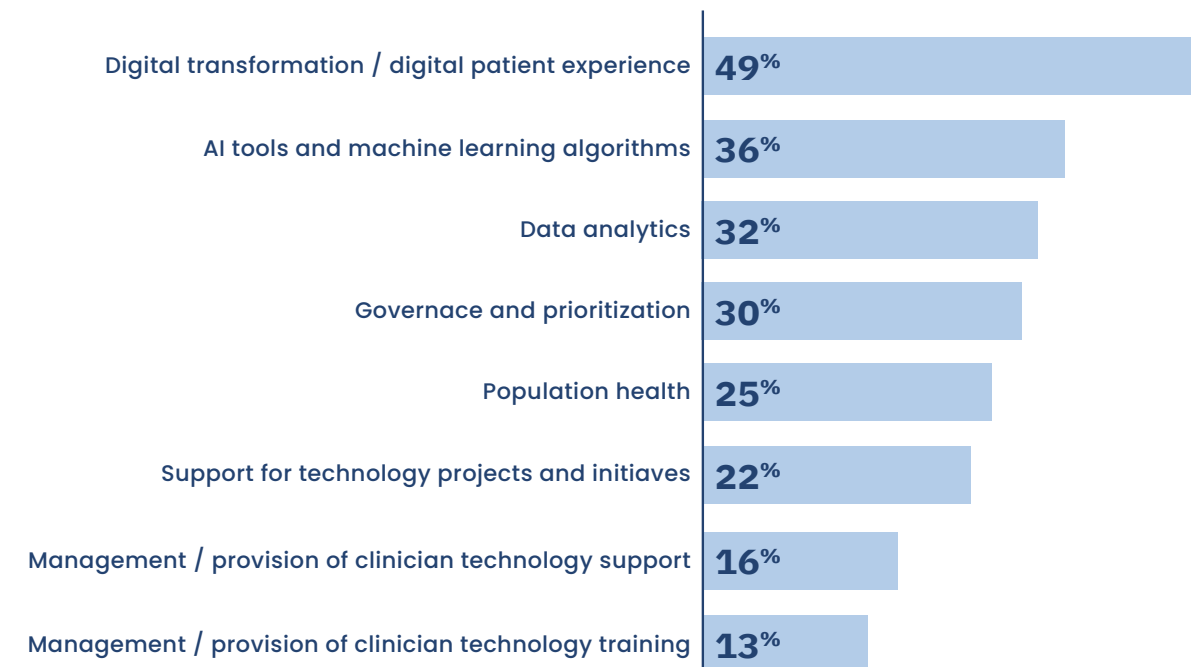
**16%**

STAYED THE SAME

**5%**

DECREASED

If increased, what are your additional responsibilities?



Other emerging responsibilities include cybersecurity, health equity, vendor evaluation, and contract negotiation.

### TOP ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF CMIOs

**1** Digital transformation / digital patient experience

**2** AI tools and machine learning algorithms

**3** Data analytics

# Role Evolution

## TENURE

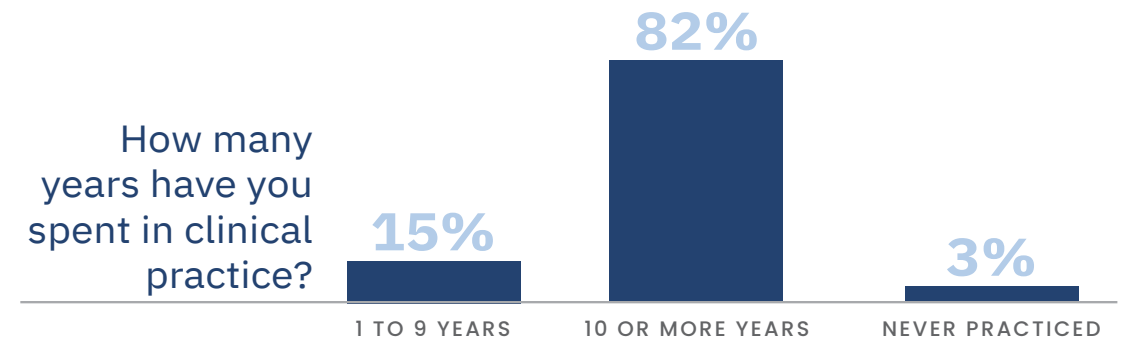
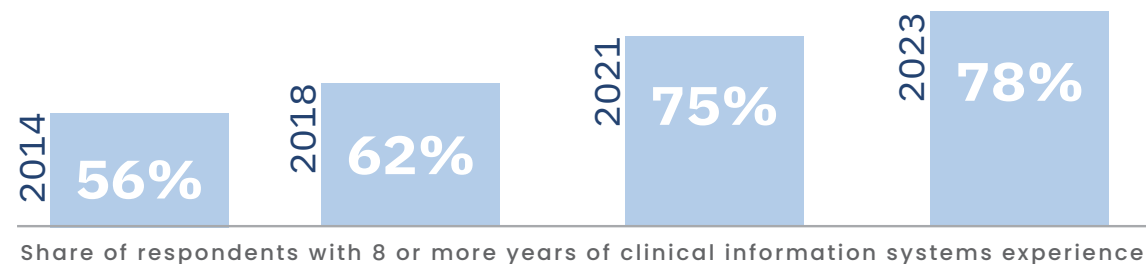
How long have you been in your current position?



