Introduction

• Advocacy is defined differently amongst PAs.
• PAs advocate effectively for their patients.
• PAs do not advocate for their profession effectively.
• Four percent of PAs donate to the Political Action Committee (PAC).
• PA education has recently considered professional advocacy as part of the education curriculum.
• This study was to ascertain thoughts and perceived barriers with professional advocacy for and with PAs.

Methods

• IRB approval was granted from AT Still University.
• No prior research findings were discovered regarding PA professional advocacy on an extensive literature search.
• Twenty-five question voluntary electronic survey via social media site frequented by PA only with 100% response rate.
• Participation in the survey served as consent.
• Survey questions included:
  - Data analyzed by IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 27).
  - Total participants: 361 surveys with 1 exclusion for a sample size total of 360. See table on below for inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion:</th>
<th>Exclusions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answered yes to being a PA/physician assistant/associate</td>
<td>Answering no to being a physician assistant/associate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed survey</td>
<td>Incomplete survey</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Results

- Majority (66%) of PAs do not donate to AAPA or state organizations.
- Seventy eight percent of PAs did not receive professional advocacy training during their medical education.
- More PAs are members to the AAPA (75%) than their state organization.
- Majority of respondents were female (75%) and Caucasian (83%).
- Ninety six percent of PAs felt it is their duty to advocate for the patient.
- PAs (79%) state they are able to help patients navigate the health care system.
- PAs that donated to a PAC reached out more frequently to elected officials.
- Fifty three percent stated they were likely to contact an elected official in the future; However, 30% were undecided.

Conclusion

• Advocacy definition was left up to interpretation of PA.
• PAs felt strongly that professional advocacy should be part of medical education.
• PAs understand opportunities and ability to address the issues despite lack of training.
• PAs know how to advocate for their patients but are unsure how to advocate for their profession.

References


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