

# PA Myth Busters

Let's get the facts out there.

## MYTH #1

**X PAs are the “physician’s assistant”**

### FACT

**Not at all.** PAs are a key part of the patient-centered healthcare team, licensed to practice medicine, prescribe medication, treat chronic illnesses and assist in surgery in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. PAs have graduate degrees, with a minimum of 2,000 hours of clinical rotations in outpatient clinics and hospitals after a year of classroom study.



## MYTH #2

**X Patients won't be happy unless they see a “real doctor”**

### FACT

**Couldn't be less true.** 93 percent of patients who recently saw a PA agreed that PAs are trusted healthcare providers.\*

\*According to a Harris Poll conducted on behalf of AAPA

## MYTH #3

**X The physician has to be on site for a PA to see patients**

*The Doctor Is*

**OUT**

### FACT

**No state requires a physician to be on-site 100% of the time PAs are seeing patients.** Collaboration is key—PAs and physicians work together as members of a healthcare team. On average, PAs see 60 patients per week.

## MYTH #4

**X PAs cannot see new patients or perform consultations**

### FACT

**Not true.** PAs can see patients in all settings without a physician present. PAs are critical to enhancing access to care in rural and underserved areas.

## MYTH #6

**X PAs wear a shorter white coat than physicians**

### FACT

**Completely false.** A shorter coat signifies a healthcare provider is in training. When PA students complete their education, they begin their practice with a longer white coat—equal to that of any other clinician.

## MYTH #5

**X PAs don't add value**

### FACT

**Wrong!** Studies show PA-physician teams deliver high-quality care. Results also indicate that PAs enhance care coordination, increase access and elevate health outcomes and that utilizing PAs is cost-effective for health systems.



## MYTH #7

**X PAs cannot practice in specialties**

### FACT

**Erroneous on all counts!** There are now approximately 108,500 certified PAs in America. They practice medicine, perform consultations and see new patients in every medical and surgical specialty from pediatric neurosurgery to oncology to primary care.

108,500

**The bottom line?** With demand for PAs having increased by more than 300% in the past three years, it's no wonder that PAs are one of the top professions according to multiple sources including U.S. News & World Report, Forbes and Young Invincibles.

Find out more about what PAs do at [aapa.org](http://aapa.org)

