



## One Size Doesn't Fit All:

# Student Demographic Considerations for Wellness Curricula

Stephanie Neary, MPA, MMS, PA-C, Mary Ruggeri, MEd, MMS, PA-C, Chris Roman DMS, PA-C,  
Eve Hoover, DMSc MS, PA-C, Bhupin Butaney, PhD, Indigo Weller, MFA, MS, MBE

### BACKGROUND

- 2020: ARC-PA requires curricula about provider wellness
- 22.9% of PA students (61/267) considered dropping out of PA school in the past 6 months
  - Mental health was #1 contributor (65.6%)

### PURPOSE

- Affect of mandatory, multifaceted virtual wellness curriculum on student wellness [mental health stigma, psychological flexibility, help-seeking behaviors].

### METHODS

- 259 first year PA students from 5 programs recruited for a 16-week wellness course in 2021
- Pre- and post-surveys
  - Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale
  - Opening Minds Stigma Scale for Health Care Providers
  - Self-Stigma of Seeking Help
  - UCLA 3-item Loneliness Scale
  - Reflective Practice Questionnaire
  - Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test Concise
- 30-60 minutes each week, asynchronous
- 3 topic sub-tracks:
  1. Vulnerability and stigma
  2. Mindfulness and decentering
  3. Reflective writing

### KEY REFERENCES

1. Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant. Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education: Fifth Edition. 2022. Accessed April 13, 2022.
2. Neary S, Ruggeri M, Roman C, Kamauf R, Chilton J, Martin A. Shared living experiences through synchronous videoconferencing have a positive impact on attitudes to mental health among physician assistant students: a mixed methods study. *J Physician Assist Educ.* 2022; 33(1):9-16.
3. Hoover EB, Butaney B, Stoehr JD. Exploring the Effectiveness of Mindfulness and Decentering Training in a Physician Assistant Curriculum. *J Physician Assist Educ.* 2020;31(1):19-22.

### KEY RESULTS

Individuals not identifying as white had higher baseline and end-point levels of mental health stigma (OMSHC-15)

Individuals not identifying as white did not have the significant decline in stigma (OMSHC-15) over the course that was seen in white students

Higher self-stigma of seeking mental health care (SSOSH) was found with lower age

Higher reflective practice (RPQ) scores for female versus male students

### KEY RESULTS AS A WHOLE

- 73.6% thought course had a “positive impact” on their training as a PA student.
- Baseline scores were significantly predictive ( $p < 0.05$ ) of end-point scores for PHLMS, OMS-HC-15, SSOSH, RPQ, and UCLA-3 measures.
- Students with the lowest baseline well-being had the largest gains at the end-point

### PRIMARY TAKEAWAYS

- We must integrate diversity driven analysis into the discussion of student wellness
- Students with low baseline well-being benefited the most from a required curriculum
- Curricula should allow freedom of choice and expression with wellness activities
- **Wellness curricula cannot be one size fits all...or even most.**