

Women Are Paid Less Than Men in the PA Profession

AAPA monitors the gender pay gap in the PA profession through the annual AAPA Salary Survey. Overall, the pay gap between men and women in the PA profession, in terms of base salary, is smaller this year than it has been in the last two decades. As the percentage gets closer to 100%, base salaries are increasingly equal. While the trajectory of the gender pay gap among PAs was volatile in the late 1990s, it steadily worsened during the 2000s. It wasn't until 2012 that female PAs started to be paid, on average, around 90% of their male counterparts.

The 2017 median base salary of full-time women PAs was \$11,000 less than men and the median bonus differed by \$3,000. Women were also less likely than men to receive a bonus (47% of women vs. 52.5% of men for full-time PAs). These disparities are present for all levels of experience (Figure 12) and in every specialty (Figure 13). There is no experience level or major specialty area in which women have a higher median base salary than men in the PA profession.

Looking at gender alone does not allow us to take into account a multitude of factors that may affect an individual's salary. Statistical modeling, however, shows that women were paid lower base salaries than men even after accounting for a variety of factors that might be expected to affect compensation, including years of experience, hours worked in a week, specialty, whether a bonus was received, whether a PA is in a leadership role or owns part of their practice, geographic location, and education. Overall, the mean base salary of women was about 6% less than that of men, even after accounting for these other factors that could be expected to affect salary. In other words, in the PA profession, women were still only being

Gender-Based Salary Discrepancies

Women are paid less than men in the PA profession. Among PAs in 2017, the overall median base salary for women was \$11,000 lower than men, and the median bonus was \$3,000 lower. Even when compensation-relevant factors such as years of experience, hours worked per week, specialty, geographic region, and whether or not a PA receives a bonus are factored in, there is still a significant difference between salaries for women and men. Having access to accurate compensation information and an openness to negotiate are important first steps in reducing compensation disparities between women and men. PA employers may begin to address disparities by committing to being transparent in compensation, being aware of any conscious or unconscious biases hiring managers may have, and by relying less on past salaries when determining compensation.

paid \$.94 for every dollar men were paid even after accounting for other differences. While the unadjusted wage gap of \$11,000 has increased since last year, when controlling for compensation-relevant factors, the gap has shrunk from 7% to 6%.

The salary discrepancy begins almost immediately upon entering the profession — there is a salary disparity between men and women in the first years of practicing as PAs. This difference may be compounded as PAs progress through their careers, since salary increases are often based on the previous year's salary, and new employers often base a PA's starting salary in part on their previous salary. A salary disparity that begins on a PA's first day on the job could have lifelong implications for the PA's compensation level. The gender pay gap is an issue that the PA profession and many other professions are facing. AAPA will continue to work for fair and competitive salaries in the PA profession.

Figure 12. Median Base Salary From Primary Employer by Gender and Experience

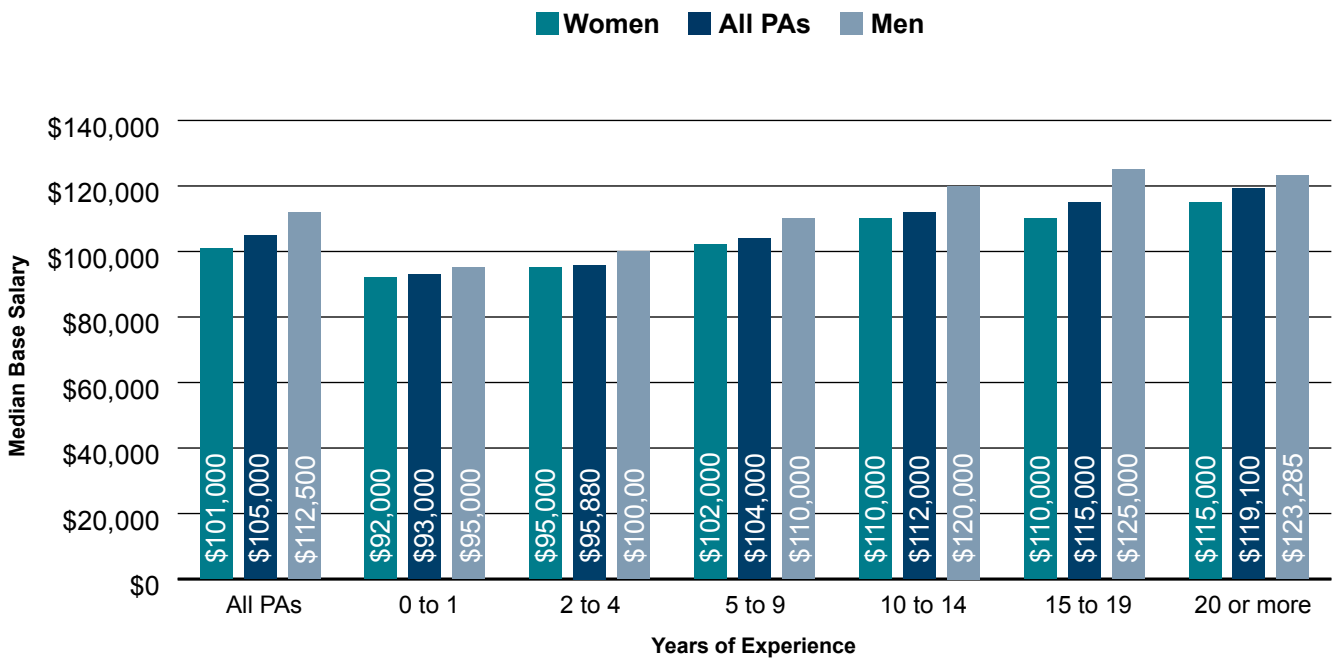


Figure 13. Median Base Salary From Primary Employer by Gender and Major Specialty Area

