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Friday, August 09, 2019

(Room 7)

14:00 - 14:55 WS #32: What Value Does a Physician Associate Add to Your Practice?

15:05 - 16:00 WS #42: What Value Does a Physician Associate Add to Your Practice?
(Repeated)

Physician Associates- Are they worth it?

Alexandra Kayat, MPAS, PA-C

President, NZ Physician Associate Society
PA, Ropata Medical Centre

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GP, Ropata Medical Centre

Why are we here?



- 47% of the existing GP workforce intends to retire within the next 10 years - The RNZCGP's 2018 workforce survey
 - The RNZCGP -10 recommendations submitted to the government's Health and Disability System Review
7. Investigate and remedy the current shortfall of vocationally registered general practitioners, rural hospital doctors and other health professionals in order to meet current demand for services.

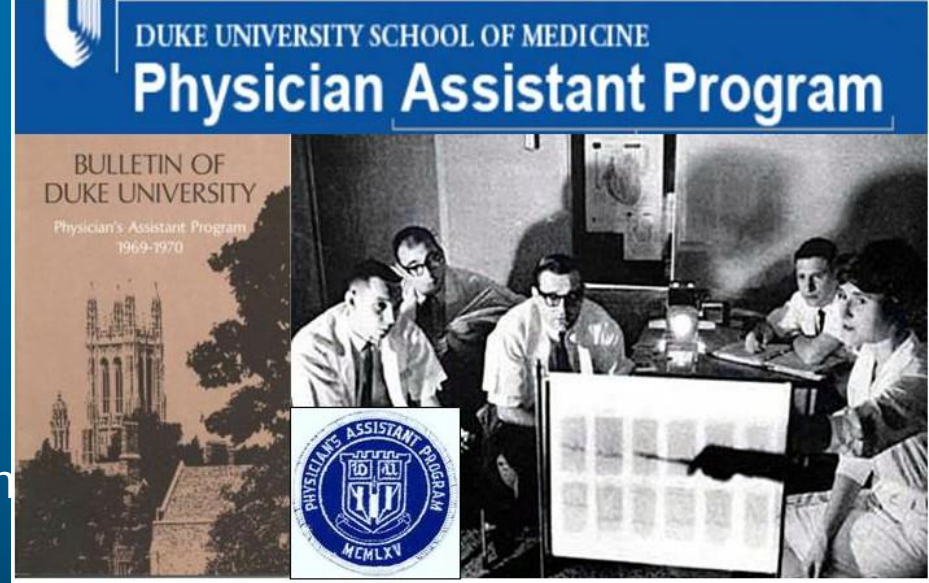
What is a Physician Assistant/Associate (PA)?

- Medical professionals who practice medicine on physician-led healthcare teams
- PAs treat patients autonomously and collaborate with doctors when necessary



A Brief History of PAs

- 1940s - Shortage of GPs
- 1965 - First class of PAs - Experienced Navy Hospital Corpsmen
- 1970s -
 - Medical community and federal acceptance
 - Recognized by American Medical Association (AMA)
 - National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants established
 - Accreditation recommendations for education



What can PAs do?



- Obtain medical histories and perform physical exams
- Order and interpret lab tests and imaging studies
- Diagnose and manage diseases
- Perform minor surgery and assist in major surgery
- Monitor and manage hospital inpatients
- Patient education
- Scope of practice and responsibilities correspond to supervising physicians' practice
- Prescribe medications (*Not in New Zealand*)



What types of patients do PAs see?

- PAs can see any patients, regardless of complexity or acuity, as long as it is within their scope of practice, correlating to their training and experience, and correlating to their supervisor's scope of practice
- PAs share the workload and do not pick and choose “the easy patients”
- PAs are trained to know their limits and ask for assistance when needed





How are PAs trained in the USA?