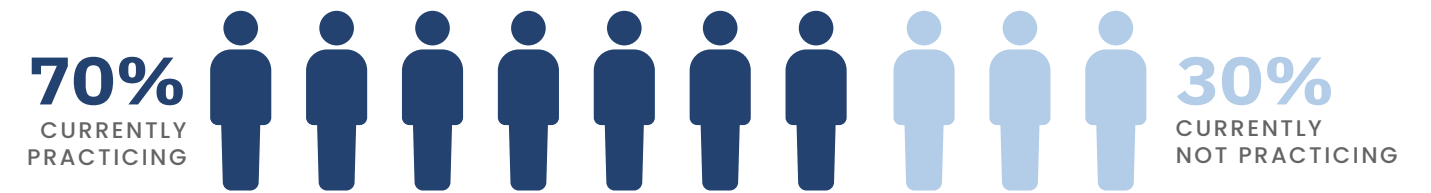
The field of healthcare informatics has undergone substantial changes, and the role of a physician informatics leader has become more extensive and diverse over time.

Currently, approximately eight out of ten executives possess eight or more years of prior experience in clinical information systems – this represents a notable increase from the previous nine years of our surveys (56%) when the CMIO role was still in its emerging phase.

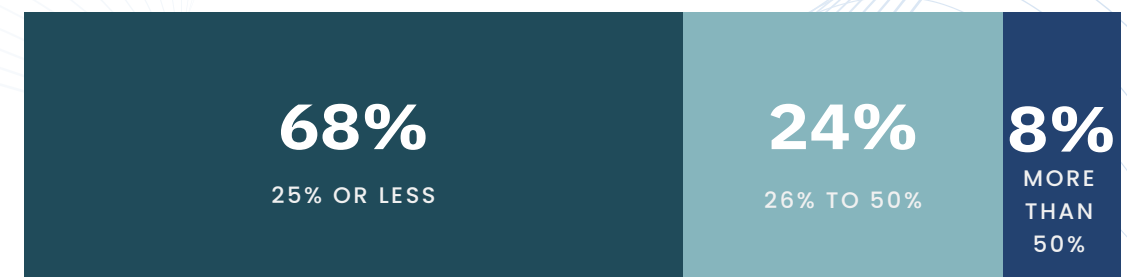
How many years of clinical information systems experience do you have?



Are you currently engaged in clinical practice?



How much of your time is spent on clinical work currently?\*

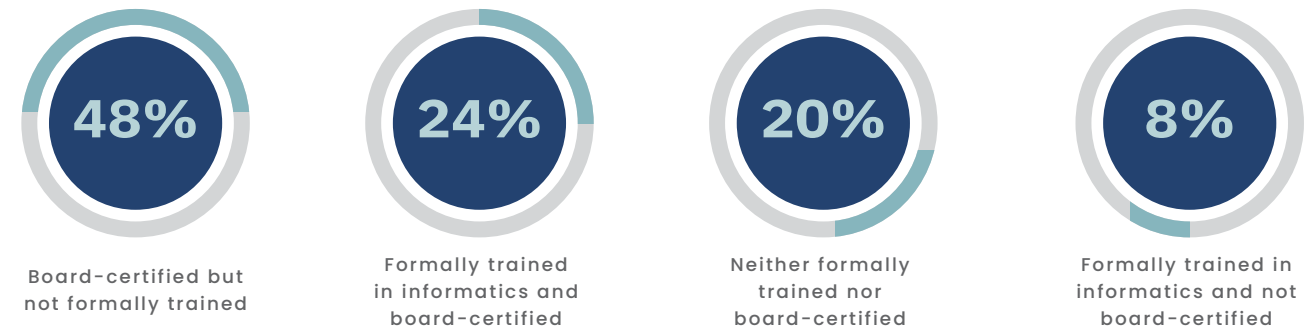


\*Responses from those who are currently practicing

# Role Evolution CERTIFICATIONS

Over 70% of respondents indicate that they are board-certified in clinical informatics. Most of these executives acknowledge the potential advantages conferred by such certification, particularly when vying for employment opportunities. However, they indicate that attaining board certification does not automatically guarantee enhanced day-to-day performance in their respective roles.

Have you completed formal training (e.g., master's in Informatics, fellowship training, etc.) and/or obtained a board certification?



