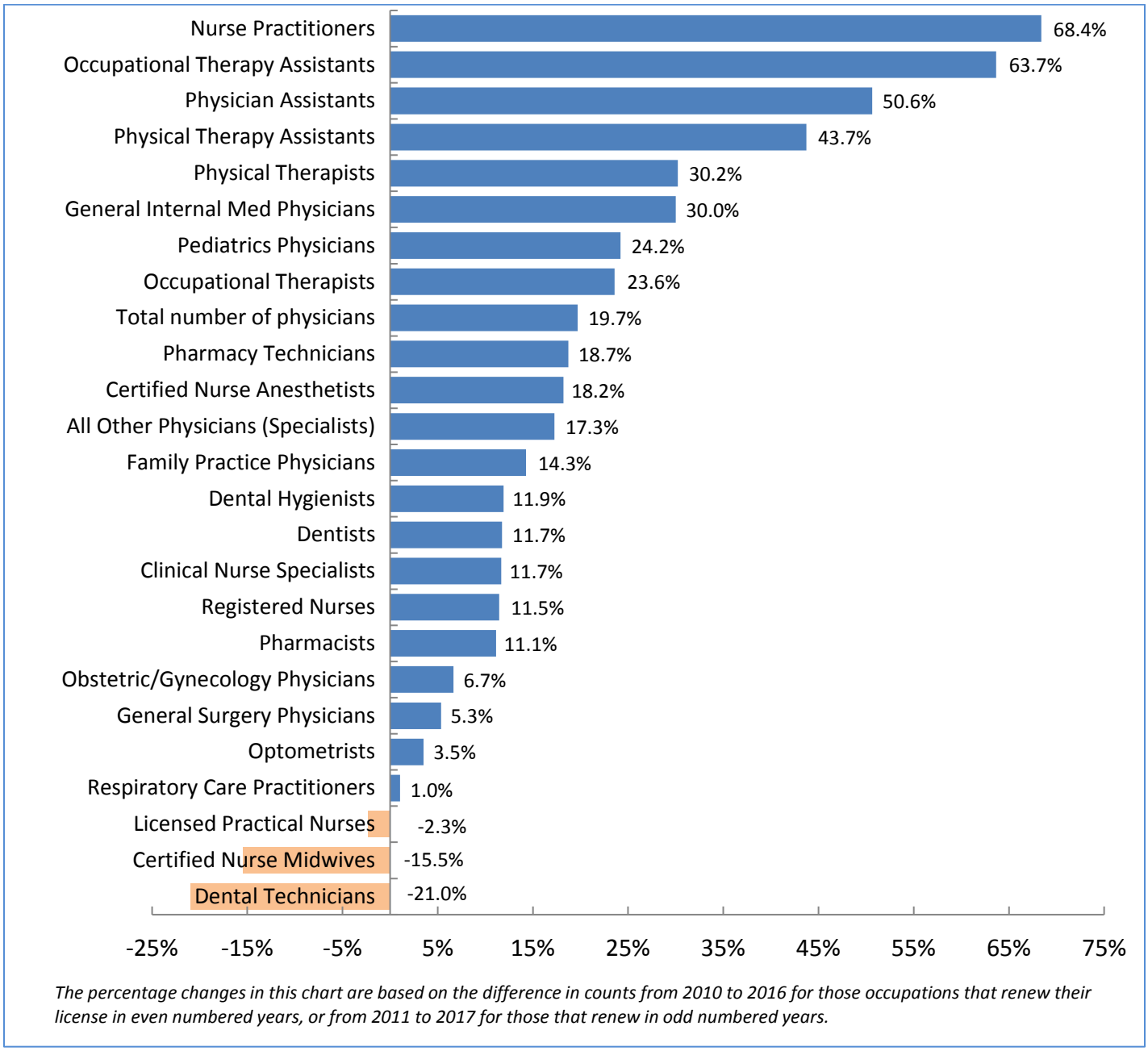
December 2019 Data Brief

Growth and Decline in Selected Healthcare Occupations Active in the South Carolina Workforce: 2010 - 2017

