PAs are medical providers who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and often serve as a patient’s principal healthcare professional. With thousands of hours of medical training, PAs are versatile and collaborative. PAs practice in every state and in every medical setting and specialty, improving healthcare access and quality.

**AT A GLANCE**

- PA profession established in **1967**
- Approximately **150,000** PAs in the U.S. (NCCPA, 2022)
- PAs have more than **400 MILLION** patient interactions per year (2021 AAPA Salary Survey, all data based on clinically practicing PAs in the U.S.)

**EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS**

- **282** PA Programs in the U.S. (The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), 2021)
- **2,000** hours of clinical rotations
- Programs are **27 months or 3 academic years** (bachelor’s degree is required for acceptance)
- Educated at **MASTER’S DEGREE** level (The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), 2021)

**CERTIFICATION & LICENSING**

To obtain a license, PAs must:
- Graduate from an accredited PA program
- Pass a certification exam

To maintain their certification, PAs must complete:
- **100 hours** of continuing medical education (CME after every two years)
- A recertification exam every 10 years
What Patients Say About PAs

2014 Harris Poll*

92% Having a PA makes it easier to get medical appointments
91% PAs improve the quality of healthcare
93% PAs are trusted healthcare providers

PA Profession in the News

#3 Best 100 Jobs List
US News & World Report 2022

#2 Best Healthcare Jobs List
US News & World Report 2022

PAs practice in every work setting

PAs practice medicine in all specialties

35.4% Hospital
5.2% Urgent Care Center
7.2% Other*
52.2% Outpatient Office or Clinic

21.0% Primary Care
12.2% Internal Medicine Subspecialties
8.4% Emergency Medicine
1.5% Pediatric Subspecialties
30.5% Other*
26.4% Surgical Subspecialties
4.7% No Specialty

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2021 AAPA Salary Survey,
All data based on clinically practicing PAs in the U.S.

*Other refers to a variety of work settings including but not limited to schools/universities, rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes and correctional facilities.

2021 AAPA Salary Survey,
All data based on clinically practicing PAs in the U.S.

*Other refers to a variety of healthcare settings including but not limited to psychiatry, hospice and palliative care, obstetrics and gynecology, addiction medicine, pain management, public health and dermatology.

**Attitudes Toward PAs: A 2014 Survey by the American Academy of PAs.**
The Harris online survey was conducted September 15–22, 2014 among 1,544 adults age 18 and older living in the US, including an oversample of 680 adults who have seen a PA and/or have accompanied a loved one to see a PA in the past 12 months. For full methodology visit aapa.org/media.

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