## Representative Quotes

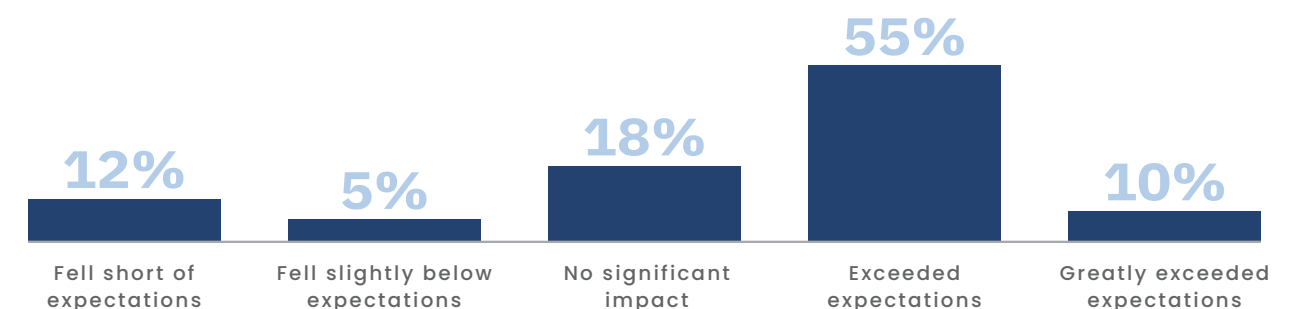
“ Board certification gave background/formal terminology and credibility but little practical help.

Board certification has helped a lot with foundational knowledge but little help in day-to-day work.

Board certification gives me credibility, if not actual tools to perform my job.”

### BOARD CERTIFICATION

If you have obtained certifications, how have they helped your performance/ability to deliver in your role?



# Role Evolution

## REPORTING LINES

The reporting lines of a CMIO can vary based on the organizational structure and priorities of the healthcare organization. This dynamic can significantly influence the CMIO's ability to accomplish their objectives and thrive in their role.

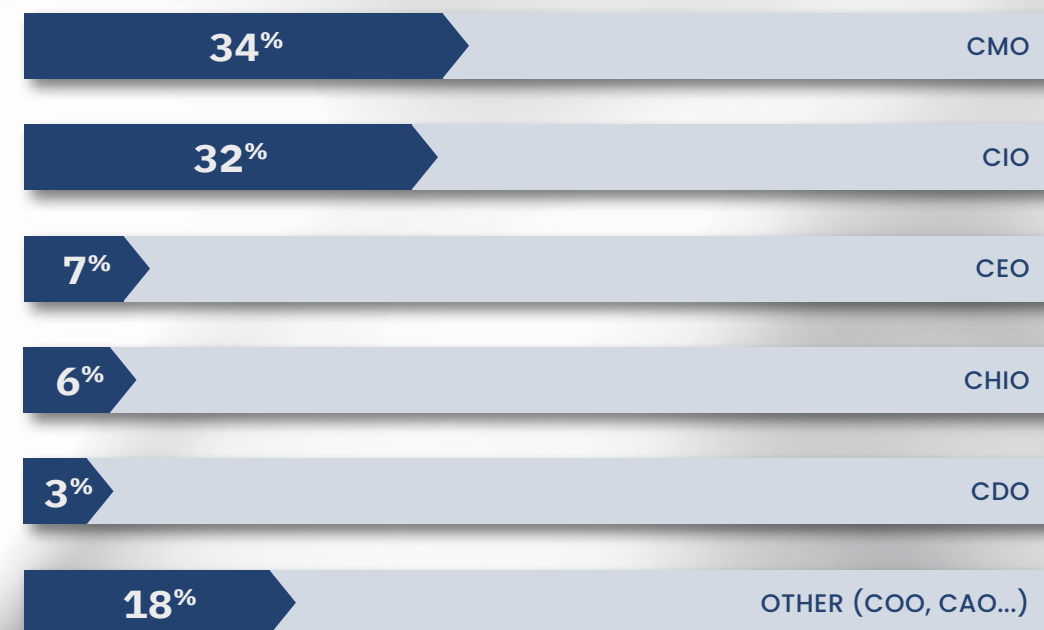
In the attempt to further elevate their informatics programs, some organizations have implemented the position of a Chief Health Informatics Officer (CHIO) to oversee all informatics functions for the organization. Additionally, we witness a growing trend of CMIOs now directly reporting to those CHIOs. This adjustment in reporting lines demonstrates a logical alignment, allowing CMIOs to synchronize their day-to-day efforts with the overarching organizational informatics goals as developed by a CHIO. By focusing on initiatives aimed at improving care, efficiency, and digital transformation, while concurrently ensuring data security and regulatory compliance, CMIOs operating under CHIOs can effectively bridge the gap between clinical and technical teams and foster collaboration across various departments. At the same time, by connecting informatics resources and teams in an effective manner, CHIOs are able to generate a significant enterprise impact.

Are you considered a member of the executive leadership team at the enterprise level of your organization?\*

53%  
YES

47%  
NO

Who do you report to?\*



\*CMIOs' responses only



# Role Evolution

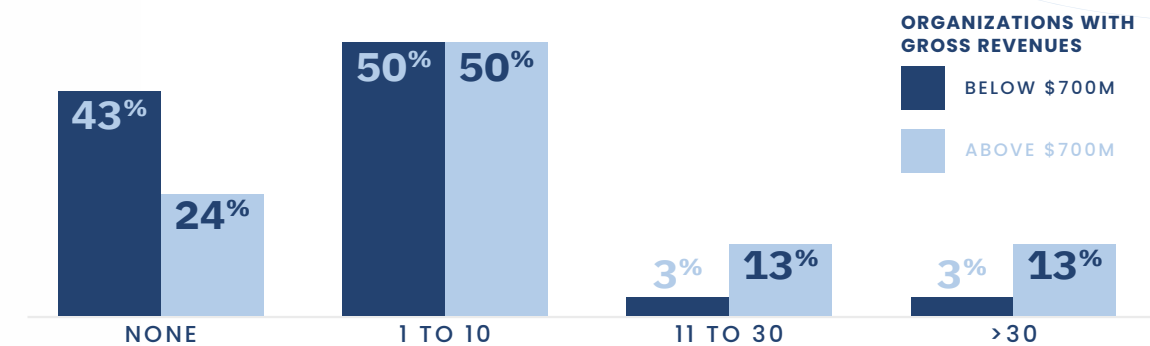
## TEAM AND BUDGET

When discussing physician informatics, the allocation of teams and budgets can vary depending on the size and financial standing of the healthcare organization.