- Very intensive 2-3 year Master's degree (year round, full time study)
 - To be a candidate for PA school, one must have:
 - Bachelor degree
 - Pre-med prerequisite courses
 - Min. 2,000 hours direct patient contact experience
- PAs are trained as ***generalists*** in the ***medical model***
- Over 2,000 hours clinical rotations
- Taught to be versatile & collaborative



Certification - the “C” in PA-C

- ***National board certification exam*** through the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)
 - Rigorous 5 hour exam covering general medical and surgical knowledge.
- To maintain certification:
 - 100 hours of CME every 2 years
 - Recertification exam every 10 years



What's the difference between a PA & NP?

Whilst their training is very different, at the practice level, there are likely more similarities than differences between PAs and NPs.

Two key differences:

1. PAs always work in collaboration with doctors while NPs can have their own practice.
2. “PAs are trained to practice medicine using a curriculum modeled on medical school education. NPs are trained in the advanced practice of nursing”

-AAPA.org



Certified #PAs Do That!

PA's PRACTICE MEDICINE
IN EVERY SPECIALTY AND
CLINICAL SETTING



PA's PERFORM ROUTINE MEDICAL SERVICES AND INTRICATE PROCEDURES

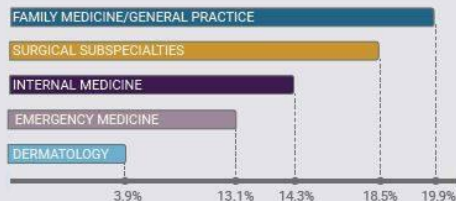
- Perform physical exams
- Order & interpret lab tests
- Perform surgical procedures
- Monitor & manage hospital inpatients
- Prescribe medicine & educate patients

PA's TREAT
9.1 MILLION
PATIENTS/WEEK



THAT'S
473 MILLION
PATIENT VISITS/YEAR

TOP 5 PA PRACTICE AREAS BY SPECIALTY



Number of Certified
PAs by State



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THERE ARE CURRENTLY
131,000
CERTIFIED PAs,
a 64% INCREASE
since 2010.

DEMAND IS HIGH FOR RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs



U.S. News & World Report ranked the PA profession as
#3 in the "100 Best Jobs" list of 2019.

TO BECOME CERTIFIED, PAs MUST:

- GRADUATE from an accredited PA program (master's level)
- PASS the PA National Certifying Exam

PA's RETAIN CERTIFICATION THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER

PA's:

- Earn 100 continuing medical education (CME) credits every 2 years
- Pass a recertification assessment every 10 years

MEDIAN
AGE OF
PA's IS



38
YRS

68% OF
PA's ARE
WOMEN

13%
OF PA's
WORK IN
2 OR MORE
CLINICAL
POSITIONS

23% OF PA's
COMMUNICATE
WITH PATIENTS
IN A SECOND
LANGUAGE

NCCPA
Certification Foundation

www.nccpa.net
www.PAsDoThat.net



Forbes

2014- #1 Best Master's degree

2015- #1 Most Promising Job

2018- #3 Best job, based on
education requirements, median
salary and job satisfaction

Now- #1 most promising job for
millennials



Rural PAs

“PAs continue to enter the rural workforce at higher rates than primary care physicians and continue to make large contributions to the care of underserved rural populations. Over 7,000 new PAs enter the workforce each year (compared to about 20,000 U.S. medical graduates) and constitute a substantial potential resource for rural populations experiencing the effects of health provider shortages.”

Larson EH, Andrilla CHA, Morrison C, Ostergard S, Glicken A. Which Physician Assistant Training Programs Produce Rural PAs? A National Study. Policy Brief #154. Seattle, WA: WWAMI Rural Health Research Center, University of Washington, Feb 2016.



PAs are also practicing medicine in....

- Canada
- UK
- Netherlands
- Australia
- Germany
- Afghanistan
- India



- Israel
- Ghana
- Liberia
- Saudi Arabia
- South Africa
- New Zealand

With similar roles in many other countries...

