



Research 101 

**Plotting the Future:  
Highlighting the National PA Research  
Agenda**

Sean Kolhoff, PhD  
Senior Research Analyst  
American Academy of PAs



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**Faculty and Disclosure Statement**

Sean is the Senior Research Analyst at AAPA. As a member of AAPA's research team, he approaches the benefits of research for advancing the PA profession from a unique perspective.

Sean received his Ph.D. from Wayne State University in 2021. He has a great deal of experience as a research methodologist and developing innovative approaches to tackling research questions with various types of data. Formerly, Sean was the Director of Forensics at Ferris State University and has developed curriculum designed to help people communicate their research findings for almost a decade.



Sean Kolhoff: No relevant disclosures

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**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the session, you should be able to:

- Describe the four research pillars within the National PA Research Agenda
- Apply existing research topics within the National PA Research Agenda

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Who initially led the work?

In 2010, AAPA was identified to lead the development of the National PA Research Agenda

No organization was charged with ...

- Developing
- Financially supporting
- Conducting

...all research within the National PA Research Agenda

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**Why did we revisit the National PA Research Agenda?**  
Changes in the priorities of the profession

Changes in the research teams at the PA professional organizations

Growing PA workforce PA researchers

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**What was the process for updating the National PA Research Agenda?**

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graph TD; A[Literature review to assess current state of knowledge] --> B[Research and Strategic Initiatives Commission]; B --> C[Leadership and Advocacy Summit]; C --> D[Researcher's Luncheon]; D --> E[Feedback from Leading Researchers]; E --> F[National PA Research Agenda 2019 - 2024];
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**The Current PA Research Agenda**

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**Landscape of PA Research**

Today's PA research agenda still has four main research pillars:

- PA Value and Impact**
- PA Workforce**
- PA Role and Practice**
- PA Education**

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**PA Value and Impact**

- 1 Cost-effectiveness
- 2 Patient outcomes <sup>NEW</sup>
- 3 Access to care
- 10 Patient safety
- 19 Patient satisfaction

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**PA Value and Impact**

Cost-effectiveness of PAs

Patient outcomes

Access to care

Patient safety

Patient satisfaction

How do PAs impact the cost effectiveness of healthcare?

Do PAs provide the same level of care or higher compared to other healthcare practitioners?

How do PAs help address access to care for underserved population (rural, low income, etc.)?

Does the presence of a PA on the healthcare team reduce appointment times?

How does PA utilization affect medical practice liability?

How do patients perceive the quality of care PAs provide?

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**PA Workforce**

- 4 PA supply and demand
- 5 PA workforce composition
- 6 PA readiness to practice <sup>NEW</sup>
- 14 PA career flexibility
- 16 PA specialization

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**PA Workforce**

PA specialization   PA career flexibility   PA readiness to practice   PA workforce composition   PA supply & demand

What does the current PA workforce in the U.S. look like? How has the workforce changed over time?

What will the workforce look like in the future – will there be a sufficient supply of PAs to meet demand? What factors drive demand?

Where are PAs working; in what types of healthcare settings? Are PAs working in the areas where they are most needed (e.g., rural, MUAs)?

How many PAs are working in specialty areas versus primary care? What are the trends over time?

How often do PAs switch specialties? What are the most common specialty changes that PAs make, and at what stage of their careers?

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**PA Role and Practice**

- 7 Understanding PA roles <sup>NEW</sup>
- 8 Healthcare team outcomes
- 9 Healthcare team dynamics
- 13 PA work settings <sup>NEW</sup>
- 15 Expansion of PA roles

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### PA Role and Practice

Understanding PA roles
Healthcare team outcomes
Healthcare team dynamics
PA work settings
Expansion of PA roles

Are PAs satisfied with their jobs and with their roles in delivering care? What factors influence whether PAs and physicians are satisfied with PA roles and contribution to delivering care?

What are the systems-level factors that influence PA practice? What is the role of quality improvement in reducing practice gaps?

What kinds of care are PAs delivering? In what types of settings are PAs delivering health care?

How do medical teams involving doctors, PAs, and other health care professionals develop? What are the dynamics of these teams?

How are PA roles expanding? What types of leadership roles are PAs taking on? What types of nonclinical roles are PAs engaged in?

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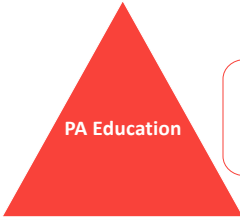
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11 PA doctorates <sup>NEW</sup>

12 Clinical sites and preceptorships <sup>NEW</sup>

17 Impact of regulation on PA education

18 Defining quality PA education

20 Cost of education

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### PA Education

PA doctorates
Regulatory impact on education
Defining quality PA education
PA faculty
Learning continuum

Is there a need for doctorally-prepared PA educators? What type of training will allow PA educators to best meet the needs of the graduate level students?

How can we increase the number of clinical site and preceptors that are needed?

How does regulation of the PA profession impact PA education? How will the move toward optimal team practice impact the curriculum needed to prepare students for work after graduation?

What factors define and influence the quality of PA education?

What is the anticipated cost of a PA education in 5 to 10 years? How might this affect demand to enter the profession?

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High Priority Topics

Research Topic	Pillar
Cost-Effectiveness of PAs	PA Value
Patient Outcomes	PA Value
Access to Care	PA Value
PA Supply and Demand	PA Workforce
PA Workforce Composition	PA Workforce
PA Readiness to Practice	PA Workforce

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Medium Priority Topics

Research Topics	Pillar
Understanding PA Roles	PA Roles
Healthcare Team Outcomes	PA Roles
Healthcare Team Dynamics	PA Roles
Patient Safety	PA Value
PA Doctorates	PA Education
Clinical Sites and Preceptors	PA Education
PA Work Settings	PA Roles

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Low Priority Topics

Research Topics	Pillar
PA Career Flexibility	PA Workforce
Expansion of PA Roles	PA Roles
PA Specialization	PA Workforce
Impact of Regulation on PA Education	PA Education
Defining Quality PA Education	PA Education
Patient Satisfaction	PA Value

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**What Does This Mean?**

The National PA Research Agenda **IS**

- Designed to be a guide upon which researchers may build their own research agendas.
- Meant to be thoughtfully applied to your own area of research.
- Complex with overlap between topics and pillars.

The National PA Research Agenda **IS NOT**

- the AAPA Research Agenda.
- Meant to be comprehensive.

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**The Future of PA Research**

- The current prioritization of research topics is designed to be reevaluated in 2024.
- Are these topic areas still meeting the needs of the PA profession?
- How does your research fit in?

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**Additional Talks**

- The Importance of Research to Advance the PA Profession
- The Importance of Developing a Personal Research Agenda
- How to Write a Conference Proposal
- How to Become a Peer Reviewer

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**For additional information**

Contact us at  
[research@aapa.org](mailto:research@aapa.org)

Learn more at  
[aapa.org/research](http://aapa.org/research)

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