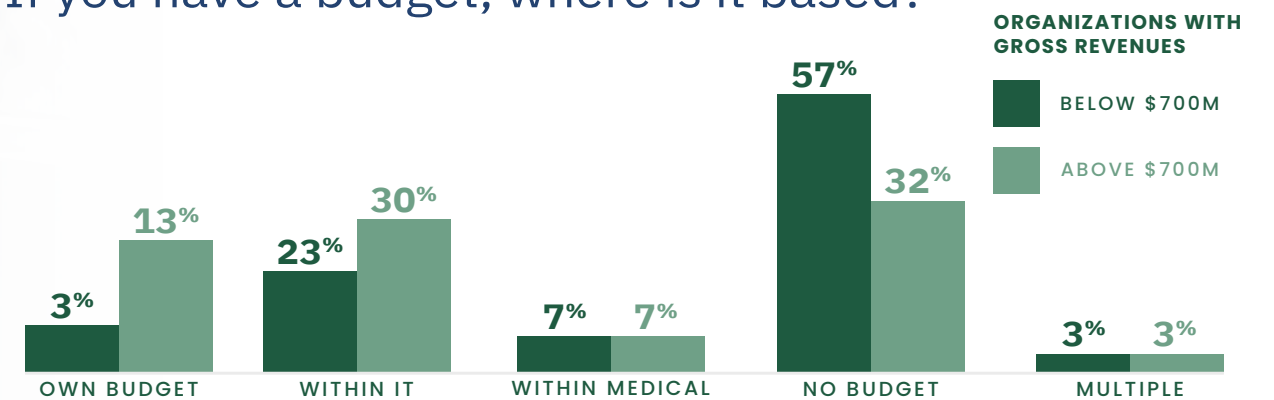
In smaller healthcare organizations with gross revenues below \$700 million, physician informatics leaders typically have fewer than ten direct reports and lack a dedicated budget of their own.

Conversely, larger organizations with gross revenues exceeding \$700 million tend to have more substantial physician informatics teams, often comprising up to 30 members or more. Furthermore, in approximately 28% of these larger organizations, physician informatics teams enjoy the benefit of a designated budget for their operations.

How many direct reports (individuals, employees, or contractors) do you have?



If you have a budget, where is it based?





## Representative Quotes

Budgetary/financial constraints.

Having dollars to hire new informatics team members.

Resources to support projects.



### FINANCIAL LIMITATIONS

# Financial Considerations ENVIRONMENT

Physician informatics executives navigate a complex and demanding landscape where resource allocation and budgetary restrictions present persistent challenges.

On one hand, the imperative to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness drives an escalating requirement for technology solutions within healthcare organizations. This trend is underscored by the progressively expanding role of physician informatics leaders and the heightened demand for their specialized expertise.

Conversely, financial limitations impede the ability to invest in new projects and expand team capacity, presenting obstacles to progress. Consequently, numerous physician informatics executives encounter obstacles when attempting to secure funding for initiatives they believe will yield the most significant advancements in patient care or operational efficiency.



## Representative Quotes

Growing volume of work and scope as the organization expands and EHR expands.

Trying to demonstrate value to the organization. It is hard to calculate hard dollar savings with much of informatics work.



### VALUE CREATION



# Financial Considerations

## COMPENSATION

It is critical to acknowledge that, despite the expanding scope of their responsibilities and the elevated role they hold within organizations, the base salary for CMIOs has remained relatively stable. In fact, the majority of respondents reported a base salary increase of below 5% over the last year. This trend spans even the most experienced executives who have held their positions for an extended period of time.