United Kingdom



- Pilots starting in 2002 with US-trained PAs
 - Pilot in England arose specifically out of the difficulties recruiting GPs to deprived communities
 - PAs safe, well received by patients, received without problems by other professions
 - Allowed some practices to increase their numbers of registered patients
- 600 PAs, 1600 student PAs (2018 FPA census)
- 31 PA programs with 3 upcoming programs
- National exams and a managed voluntary register
- Oct 2018 - Government announced plans to regulate Physician Associates
- **July 2019 - General Medical Council (GMC) to regulate PAs**

NZ PA Pilot Demonstrations



2010 - 2011



- Two PAs - Surgical/Hospitalist project - Middlemore Hospital



2013 - 2015



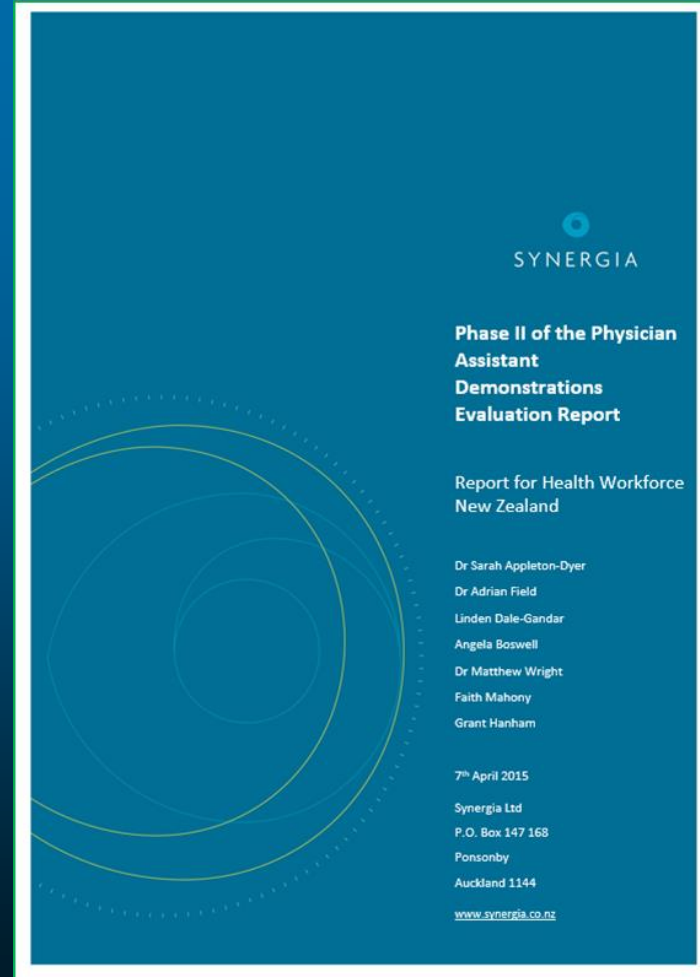
- Seven PAs - primary care setting & rural hospital ED - Tokoroa, Hamilton, Taneatua, Gore



Synergia Report

Evaluation Method

- Two sets of site visits to each of the demonstration sites to conduct key stakeholder interviews, supplemented by some telephone interviews; a total of 60 interviews were conducted.
- Staff and patient surveys at each site; a total of 511 patients were surveyed and 65 staff were surveyed.
- An analysis of routinely collected administrative and clinical data.
- *The breadth of the data collected for this evaluation is on par with, and in many cases exceeds that collected in overseas studies.*



Synergia Findings



PAs are safe: 30,000 patients seen by PAs with no issues of clinical safety

PAs were found by their colleagues to be adaptable and...

