

PA Specialty Practice Report: PAs in Family Medicine: Are we prepared?

D. M. Morton-Rias¹,

¹NCCPA, Johns Creek, GA;

Objective: A closer look at physician assistant (PA) specialty practice: Family Medicine.

Population: NCCPA asks certified PAs to provide updated information about their clinical practice through a secure, online portal. By the end of 2015, 93.6% of all certified PAs had responded.

Findings: 94.6% or 86,615 of profile respondents indicated they practice in at least one clinical position. 21% of profile respondents practice in Family Medicine; 18.6% in surgical subspecialties, with Orthopedics, Cardiothoracic and Neurosurgery as the most common and 13.4% practice in Emergency Medicine. These disciplines represent the most populous among PA. For the first time, NCCPA is presenting more detailed information about PA specialty practice patterns, with the launch of the 2016 Specialty Report. The report and poster will present the number and percent of PAs working in the specialty, their demographic breakdown and salary ranges. The report and poster will also include practice setting, hours worked, numbers of patients seen, payer mix and broad-based clinical services provided. The first specialty specific report will be of Family Medical. Sixty-six percent of PAs working in Family Medicine are female and 86.9% identify themselves as White. The median age of PAs working in Family Medicine is 41 years. Fifty-six percent of Family Medicine PAs work in office based, private practice settings, and 11% in community health centers and federal government facilities, respectively. More than 80% treat and manage acute conditions, prescribe medications for acute and chronic conditions and provide preventive services. More than 50% make referrals to other health clinicians and provide care coordination, an increasingly essential element of care. Sixty-three percent report that they do not take call and the median number of hours worked per week is 40. The average salary of certified PAs in 2015, working in all disciplines is \$102,163 with the highest paid to those working in dermatology, emergency medicine, pathology, surgery subspecialties, and critical care medicine. The median salary for PAs working in Family Medicine is \$95,000/year.

Conclusion: The PA profession has strong roots in Family Medicine yet current practice patterns (21% of all PAs work in Family Medicine) indicate steady movement to specialty care. Market factors, reimbursement rates, provider satisfaction and other factors impact these findings. The population of PAs providing care in Family Medicine is relatively young, less diverse and compensated at the lower end of the spectrum. These findings help workforce analysts, policy makers, employers, payers and others in projecting and preparing for future health workforce needs in Family Medicine.