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As the Nation Grapples with COVID-19, More Physician Assistants are Poised to Join the Fight

The PA profession has grown by 37 percent in the past five years; 10,000 new Certified PAs added in 2019 alone

Johns Creek, Ga., May 19, 2020 – As the nation continues to battle COVID-19, a new report published by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) indicates that there is good news to share-- more Certified PAs are available to join the fight.

According to the [2019 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants](#), the most comprehensive report of PA data nationwide, the number of Certified PAs in the United States is quickly approaching 140,000 (139,688). Over the past five years the PA profession grew by 37 percent, with nearly 10,000 newly Certified PAs joining the workforce in 2019 alone.

“Certified PAs have always been essential members of health care teams, but they are especially needed during this unprecedented time,” said NCCPA President and CEO Dawn Morton-Rias. “The growing PA workforce is filling clinical gaps on the front lines, treating and managing patients who are battling COVID-19 but also working in all disciplines, providing essential medical and surgical care. PAs are also playing key roles that help keep people healthy, reduce exposures, comfort and inform family members and educate patients on how to slow the spread of the disease.”

The 2019 report also indicates that for the second consecutive year, more PAs are choosing to work in hospitals (41.1 percent) over office-based private practice (38.6 percent,) and that more PAs (18.7 percent) are working in surgical subspecialties than any other specialty.

“Though more PAs are entering surgical subspecialties, it is important to remember that PAs are educated as generalists, and are prepared to serve wherever they are needed,” Morton-Rias added. “We implore hospitals to mobilize PAs so that they can address this health care crisis and aid in the nation’s efforts to get on the road to recovery.”

Additional key findings from the 2019 report include:

- Certified PAs worked an average of 40.3 hours and saw an average of 72 patients per week.
- Collectively, PAs saw 9.5 million patients per week.
- 22.8 percent of Certified PAs communicate with patients in a language other than English.

Physician assistant is consistently ranked as one of the top jobs in America, most recently by [*U.S. News and World Report*](#) as #2 in the Best Health Care Jobs of 2020.

To read the complete *2019 Statistical Profile of Certified Physician Assistants*, please visit www.nccpa.net.

About the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is the only certifying organization for the more than 139,000 physician assistants (PAs) in the United States. The PA-C credential is awarded by NCCPA to PAs who fulfill certification, certification maintenance and recertification requirements. NCCPA also administers the Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) program for experienced, Certified PAs practicing in seven specialties. For more information, visit <http://www.nccpa.net>.

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