



# What is a PA?

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, 2021.

PAs have more than

**400**  
**MILLION**



patient interactions  
per year

2020 AAPA Salary Survey,  
All data based on clinically practicing PAs in the U.S.

## EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS



**260** PA Programs in the U.S.

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), 2020



**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

### 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)

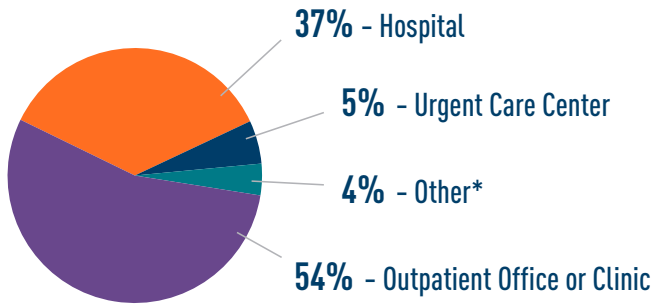


A **recertification exam** every 10 years

## CERTIFICATION & LICENSING



## PAs practice in every work setting

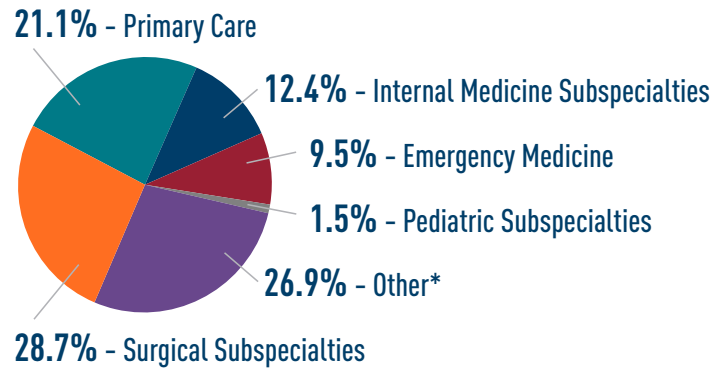


2020 AAPA Salary Survey,  
All data based on clinically practicing PAs in the U.S.

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



## PAs practice medicine in all specialties



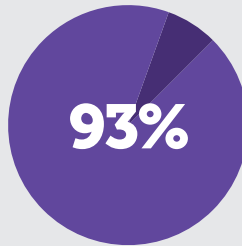
2020 AAPA Salary Survey,  
All data based on clinically practicing PAs in the U.S.

\*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.

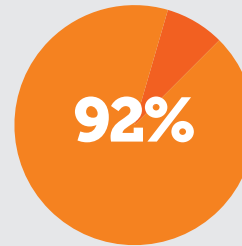
### What Patients Say About PAs



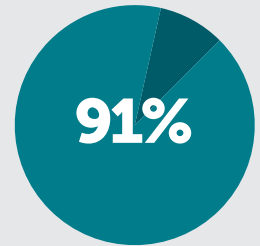
2014 Harris Poll\*



PAs are trusted healthcare providers



Having a PA makes it easier to get medical appointments



PAs improve the quality of healthcare

## PA Profession in the News

**#1** Best 100 Jobs List  
US News & World Report, 2021

**#1** Best Healthcare Jobs List  
US News & World Report, 2021

**#5** Fastest Growing Jobs In America  
Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020



\*"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](http://aapa.org/media).