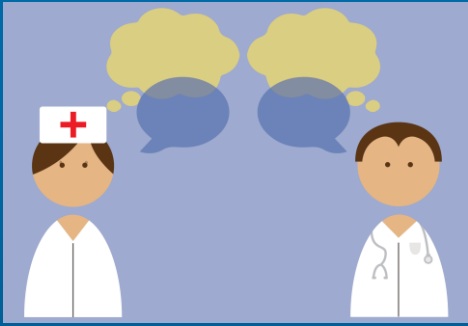
- Improve the throughput of patients
- Reduce the workload of existing staff



PAs integrated well:

“For the most part, the practice models have generally not changed, with the PAs operating in their clinical settings in a similar capacity to doctors.”

An exception - “Tokoroa created a temporary **walk-in clinic run by a PA** over the peak season of winter months. The practice saw an **additional 900 patients** over a 3-month period. “ Synergia p.64



Synergia Findings Cont

Impact on:

Nurses:

- No negative impact on nursing
- Two roles were seen as complementing each other

Junior Doctors:

- PAs had *not affected the employment of junior docs... nor had it affected support for junior doctor training*
- Many saw the PAs as being ideal for supporting the training of junior doctors

Synergia p.63

Prescribing:

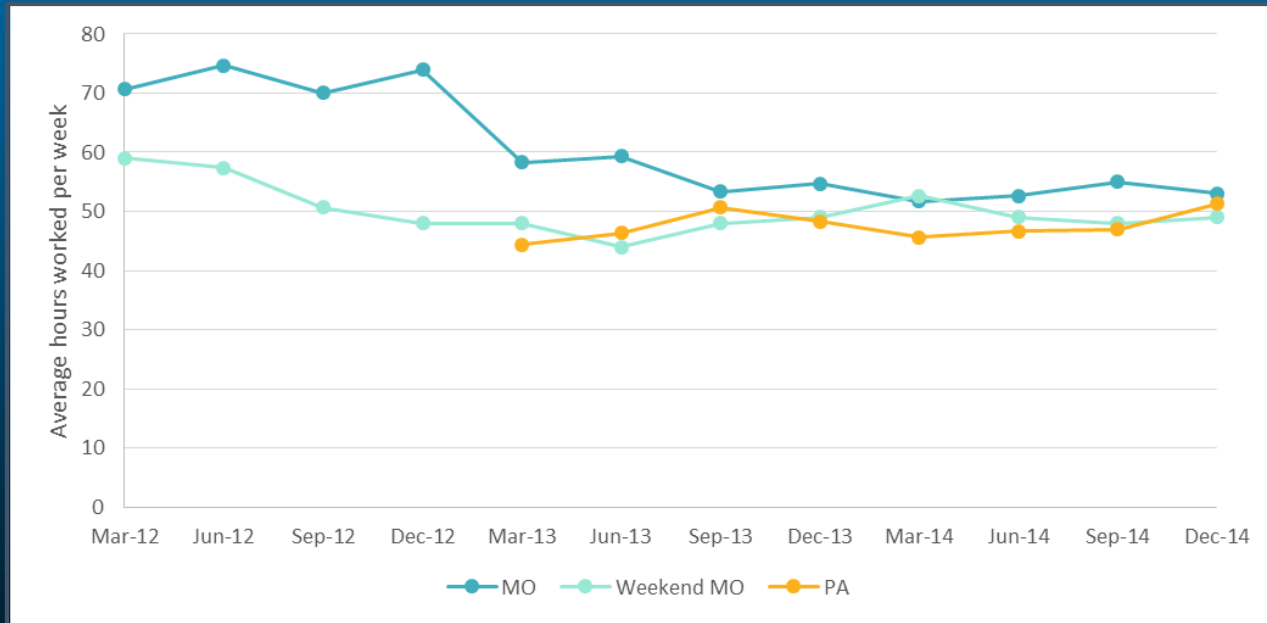
“The lack of prescribing rights was the most commonly cited challenge to the integration of the PA role.... ***Allowing PAs to prescribe was also the most frequently cited recommendation for the future development of the role in New Zealand in the staff survey.***”

Synergia p.12



Gore Experience - Clinician Hours

- The PA working at Gore ED had a substantial effect on the working hours of the other clinicians.
- With the PA, average hours worked per week for **MOs reduced from 72.3 hours per week to 54.8 hours per week.**
- Hours of the weekend MOs reduced from 53.8 hours per week to 48.5 hours per week.