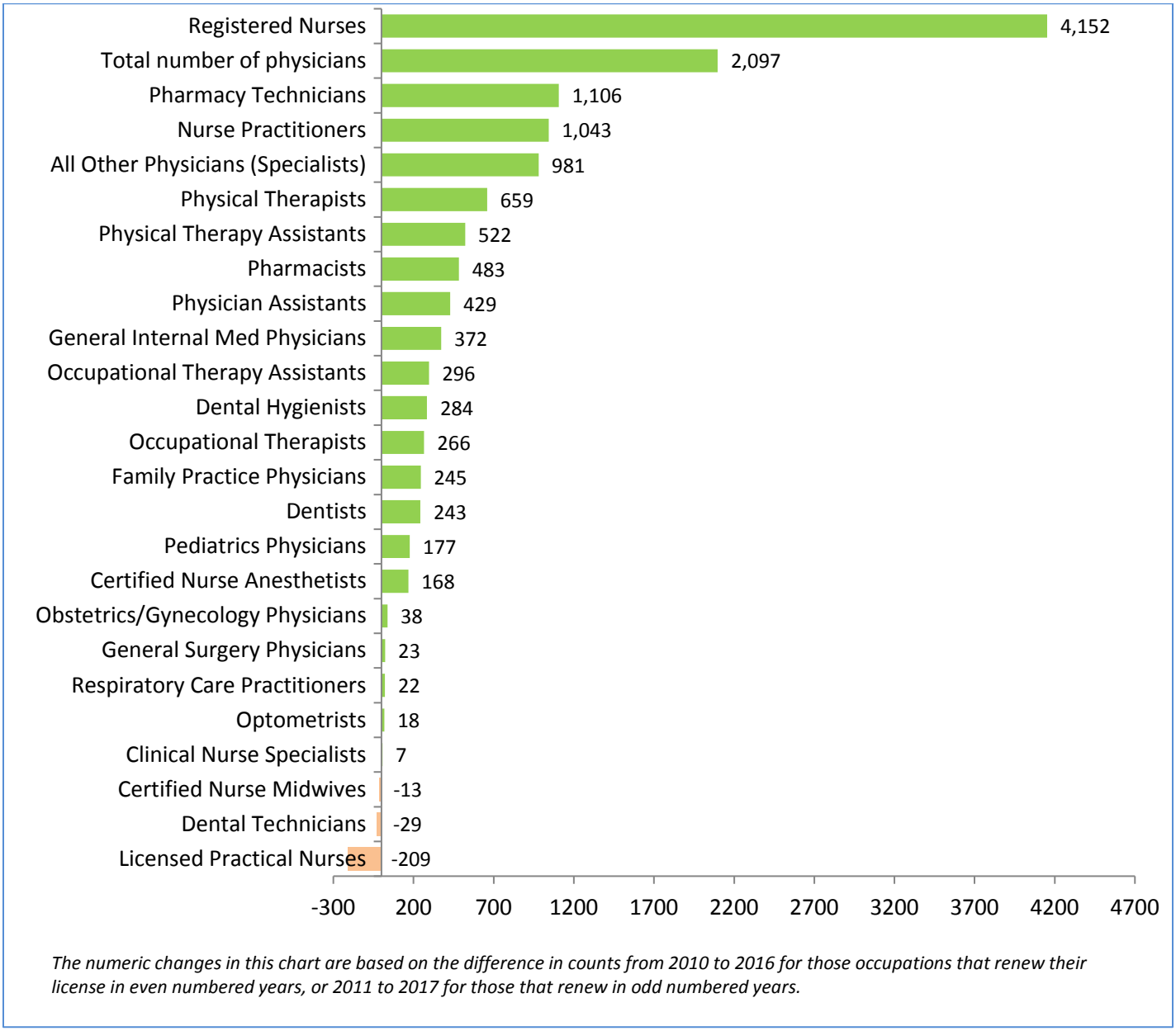
In general, licensed occupations involved in healthcare have been growing in South Carolina during the past decade - with a few exceptions. Figure 1 shows the relative speed of change between 2010 and 2017 for a selected group of those occupations. The size of the three groups at the top of the chart grew by more than 50% while the occupations at the bottom of the chart shrank over the same period. Be aware that measuring change in percentages is greatly influenced by the original size of the group. See Figure 2 to see how these groups changed in terms of their numbers.

Figure 1. Percentage Change in the Size of Healthcare Occupations in the South Carolina Workforce: 2010 - 2017



The percentage changes in this chart are based on the difference in counts from 2010 to 2016 for those occupations that renew their license in even numbered years, or from 2011 to 2017 for those that renew in odd numbered years.

Figure 2. Numeric Changes in the Size of Healthcare Occupations in the South Carolina Workforce: 2010 - 2017



The numeric changes in this chart are based on the difference in counts from 2010 to 2016 for those occupations that renew their license in even numbered years, or 2011 to 2017 for those that renew in odd numbered years.

Nurses and physicians are the largest occupational groups in the healthcare workforce in South Carolina, so their place at the top of the chart above is not surprising. The total number of physicians practicing in the state increased by 2,097 – a growth rate of 19.7% between 2010 and 2017. The number of registered nurses increased by more than 4,000 while their growth rate was only 11.5% due to the very large size of that occupation in 2010.

Note that several important provider groups are on the decline (nurse midwives, LPNs and dental technicians) or are growing only very slowly. Some of those patterns may be related to changes in the way that patient care is being delivered, or by changes in where that care is taking place.

Notes: Physician counts include residents in training but exclude physicians employed in federal or military facilities. All counts are based on those who were actively employed within South Carolina at each time period. Data are drawn from the license files maintained by the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, Healthcare and Demographics Section.