

Diversity in the Pediatric Heart Transplant Surgeon Workforce Between 2000 and 2020

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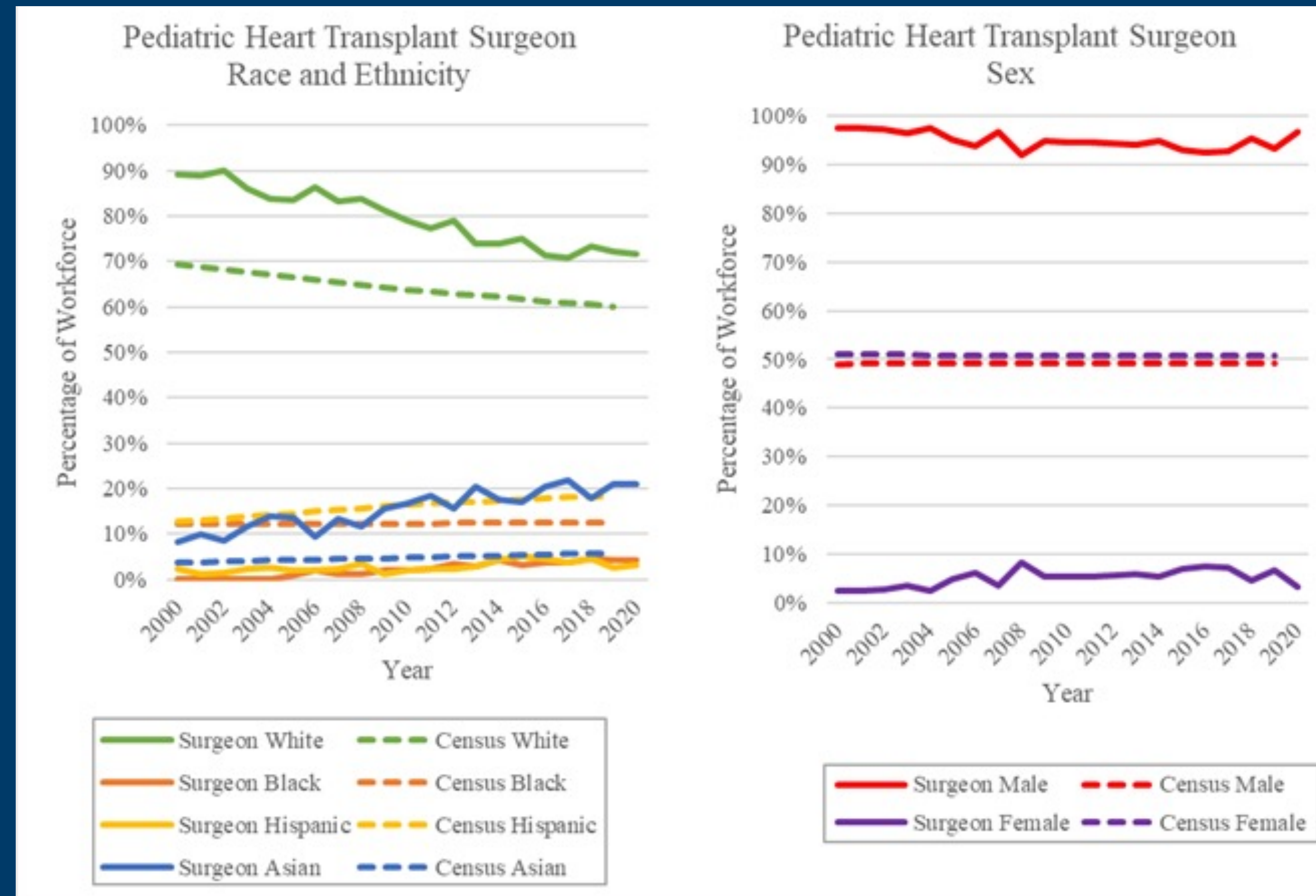


Background

Sexual and racial diversity bring representation, different points of view and a more inclusive environment to a workforce. These effects are crucial in a healthcare setting because they affect not only the providers, but also improve patient care. Racial diversity is key to accurately represent the ever-diversifying US population. It is important for patients to be able to see a healthcare provider with whom they share an ethnicity, culture or language; this also increases patient satisfaction and compliance. Different points of view can help providers to effectively care for patients due to additional perspectives and ideas pertaining to diagnoses and treatments. A more inclusive working environment is also essential for effective teamwork. Benefits include increased employee morale, mutual respect and productivity.

Only 7% of practicing cardiothoracic surgeons are female. There is a lack of data in the racial demographic of cardiothoracic surgeons, and only 4% of all physicians identify as Black. We sought to examine the demographic patterns in the cardiothoracic surgery workforce in the context of pediatric heart transplants over the last twenty years.

Results



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.3% White • 0.0% Black • 2.4% Hispanic • 8.3% Asian • 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71.6% White • 4.2% Black • 3.2% Hispanic • 21.1% Asian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 97.6% male • 2.4% female • 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96.8% male • 3.2% female |
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Methods

- Surgeons were classified by sex and race using photographs from institutional websites by two independent raters
- Sex was classified into male or female
- Race/Ethnicity was separated into White, Black, Asian and Hispanic
- Discordance was resolved by a third rater and a search for additional images
- Surgeons without publicly available pictures were excluded

Conclusions

- Surgeons performing heart transplants in the pediatric population are still mostly White and male
- Female, Black and Hispanic surgeons are severely underrepresented
- Asian surgeons are overrepresented
- Sex and race disparities can affect access to and outcomes of HTs in pediatric patients
- Limitations included a third party identifying the sex and race through an image, rather than through self-identification
- Need for further research to analyze the cause of sexual and racial disparities in surgical subspecialties to initiate efforts that effectively increase diversity in the workforce