2019: Where in New Zealand are they now?

- Kaitaia
- Te Awamutu
- New Plymouth
- Hastings
- Wellington
- Gore

Past- Auckland, Taupo
Whakatane, Tokoroa



Hastings Health Centre Urgent Care

Andie Cook, PA-C



"I work very closely with our Physician Associate and found her extremely competent, efficient and knowledgeable. She is a very valued member of my team. A Physician Associate with specific skills in urgent care and emergency medicine should be able to practice within her scope of care.

However at the moment we are still restricted by the lack of regulation her profession has in New Zealand - Regulation and prescribing authority similar to those used in the United States where the profession has thrived for 50 years is needed here."

- Dr. Pauline Teong, Urgent Care Fellow, Hastings Health Centre

Ropata Medical Centre Lower Hutt



Alex Kayat, PA-C

“The help and support offered to the nursing and GP team by the PA has been a real bonus, she has been very well accepted by all team members and is now an integral part of how we do business. Our future plans are to extend our PA team enabling them to run our entire acute service.”

- **Adrian Tucker, Practice Manager**

Te Awamutu Medical Centre

Tiffany Hodgson, PA-C

Jackie Sartorius, PA-C

“I have enjoyed working alongside our physician associates at a busy medical centre for two years. I find them to have an amazing realm of knowledge which they are more than willing to share with their colleagues. They are thorough in all patient care and are well-liked and respected by staff and patients seeing them for consults. I feel they bring a new set of skills to the centre to enhance the quality of care we provide.” -Natalie Davidson RN





Lisa deWolfe, PA-C
PA since 1987

Te Hiku Hauora in Kaitaia

“The Physician Associate is currently well received here in the Far North. There has been a long term shortage of medical practitioners and our clinics need practitioners. The Nurse Practitioners and Physician Associates can make a big difference in the quality of care. They also ensure same day appointments are available and that patients have more consistency in their care with all providers” . -

Supervising GP, Te Hiku

What's in it for me/my clinic?

Demonstrated benefits of PAs



- Better patient outcomes
- Reduced waiting times
- Greater patient satisfaction
- Greater efficiencies
- More time/less workload = less stress
- Better work/life balance = “Home for dinner”
- Better workforce flexibility
- Increased job satisfaction, doctor retention
- Potential advancement career pathway
- A solution to Primary Care shortage
- Cost effective (avg salary \$105,000)
- Young workforce

Looking forward

- Continue to recruit & retain PAs with prior ED/generalist experiences in rural, remote & other isolated settings
- Promote the PA role throughout NZ as a strategy for increasing health care access, retaining doctors, Increasing efficiency and sustainability.
- Regulation under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 and prescribing authority so PAs may practice at their full scope
- Training Programs - Kiwis from rural areas could be recruited and trained to become PAs with the expectation that they return home to practice

I'm interested in a PA, what's the next step?

The NZ PA Society is happy to help point you in the right direction.

- We can post jobs to a wide audience of PAs
- Put you in touch with a PA recruiter who does all the work for you.
- “Hiring a PA” Documents
- Voluntary registry
- Confirm a PA is certified by searching their NCCPA number:
<https://www.nccpa.net/verify-pa>
- New PAs to NZ should shadow PAs that are already established

You can contact us at nzpasociety@gmail.com

Thank you

GPCME Christchurch
Ropata Medical Centre
Te Awamutu Medical Centre
Gore Hospital
NZ Medical Association
NZ Medical Council
Te Hikau Hauora, Kaitaia
Hasting Health Centre Urgent Care
And all those who support PAs.

nzpasociety@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/nzpas/>



“It is my contention that the
PA occupation is a
Significant Innovation in the
medical division of labor.”
*Eugene S. Schneller, Ph.D. -
1978*

