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

131,000 PAs in the U.S. (NCCPA, 2018)

PAs have more than 400 million patient interactions per year (2019 AAPA Salary Survey)

EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS

238 PA Programs in the U.S. (The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), 2019)

2,000 hours of clinical rotations

Educated at MASTER’S DEGREE level

Programs are 27 months or 3 academic years (bachelor’s degree is required for acceptance)

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

- 36.5% - Hospital
- 5.9% - Urgent Care Center
- 4.3% - Other*
- 53.3% - Outpatient Office or Clinic

2019 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

- 20.8% - Primary Care
- 12.2% - Internal Medicine Subspecialties
- 9.4% - Emergency Medicine
- 1.4% - Pediatric Subspecialties
- 28.8% - Other*
- 27.4% - Surgical Subspecialties

2019 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

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

2014 Harris Poll*

PA Profession in the News

- #3 Best 100 Jobs List US News & World Report 2019
- #1 Best Healthcare Jobs List US News & World Report 2019
- #7 Highest Paying Jobs In America Forbes 2018
- #5 Fastest Growing Jobs In America Bureau of Labor Statistics 2019

**“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.**

AAPA | aapa.org

Updated August 2019