

## PA Week Op-Ed Template

*This template opinion was developed to serve as a guide for AAPA Constituent Organizations' leaders and all PAs seeking to raise awareness of the PA commitment to expanding patient access to care. For assistance with customizing this template and seeking publication, please contact [media@aapa.org](mailto:media@aapa.org).*

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Rising costs, limited access, workforce shortages, and disparities in care have left millions of Americans feeling anxious and uncertain about their well-being and the future of healthcare. By 2026, there will be a shortage of up to 3.2 million healthcare workers.

As a physician associate/assistant (PA), I am one our country's more than 178,700 PAs who are committed to working with our healthcare colleagues, lawmakers, patients, and communities to find solutions for making team-based healthcare delivery more efficient.

From October 6-12, the American Academy of Physician Associates recognizes PA Week to bring greater awareness to our profession, our contributions to the nation's health, and to let our patients know – we are here for you!

A 2023 national survey from The Harris Poll found that 91% of patients agree that PAs provide safe and effective healthcare. 91% of patients also say that PAs are part of the solution to addressing the shortage of healthcare providers.

PAs, like myself, do not take these stats as a “pat on the back” – they are a call to action!

We know patients are looking to healthcare providers to work together. At a time when our healthcare system is failing to meet patient needs, it is the obligation of all medical professionals to be part of a movement to fix the systemic issues in our healthcare system.

One of the solutions PAs across the country advocate for is modernizing PA practice laws and regulations to remove unnecessary barriers that can hinder PAs from working to the full extent of their education, training, and experience. Fully utilizing all members of our healthcare workforce, including PAs, will improve the system's efficiency and encourage patients to prioritize their health.

Practicing as a **[specialty]** PA the past **[X]** years, **[personal anecdote on patient needs you've seen and how PAs accommodate them/updates to laws that could help to address the needs and how]**.

PAs know patients are counting on us, and as a PA for more than X years, I can think of no better way to mark this week than with a pledge to my community to continue to be your advocate.

**[Author name]** is a PA currently practicing in **[city, state]**, and is also **[a member OR official title]** of **[constituent organization]**.