

Highlights of National Statistics

Section I. Characteristics of Respondents and Non-Respondents

Sex: Females accounted for 62 percent of the respondents to this year's census.

Ethnicity: White PAs comprise 88 percent of the respondents.

PA Education: Just under half (47%) of respondents hold a bachelor's level PA degree; 30 percent of respondents hold a master's level PA degree.

Age: The mean age of census respondents is 42 years (median = 40), the mean age at time of graduation from PA school was 31 years (median = 29), and the mean number of years since graduation from PA school for census respondents is 11 (median = 7).

Section II. Professional Status of Respondents

Practice Status: The vast majority of respondents (89%) are in clinical practice.

Current Profession: Four percent of respondents reported working as a PA educator. This was the most common professional activity other than providing clinical services as a PA.

Section III: Information about Respondents in Clinical Practice

Number of Clinical PA Jobs: Eighty-five percent of respondents reported working exactly one clinical PA job; 15 percent work more than one clinical PA job concurrently.

Employer Type: More than four in ten respondents (43%) are employed by a single or multi-specialty physician group practice while 22 percent are employed by hospitals and 14 percent are employed by solo physician offices.

Government Employment: About 10 percent of respondents work for some type of government agency. The Department of Veterans' Affairs is the single largest government employer of PAs accounting for about three percent of respondents; state governments collectively employ just over two percent of this year's respondents.

Primary Work Setting: The most prevalent "primary" work setting, reported by 36 percent of respondents, is a hospital; the hospital departments cited most frequently as primary settings are hospital emergency rooms (9%), hospital inpatient units (9%), hospital outpatient units (7%), and hospital operating rooms (7%). Physician group practices are the primary work setting for 30 percent of respondents; 21 percent report working in a single-specialty group practice and 9 percent report working in a multi-specialty group practice.

Other settings reported as the primary work setting by large numbers of PAs include solo-practice physician offices (14%), and Federally Qualified Health Centers or community health facilities (8%).

Work Settings where Clinical Services are Provided over the Course of a Typical Month:

Respondents were asked to indicate all of the settings where they provide clinical services for their primary clinical employer over the course of a typical month. The specific work settings reported by at least 20 percent of respondents are hospital inpatient units (34%), hospital emergency rooms (30%), single-specialty physician group practices (29%), hospital operating rooms (22%), hospital outpatient units (22%), and hospital intensive care/critical care units (22%).

Primary Specialty of Practice: While PAs practice in over 60 different specialty fields, 41 percent of this year's respondents reported that their primary specialty was one of the primary care fields: family/general medicine (28%), general internal medicine (8%), general pediatrics (3%), and obstetrics/gynecology (2%). Other prevalent specialties for PAs include general surgery/surgical subspecialties (25%), emergency medicine (10%), and the subspecialties of internal medicine (10%).

Years in Clinical Practice, Years in Position, and Years in Specialty: The mean number of years respondents have been in clinical practice is 9 (median = 6), the mean number of years respondents have worked in their current position is 5 (median = 3), and the mean number of years respondents have worked in their current specialty is 7 (median = 4).

Geographic Distribution: The states with the largest numbers of clinically practicing respondents are: New York (9%), California (8%), Texas (6%), Pennsylvania (6%), Florida (6%), and North Carolina (5%).

Metropolitan Status of Work Site: Seventeen percent of respondents work in counties that are non-metropolitan.

Functions and Responsibilities: PAs can perform a variety of functions for their primary employers. Thirty-seven percent of respondents reported that they manage the care of patients in an inpatient setting, more than half (61%) reported performing minor surgical procedures, and about one-quarter (24%) reported first-assisting at surgery. Nine percent of respondents reported supervising other PAs, and one in five (19%) reported supervising other clinical staff. More than one-third of respondents (35%) indicated that they precept PA students; one-fourth (24%) reported precepting students of other health professions.

Work Status: The majority of clinically practicing respondents (87%) work full-time, defined as more than 32 hours per week, for their primary clinical employer.

Section IV. Information about Respondents in Clinical Practice Who Work at Least 32 Hours per Week at Their Primary Clinical Job

Hours Worked: The mean number of hours worked by the respondents who work more than 32 hours in a typical week is 44.3; the median is 42 hours.

Patient Visits/Encounters: Due to the variety of work settings and specialty fields in which PAs practice, the types of patients PAs treat are quite varied. The vast majority (86%) of census respondents who work full-time see some outpatients in their primary job; the mean number of patient visits provided per week by PAs who see outpatients exclusively is 97. Over one-third of respondents who work full-time (40%) see some inpatients in their primary job; the mean number of patient encounters provided per week by respondents who see inpatients exclusively is 67. Six percent of full-time PAs reported seeing some nursing home patients in their primary job, and eight percent of respondents report seeing patients who can not be classified as inpatients, outpatients, or nursing home patients.

Hospital Privileges: Respondents to this year's Census were asked to indicate the number of hospitals in which they had privileges granted by the medical staff, and the number in which they had privileges granted by human resources. Of those respondents who indicated having privileges in exactly one hospital, the vast majority (95%) reported that their privileges were granted by the medical staff.

Taking Call: Four in ten respondents (40%) reported taking call for their primary employer. The mean number of hours on call per month for those PAs who reported taking some call but who were not always on call is 96.

Base Pay: The majority of respondents (80%) reported receiving their base pay in the form of a salary; 18 percent indicated that they receive an hourly wage.

Compensation: Respondents reported receiving several additional forms of compensation from their primary employer. The most common form of additional compensation was a bonus or incentive pay based on the PA's productivity or performance, reported by 24 percent of respondents. Eighteen percent of respondents reported receiving a bonus based on something other than productivity or performance while 17 percent reported receiving overtime pay. Almost half of those who reported receiving an incentive based on productivity or performance (44%) indicated that the incentive was based on revenue.

Annual Income: The median total annual income from primary employer for respondents who work at least 32 hours per week for their primary employer and who are not self-employed is \$77,402; the mean is \$81,129. The comparable figures for respondents who graduated in 2004 are \$66,591 and \$68,116, respectively.