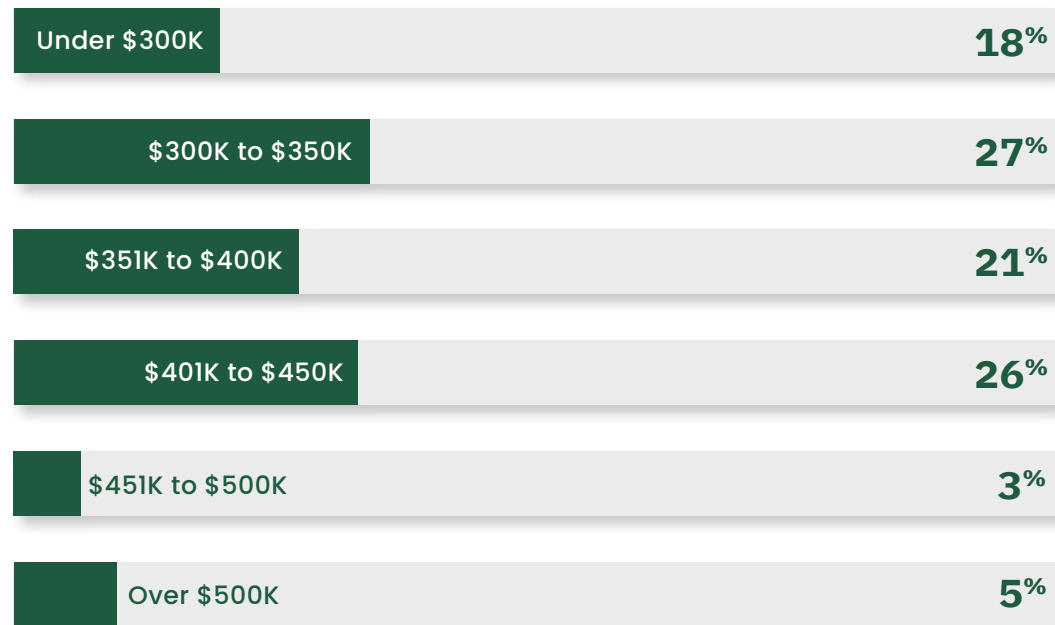
Currently, a substantial majority of CMIOs (55%) receive remuneration surpassing the \$351k base salary threshold, although this figure may vary depending on geographical considerations.

There is a trend among healthcare organizations that historically did not provide bonuses as part of their compensation structure: In 2021, only 72% of CMIOs reported receiving any bonuses. However, this proportion has risen impressively to 89% in 2023, indicating a substantial growth in the number of CMIOs being rewarded with bonuses as part of their comprehensive compensation packages.

# Financial Considerations

## COMPENSATION

What is your current 2023 base salary\*?

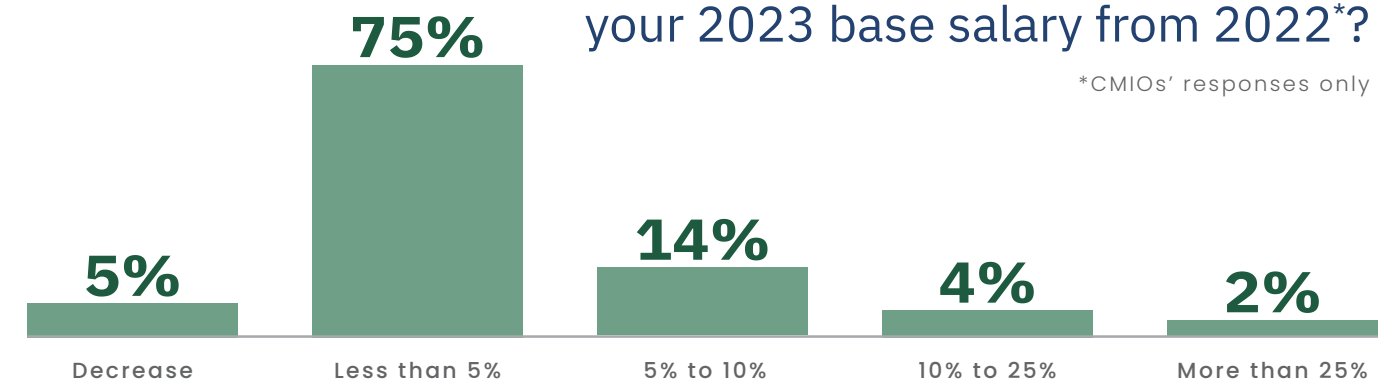


\*CMIOs' responses only

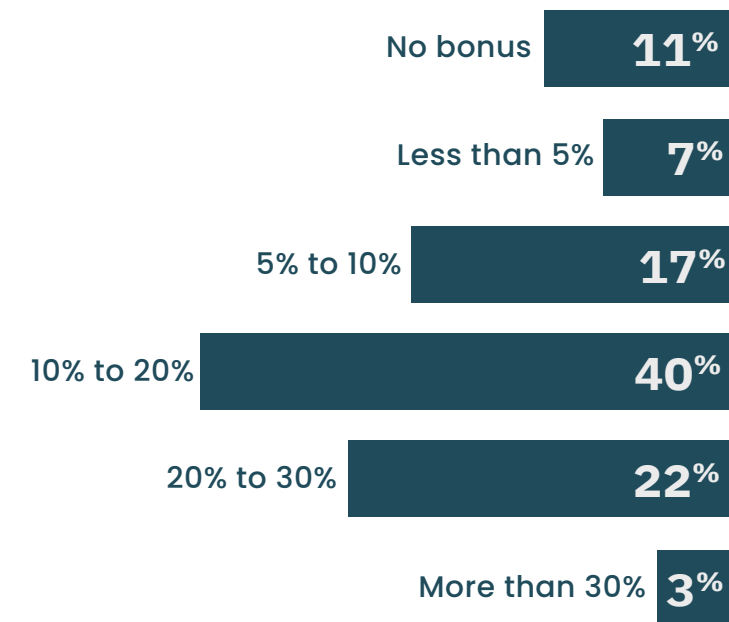
**Over half (55%)** of CMIOs are within the base salary range of **\$351k and above**.

