



Report of the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants for the Physician Assistant Education Association

Submitted October 2017

On behalf of the Board and staff of NCCPA, I am pleased to offer the following report on recent and future developments to PAEA leaders and members.

Identifying “Core Medical Knowledge”

NCCPA has spent the best part of the past three years examining PA recertification. Last year we committed to narrowing the content of PANRE to focus on “core medical knowledge” – knowledge all PAs should maintain regardless of the discipline in which they practice. Since January, more than 100 PAs from across the country representing all disciplines and practice levels have worked with us to help refine a strategy to identify core medical content. A profession-wide survey informed by the work of the dedicated PA volunteers is being conducted this fall, which will give all Certified PAs a voice in this process. Following that, for the first time we will publish a content blueprint specific for PANRE and the PANRE alternative in early 2018 for implementation in 2019.

Providing an Alternative to PANRE

On October 3, NCCPA announced details of an alternative to PANRE that we will soon pilot. This alternative approach to assessment is the culmination of more than two years of study and effort on the part of our Board and staff. It addresses many of the concerns we have heard from PAs about the time, cost and challenge of preparing for and taking today’s PANRE. It also reflects our evolving technological capabilities, current trends in assessment and our responsibilities to those who rely on the PA-C credential. The content of this assessment will also focus on core medical knowledge and will be informed by the same profession-wide survey referenced above. I look forward to sharing more about this during the PAEA Education Forum.

Research, Data and Outreach

We continue to report information from the PA Professional Profile, with data provided by almost 95% of Certified PAs. We have delivered a number of reports on PA workforce data in addition to fielding data requests from researchers in government, education and media. If you are not already familiar with our reports, please [browse them online](#). We encourage you to use these reports and the information contained therein to further your own promotion of PA education and the PA career path.

For our part, NCCPA has used this data to inform many groups and audiences, including those attending annual meetings of:

- The Association of Health Care Journalists, where we met with health care writers about the reports and resources we have to assist them with articles about the health professions, health care, and the tremendous impact of Certified PAs;
- The Association of American Medical Colleges;
- The Federation of State Medical Boards; and
- More than three dozen national, state and specialty PA associations.

We also met with state medical boards and committees in a number of states where we shared state-level statistics about the PA population and the PA pipeline and more generally about the role, qualifications and impact of Certified PAs. Each of those audiences was appreciative of the presentation and impressed with what we had to report. We certainly have much to be proud of as we celebrate the 50th year of this great profession, and it has been a privilege to help share that story.

Please visit www.PAsDoThat.net to see and share content on the great work of PAs, and be sure to utilize the information and resources we provide through our PA Program Portal when you need to share or teach information about NCCPA and the certification process. Resources there include a presentation for PA students about the role and work of NCCPA.

Our PAEA Partnership

NCCPA has supported the development and administration of PAEA's End of Rotation™ Exams since their inception. From our vantage point behind the scenes, it has been rewarding to watch so many programs benefit from this innovative way PAEA is facilitating the educational assessment process. This year PAEA and NCCPA renewed that partnership, and we look forward to continuing to support PAEA and its member programs in this important way.

We value our relationships with PAEA, PA programs, program leaders, and faculty members, and we enjoyed hosting some of you at our 10th annual PA Educators Workshop last month. Gatherings like that are great opportunities to discuss and celebrate the commitment we share to delivering programs, assessments and initiatives that result in highly qualified PAs delivering care to a welcoming public. That work is never done, and I look forward to continuing to share in that effort with you. Your feedback and ideas are always welcome.

Affiliate Organizations

NCCPA is proud to support the PA profession through its two supporting organizations: the PA History Society and the nccPA Health Foundation. We appreciate the invitation extended to both organizations

to also submit a written report and to address the PAEA membership in Denver. We look forward to seeing you then.



Dawn Morton-Rias, Ed.D, PA-C
President/CEO
dmorton-rias@nccpa.net

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is the only certifying organization for physician assistants (PAs) in the United States. The PA-C credential is awarded by NCCPA to PAs who graduate from accredited PA education programs and then fulfill certification, certification maintenance, and recertification requirements. Today there are more than 115,500 certified PAs.
