

About AAPA

Fact Sheet



Founded in 1968, the American Academy of PAs (AAPA) is the national professional society representing PAs (physician assistants). It represents a profession of more than 123,000 PAs who practice in every medical setting in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

PAs are medical professionals who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and often serve as a patient's principal healthcare provider. 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. AAPA advocates and educates on behalf of the PA profession and is committed to:

- Equipping PAs for expanded opportunities in healthcare;
- Advancing the PA identity;
- Creating progressive work environments for PAs; and
- Fostering AAPA organizational effectiveness and sustainability.

To learn more, read [AAPA's Strategic Plan](#).

AAPA works to ensure the professional growth, personal excellence, and recognition of PAs. We also enhance their ability to improve the quality, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness of patient-centered healthcare.

Our Vision

PAs transforming health through patient-centered, team-based medical practice.

Our Mission

AAPA leads the PA profession and empowers our members to advance their careers and enhance patient health.

Our Values

- **Leadership and Service**—We inspire a shared vision to lead the profession, emphasize service to our members, and enhance the ability of PAs to serve patients and their communities.
- **Unity and Teamwork**—We embrace the strength of our members and constituent and partner organizations to speak with one voice for the profession and work together to transform health.
- **Accountability and Transparency**—We listen, deliver results, take ownership of actions, and operate in an environment of openness and trust.
- **Excellence and Equity**—We commit to the highest standards and seek to eliminate disparities and barriers to quality healthcare.

Constituent Organizations

Constituent organizations (COs) are independent organizations affiliated with AAPA. They provide their PA members locally-based continuing medical education (CME) programs, networking opportunities, and advocacy and job resources. AAPA COs include:

State & Federal Service Chapters

- Chartered chapters of AAPA in every state, one U.S. Territory, and the District of Columbia. There are also five federal service chapters.

Specialty Organizations

- Specialty organizations support AAPA's knowledge base regarding medical specialty practice issues. More than 20 organizations strengthen the PA profession through their specialized medical knowledge and interactions with their medical and professional counterparts. These relationships allow specialty organizations to partner with AAPA to address challenges with reimbursement, clinical practice, regulation and other matters.

Special Interest Groups

- Special interest groups (SIGs) are informal groups composed of individuals sharing a common goal or interest. SIGs are recognized and approved by AAPA's Board of Directors. AAPA currently recognizes 20 SIGs including PAs in Obesity Medicine, PAs in Pain Medicine, and more.

Caucuses

- A caucus is composed of individuals who share a common goal or interest related to healthcare access or delivery. AAPA currently recognizes eight caucuses including PAs for Global Health, PAs for Latino Health, and more.

Member Services

- **Advocacy and Government Relations**—AAPA's advocacy staff works with policymakers and third-party payers at both the national and state levels to advance PA practice so that PAs can deliver quality healthcare to patients.
- **Reimbursement**—AAPA reimbursement staff works on behalf of PAs to ensure that insurance companies and Medicare and Medicaid cover PA-provided medical and surgical services.
- **Professional Practice**—The professional practice staff works with PAs on issues such as credentialing, privileging, Joint Commission, and liability insurance to secure professional standing and enable PAs to focus on patient care.
- **Education**—AAPA offers an array of CME opportunities, from live CME events to CME on demand digital libraries to online modules. In Learning Central, PAs can choose from a catalog of more than 250 online CME activities and customize their own curriculum.
- **Public Awareness**—AAPA actively promotes the value of PAs through [content development](#), and integrated marketing and communications campaigns.
- **Research**—In partnership with PA-focused organizations, AAPA continuously collects and analyzes data on the profession, publishing findings in reports and peer-reviewed journals. These include the [AAPA Salary Report](#), state-by-state profiles of PA practice, and scholarly articles.
- **Publications**—AAPA delivers relevant clinical news and other information for and about PAs through our print and online publication, the Journal of the American Academy of PAs (*JAAPA*).

Other Services

- **PA Foundation**—As the philanthropic arm of AAPA, the PA Foundation funds PA education, supports PA-led healthcare initiatives locally and globally, and provides key resources to improve patient health.
- **Center for Healthcare Leadership and Management (CHLM)**—CHLM provides hospitals and health systems strategic and operational guidance on how best to utilize their PA and NP workforce, increasing organizational value, enhancing the patient experience, and improving PA/NP recruitment and retention.

Membership Overview

- Total Membership: more than 55,000
- Student Membership: nearly 15,000
- Fellow Membership: more than 39,000
- Distinguished Fellows: more than 950

Special Events

- **AAPA Conference**—PAs connect with thousands of their colleagues and PA students at the profession's preeminent educational and networking event.
- **National PA Week**—Celebrated every year from Oct. 6-12, National PA Week is an opportunity to recognize the PA profession and its contributions to improving the nation's health.
- **AAPA Leadership and Advocacy Summit**—The PA profession's premier event for leadership development and advocacy training with an opportunity to participate in federal advocacy and earn CME.
- **CHLM Executive Leadership Conference**—This annual conference offers PA leaders professional networking opportunities and a first-rate leadership and management curriculum.

Leadership and Governance

- The [Board of Directors](#) is AAPA's governing body, responsible for AAPA's strategic, administrative, and financial management. The [House of Delegates](#) is AAPA's policy-making body. The [Student Academy](#) and the [PA Foundation](#) have their own boards and committees.
- AAPA conducts annual elections in which fellow members choose their next president, along with any other open board positions. The CEO of AAPA is selected by the Board of Directors. The current CEO is [Jennifer L. Dorn](#), who has held the position since 2011.
- AAPA's volunteer engagement creates a wide variety of task-oriented, outcome-focused opportunities, where members lend their expertise and time to address a wide range of issues affecting PAs, the patients they serve, and healthcare.