What was the percentage increase in your 2023 base salary from 2022\*?

\*CMIOs' responses only



If you are eligible for a bonus, what percentage of your salary is it\*?



\*CMIOs' responses only

### TOP FACTORS INFLUENCING BONUS

- 1 Individual job performance
- 2 Overall organizational financial performance
- 3 Enterprise quality metrics
- 4 Enterprise financial metrics
- 5 Medical group financial metrics

# Financial Considerations

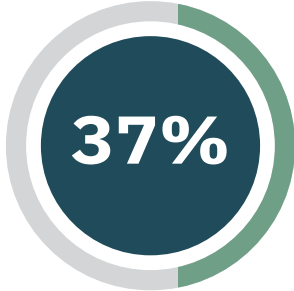
## CLINICAL WORK

If you are currently clinically active, how does that revenue impact your salary?



My clinical income is used to offset part of my informatics salary expense to the enterprise.

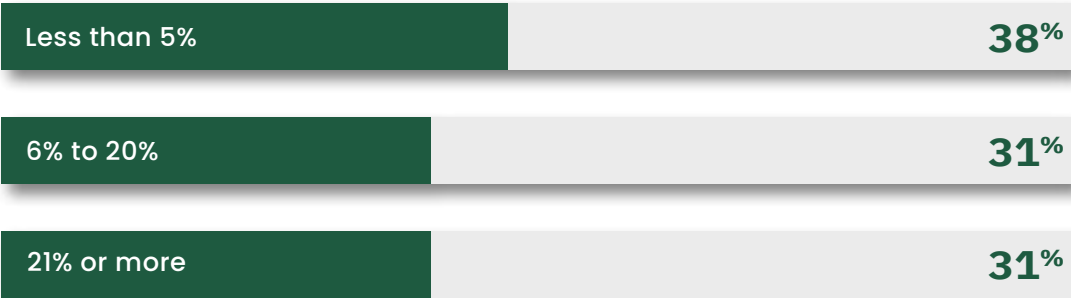
*Example: 50% of informatics salary is administrative, 50% of informatics salary is covered by my clinical work.*



My clinical outcome is given on top of my 100% guaranteed informatics salary.

*Example: 100% of informatics salary is covered by enterprise and any additional clinical revenue I bring in is supplemental.*

If you are doing clinical work, what percentage of your income is derived from it?



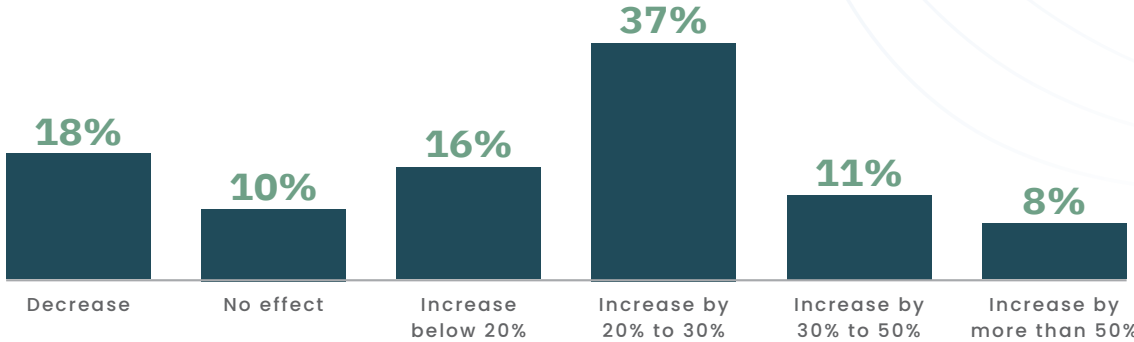
# Financial Considerations

## EMPLOYER CHANGE

In many instances, the process of transitioning to a new organization presents physician informatics executives with an opportune moment to seek a more advantageous compensation package or secure a position of higher remuneration and increased responsibilities.

Remarkably, our research indicates that in an overwhelming 72% of cases involving employer changes, these executives use the opportunity to negotiate improved compensation terms or pursue positions that offer greater monetary rewards and elevated levels of responsibility.

If you made a move in the last year to a new organization, how did that move affect your total compensation?\*



\*Responses of those who made the move in the last year.

