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2018 Cohort of Newly Certified Physician Assistants is the Profession's Largest, Youngest Yet

Over 9,000 newly Certified PAs enter the profession, helping to alleviate provider shortages

Johns Creek, Ga., October 3, 2019 – 52 years after the first PA (physician assistant) class graduated in 1967, the profession is showing no signs of slowing down.

The latest [*Statistical Profile of Recently Certified Physician Assistants*](#), published by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), indicates that 9,287 physician assistants were certified for the first time in 2018, a 26.5 percent increase from 2013.

72.5 percent of the cohort are under 30 years old, making it the youngest group of Certified PAs yet.

The comprehensive report, which is published annually, also reveals that the profession is showing some progress in the area of diversity. 14.4 percent of newly Certified PAs identify as non-white and 7.6 percent indicate that they are of Hispanic, Latino(a) or Spanish origin. Like the larger PA workforce, women made up the majority of newly Certified PAs, with 73.9 percent.

While there is still considerable opportunity for growth with regards to diversity of the profession, NCCPA President and CEO Dawn Morton-Rias is encouraged by the employment opportunities afforded to the 2018 cohort.

“74.4 percent of newly Certified PAs who accepted a job offer received two or more offers, and 71.9 percent reported that they faced no challenges while searching for a job,” says Morton-Rias. “67 percent of these PAs were offered incentives such as reimbursement for continuing medical education, income guarantees and professional development. In a time when we continue to contend with the provider shortage, this is a positive indication that employers see

Certified PAs as a part of the solution, and are willing to do what is necessary to bring these valuable health care team members on board.”

Additional findings from the report include:

- 24 percent of newly Certified PAs who have accepted a job are working in primary care, with the highest percentages in family medicine/general practice, surgical subspecialties and emergency medicine
- The median salary for newly Certified PAs is \$95,000 per year
- 62.2 percent of newly Certified PAs have a total educational debt of over \$100,000
- 22.1 percent of newly Certified PAs indicated that they 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 #1 in the Best Health Care Job of 2019.

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 131,000 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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