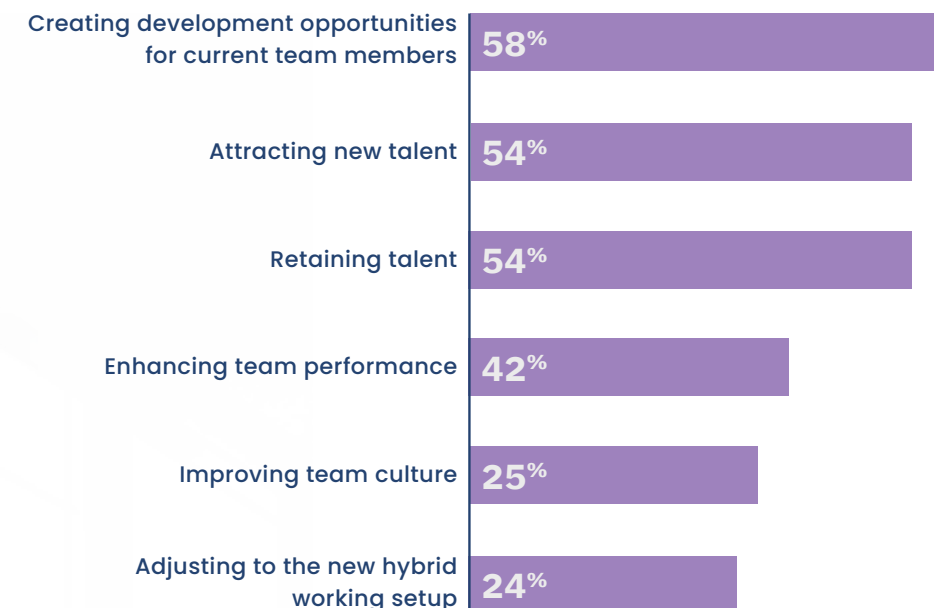
# Talent Challenges

## TEAM

Our survey findings have revealed significant challenges faced by CMIOs and physician informatics leaders in the areas of attracting, retaining, and developing their team members. More than half of the participants reported encountering difficulties in these critical areas of talent management.

Furthermore, respondents emphasized the presence of additional challenges, including cultivating a positive team culture, optimizing team performance, and effectively adapting to new hybrid working models. These complexities further compound the already formidable task of managing and nurturing high-performing teams.

### What talent-related challenges does your team currently face?



### Representative Quotes

- Financial constraints on staffing and projects.
- Ensuring collective alignment toward organizational goals, and that [team members] professionally continue to grow.
- Finding the sweet spot to balance informatics and IT to foster collaboration vs. competitive environment.
- Growing volume of work, multiple leadership roles, burnout.
- Attracting diverse talent.

### TALENT CHALLENGES

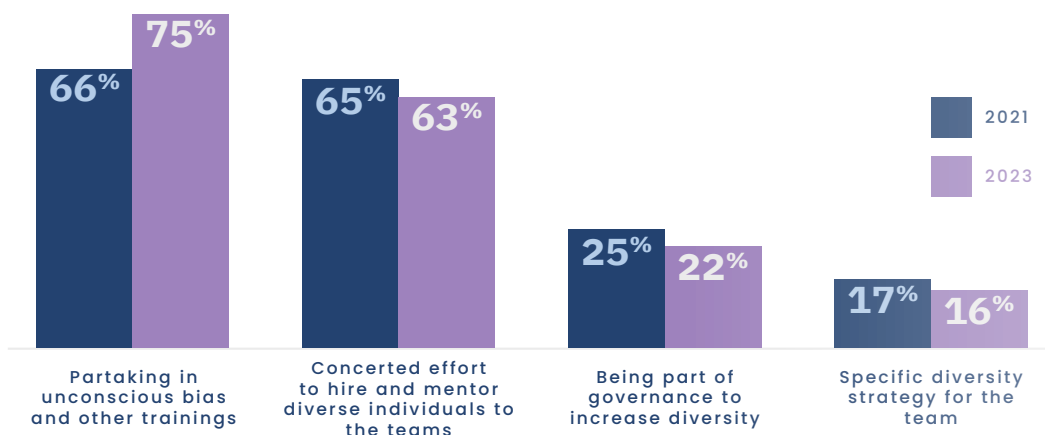
# Talent Challenges **DEI**

Physician informatics executives have wholeheartedly embraced the imperative of fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within their organizations. Recognizing the significance of cultivating an inclusive workplace culture, they are actively driving DEI initiatives through a combination of comprehensive trainings and daily actions, surpassing mere reliance on strategic plans.

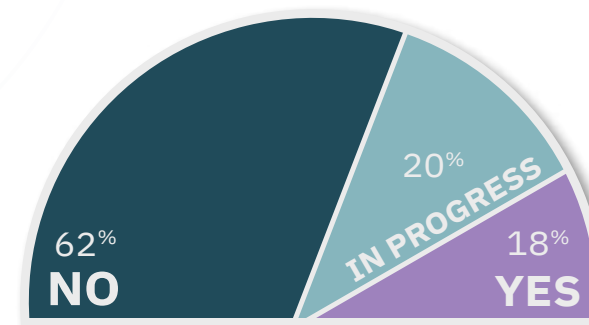
These passionate executives demonstrate their steadfast commitment by actively participating in unconscious bias training and other educational programs, with an impressive 75% engaging in such opportunities. Moreover, they prioritize the recruitment and mentoring of diverse team members, with a notable 63% making it an integral part of their daily activities.

While some organizations might rest solely on the laurels of strategic plans for DEI, physician informatics executives appreciate the tangible impact of concrete steps towards achieving diversity objectives. Thus, a mere 16% of these executives have implemented specific diversity strategies, instead focusing on tangible actions that will undoubtedly foster a more inclusive work environment.

## How do you support diversity and inclusion initiatives within your own organization?



# Talent Challenges **SUCCESSION**



Is there a succession plan for your current role in place?\*

\*Responses of CMIOs, CHIOs, ACMIOs, ACHIOs only

Within the cohort of CMIOs, CHIOs, and Associate CMIOs/CHIOs, an illuminating statistic emerges – a staggering 62% indicate the absence of a formal succession plan. Conversely, 18% have already implemented a succession plan for their current role, with a further 20% actively engaged in its development.

The purpose of succession planning, however, transcends mere crisis management or reactionary measures. It represents a multifaceted leadership initiative aimed at identifying and grooming a fitting successor who can seamlessly assume a leadership role and further drive business impact.

## Why Succession Planning?

- Helps identify, develop, and promote high-potential leaders from within.
- Develops an agile pool of future leaders.
- Offers time to plan for future leadership moves and ensures business continuity through a seamless leadership transition.
- Allows organizations to identify internal talent capable of assuming ownership of certain areas to enable leaders to streamline their focus and devote greater attention to high-level strategic initiatives.
- Boosts team members' trust in leadership and enhances their commitment and performance.
- Provides opportunities to enhance diversity at the leadership level.

# Recommendations for Leaders

## DEVELOPMENT

In healthcare informatics, investing in the development of additional competencies for themselves and their teams holds paramount importance for leaders operating within this ever-evolving landscape. While technical expertise undoubtedly forms the foundation, it is merely the tip of the iceberg.

To excel in a strategic role within physician informatics, leaders must possess a rich tapestry of skills, encompassing superior interpersonal and communication abilities, as well as a talent for influencing and navigating complex political dynamics. Moreover, physician informatics executives must cultivate a forward-thinking mindset, adept at successfully adapting to novel developments in the healthcare industry. By embracing change and proactively expanding their knowledge and skill sets, they can effectively position themselves at the vanguard and continue to make lasting contributions to the field.



## LEADERSHIP

The long-term success of any team hinges upon the cultivation of a highly strategic and innovative approach to attracting, retaining, and developing talent. In healthcare informatics, this imperative necessitates a proactive talent management methodology that begins with a thorough evaluation of the requisite skills and attributes for success.

Furthermore, leaders must forge an inclusive and diverse workplace culture that promotes collaboration, creativity, and forward thinking. By offering ongoing learning and development opportunities, employees remain engaged and energized. Additionally, implementing flexible work arrangements and prioritizing employee well-being fosters a harmonious work-life balance, thus bolstering talent retention.

By nurturing a supportive environment, cultivating growth prospects, and instilling a profound sense of belonging, CMIOs and other physician informatics executives can forge loyal and high-achieving teams that drive innovation and fuel organizational growth. Furthermore, honing communication and influencing skills enables them to effectively construct and promote the narrative of value creation to key stakeholders within the organization.





## SUCCESSION

Succession planning is a critical aspect of organizational management that cannot be overlooked. By proactively identifying and developing potential successors for key positions, organizations can minimize the risks associated with leadership changes and ensure a smooth transition. This is especially true in the highly specialized field of healthcare informatics.

Embracing succession planning allows CMIOs and other physician informatics leaders to maintain stability and continuity, even in the face of unexpected transitions. It provides an opportunity to nurture and retain high-potential talent, creating a pool of qualified individuals ready to step into critical roles when needed. By fortifying business continuity through effective succession planning, organizations can adapt to changing circumstances and thrive in an ever-evolving healthcare landscape.

# Appendix:

## Demographic Profile of Respondents

The survey of 215+ physician informatics executives explores the role, scope, and compensation of CMIOs and other medical informatics leaders, as well as talent-related challenges the leaders currently face. The nationwide survey was conducted in April-May 2023. Responses were anonymous to gather the most genuine feedback.

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the background and composition of the survey participants.

GENDER	SHARE OF RESPONDENTS
Male	75%
Female	24%
Prefer not to answer	1%

RACE / ETHNICITY	SHARE OF RESPONDENTS
White	67%
Asian	18%
Multi-racial	6%
Hispanic / Latino	3%
Black / African American	2%
Middle-Eastern / North African	1%
Prefer not to answer	3%

TITLE	SHARE OF RESPONDENTS
Chief Medical Information/Informatics Officer	48%
Associate Chief Medical Information/Informatics Officer/ Associate Chief Health Information/ Informatics Officer	15%
Director, Medical Informatics	10%
Chief Health Information/Informatics Officer	8%
Vice President, Medical/Clinical Informatics	5%
Chief Medical Officer	2%
Chief Information Officer	2%
Physician Executive	2%
Other (e.g., Chief Digital Officer, Chief Data Officer, Chief Nursing Informatics Officer, Consultant/Advisor, etc.)	8%

ORGANIZATION'S GROSS REVENUE	SHARE OF RESPONDENTS
Over \$3bn	38%
\$1.5bn to \$3bn	22%
\$901m to \$1.5bn	17%
\$701m to \$900m	6%
\$301m to \$700m	5%
\$100m to \$300m	3%
Less than \$100m	9%

TYPE OF ORGANIZATION	SHARE OF RESPONDENTS
Integrated delivery network	27%
Multi-hospital system	23%
Academic medical center	21%
Children's hospital	7%
Community hospital	6%
Medical group	4%
Federally qualified health center	2%
Other (e.g., laboratory group, public health organization, consulting)	10%

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